

Third Sunday of Lent | March 7, 2021



SAINT JOAN of ARC NEWS

The members of St. Joan of Arc Parish are disciples of Jesus Christ, who recognize God's love for the world & are empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel to all people through joyful worship, life-long education, compassionate service, responsible stewardship, & active community living.

~ Mission Statement - Pentecost 1998 ~

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3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area. - Jn 2:13b-15a

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22412 Overlake
Saint Clair Shores, MI 48080
Phone: 586-777-3670
Fax: 586-774-5528
Website: www.sjascscs.org
E-mail: sjainfo@sjascscs.org

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Saint Clair Shores, MI 48080
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Website: www.stjoan.net
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**FAITH AND FAMILY
FORMATION OFFICE**
22415 Overlake
Saint Clair Shores, MI 48080
Phone: 586-772-1282
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Parish Directory / Liturgy Schedule

ST. JOAN OF ARC DIRECTORY

Parish Center

Phone: 586-777-3670
Fax: 586-774-5528

School

Phone: 586-775-8370
Fax: 586-447-3574

Religious Education

Phone: 586-772-1282
Fax: 586-775-8374

Pastor

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gmbugarin@sjascs.org

Business Manager

Dina Ciaffone
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Athletic Director

Charles Kaiser
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Associate Pastor

Fr. Andrew Dawson
adawson@sjascs.org

Principal

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**Office of Faith &
Family Formation**

Kristine Stewart Hass
khass@sjascs.org

Non-Resident**Associate Pastors /
Weekend Assistants:**

Fr. Rich Bartoszek
Fr. James Grau

Assistant Principal

Mary Pat Brennan
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Exceptional Children

Mary Cal
mcal@sjascs.org

Permanent Deacons

Deacon Tom Strasz
tstrasz@sjascs.org

Music Director

Catherine Thomas
cthomas@sjascs.org

Youth Group

Linda Lietaert
llietaert@stjoan.net

Deacon Dom Pastore
dpastore@sjascs.org

Anthems Director

Eleonore Ellero-Groth
eleonoraellero@gmail.com



PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

The Parish Center is open Monday -Thursday from 8:30am-5pm and Friday from 8:30-4pm.

MASKS ARE MANDATORY WITHOUT EXCEPTION

For mass intentions or any service we may be reached at 586-777-3670 during these hours.

For any urgent needs when we are not open, please call our after-hours emergency number: 586-777-1342.

Baptisms: Please go to our website (stjoan.church) and fill out the Baptism request form.

Marriages: Arrangements should be made at the Parish Center at least six months prior to the desired date. Pre-marriage series required.

Registration: It is very important that every family and independent adult be registered in the Church in order to keep our records and mailings current. Please contact the Parish Office to register at your earliest opportunity.

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Weekdays

Monday thru Friday: 7:00 am

Weekends

Saturday: 4:00 pm & 6:00 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am & 12:00 pm

Holy Day Masses

Vigil Mass: (evening prior) 7:00 pm

7:00 am, 12:00 pm, 7:00 pm

Reconciliation

Saturday: 11:00 am in the Sister Carol Center adjacent to Church

Holy Hour

Thursdays in Church at 7:00 pm

Rosary

Monday - Friday after the 7am mass outside by the Holy Trinity statue.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A PARISHIONER?

If you would like to become a parishioner of St. Joan of Arc, at this time please register at stjoan.church and we will contact you by phone to get further information OR by calling us at 586-777-3670 during office hours.

Live Streamed Broadcasts at St. Joan of Arc

Though we have returned to public masses we will continue our Live Stream Broadcasts of all celebrations.

- **Weekdays -7 am Mass - (Monday thru Friday)**
- **Saturdays - 4 pm and 6 pm Masses**
- **Sundays - 8 am and 12 pm Masses**
- **Thursdays - 7 pm Holy Hour**

Go to: livestream.stjoan.church to watch all live streaming and to view archived celebrations.



Driving Miss Daisy

As I was thinking about a catchy title for this week's column, I contemplated "Fridays with Mom," but that didn't seem to do

the trick. As I thought about it a bit more, I remembered the movie "Driving Miss Daisy," and that title seemed to be the perfect fit.

My Fridays with my mom have been pretty productive. Besides getting the usual errands done and getting a doctor's appointment or two in, we've also spent time working through some of the banking chores that still need to get done. I could devote a whole column on this topic alone based on my lived experience since my dad's death. Trying to piece together all of my parents' financial stuff has been a real challenge and has become sort of a game. My dad never shared much of this with my mom. My dad took care of the banking stuff himself. He even did his own taxes with TurboTax. I would get called in for "technical support" from time to time, but he enjoyed doing these tasks himself. I once tried to get him to use a password manager program, but he resorted to a binder with pages of crossed-off user names and passwords.

The bank challenge has been even more complicated because of COVID restrictions. Timing is everything too. My schedule, my mom's schedule, and available appointment times at a bank or credit union have complicated the process too.

A week ago this past Friday, my mom and I set out to run a few errands with the ultimate goal of getting her to a doctor's appointment. On the way out, we decided we would try this one credit union that had a branch in Romeo. Going through Romeo was somewhat on our way. As my mom was calling the branch to see if we could stop by and accomplish what needed to be done, I was hoping and praying they would meet with us without an appointment. Thankfully, they said they could help us, but the transactions had to be done at the drive-thru window.

Now, I'm usually pretty good with directions. I've written in the past how my sister Jackie is the direction-challenged one in the family. It's not too

uncommon for some of us to get frantic phone calls from her asking us to help her get back on track to her final destination. When she gets lost, she really gets lost and is usually miles and miles off course.

Once my mom and I started the trek down Main Street in Romeo, we had our eyes on the lookout for the credit union. But I was getting totally discombobulated as we drove around. I had to ask my mom a few times if I had to turn right or turn left. It was getting rather embarrassing. We finally found the credit union and spent about 45 minutes in the drive-thru window. Thankfully, no one ever pulled up behind us! Once we finished all that needed to get done, I slowly pulled away from the narrow bank lane and stopped at the street. I paused and tried to figure out which way I had to turn. I was royally confused at this point. As I was waiting there for my brain to kick in and signal which way I had to turn, I could see my mom out of the corner of my eye turn toward me. Then, without blinking an eye, she said, "BOY, I feel like I'm driving with Jackie. Turn left and then right. I'll get you out of here!" Yikes. I guess the guy Driving Miss Daisy better get his GPS engaged, or he better get to know these small country towns a bit more!

Back to Church Sunday: With Archbishop Vigneron's call to the faithful to return to Church next weekend, we have designated next weekend, the Fourth Sunday of Lent, as "Back to Church Sunday." As I've noted at masses recently, the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days comes to an end on March 13. While the general dispensation expires next weekend, there are still individual dispensations that remain in place. Archbishop Vigneron is granting individual dispensations to those in need, including those who are at high risk of COVID 19.

Others who may continue to be excused from their Sunday obligation include: those who are ill or whose health would be significantly compromised were they to contract a communicable illness; those who care for the sick, homebound or infirmed, or someone in a high-risk category; pregnant women; those age 65 or older; those who cannot attend Mass for other reasons (such as a lack of transportation or being turned away because of capacity limits); and those who have "significant fear or anxiety of becoming ill by being at Mass." If you

have any questions about the dispensation, please reach out to me or Father Andrew.

To those who have been regularly attending Mass in person, please spread the word about the many precautions we take at SJA and, more importantly, share your personal testimony about what it was like to return to Church in person. I have been moved to tears by the testimony of so many people about their experiences of being back to Mass in person.

Of course, we will continue to live-stream all of our liturgies at livestream.stjoan.church. Our live-stream ministry has become an essential part of our life, and we plan not only to continue it but expand it as well.

To celebrate "Back to Church Sunday," we're going to have coffee and cookies at the Saturday Masses and coffee and donuts at the Sunday Masses. Everything will be pre-wrapped and ready for grab-and-go. While we can't necessarily gather and socialize yet, we can certainly enjoy a little bit of hospitality.

For the time being, our mass schedule will remain as it exists today: Saturdays at 4 PM and 6 PM and Sundays at 8 AM and 12 PM. It is only a matter of time before we bring the 10 AM Mass back into the schedule. So, stay tuned.

Reconciliation during Lent: To assist you on your Lenten journey, we are expanding the number of confession opportunities. Beginning this week and through Holy Week, we will be available in the Sr. Carol Center on Tuesdays from 6:30 to 8:00 PM and on Wednesdays from 1:00 to 2:30 PM for the celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation. These will not be reconciliation services as we have done in the past, but opportunities for individual celebrations of the sacrament like what is done on Saturday mornings. Chairs will be lined up in the Gathering Place, and you will wait your turn to celebrate the sacrament with one of the priests. We will, of course, still be available on Saturdays from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Again, all of this takes place in the Sr. Carol Center.

Enjoy the week. Know of my prayers.

In Christ,

gmb
gmb@sjascs.org

St. Joan^{of} Arc

Online Giving



Manage your
Online Giving account
with the app!

Download the Online Giving app
today at OLGApp.com

Donations

Payments

Give online at
stjoan.church
or from the app

REGISTER THE APP WITH OUR ORGANIZATION ID#

4719



St. Vincent De Paul Conference

MY LENTEN OFFERING ENVELOPES AVAILABLE AT ALL CHURCH ENTRANCES AND EXITS!

Everyone is aware that the year 2020 presented many unexpected and difficult situations for people, businesses, schools and church related issues. It doesn't appear that very little has not been affected by the pandemic. We continue to live with the effects of the COVID 19 virus. Many lives have been lost to it; many families have had to adjust their way of living. School students have had their classroom experience changed in many ways. Much unfamiliarity in everyday life, and life in general, has changed. Mandates have been enforced, rescinded and mandated again.. The word "adjustment" has become the norm today.

While the world continues to adjust (if that is even remotely possible at the present time), the St. Vincent DePaul Conference of St. Joan of Arc Parish, continues its work and is available to help with food and paper goods if needed by persons who reside within the boundaries of our parish. Those in need can call 586-774-3598 on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays. Phone calls will be retrieved and calls returned.

When calling, please state

Family Name

Address

Phone #

Number of family members in household

When calling, please speak clearly and slowly so that we are able to record correct information and return your call.

We wish to thank everyone who donated to our St. Vincent DePaul conference during the past year. Your generosity continues to support our ministry for which we are very grateful. Thank you to the SJA students, parents, and staff for the Dec. 15, 2020 Paper Products Drive. Your twice a year drives keep us re-stocked. In addition we thank the Dan McMann family & friends who for the last 10 years have supplied us with carloads of canned and packaged dry foods. Together with donations from the school children and the McManns, we are fortunate to help many people in need from within our parish.

With sincere gratitude, we know that our loving God will bless each and every one for your goodness and sacrifice.



SJA Health Ministry



March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

“While screening is the most important step you can take to prevent to prevent colorectal cancer, it is not the only one. You may be able to lower your colorectal cancer risk with some simple lifestyle changes.

Eat well: “Diets high in vegetables, fruits and other plant foods reduce risk for many diseases, including colorectal cancer. Plant foods can also help us maintain a healthy weight – also important in reducing risk of colorectal cancer – because many are lower in calories. Try to keep your red meat intake to 18 ounces (cooked) per week or less. Processed meats, on the other hand, should be avoided if possible. Avoid processed meats including hot dogs, ham, bacon, sausages, that increase cancer risk even with low consumption.”

Get your exercise: “Research consistently shows adults who increase their physical activity, either in intensity, duration, or frequency, can reduce their risk of developing colorectal cancer by 30 to 40 percent. Exercise also helps you to maintain a healthy body weight, which reduces your risk for colorectal cancer. In fact, studies show people who are overweight or obese are more likely to develop colon polyps, a possible precursor to cancer, and higher weights are associated with higher polyp risk.”

Know your family health history: “A family history of colorectal cancer puts you at an increased risk. If you have a family history, you may need to be screened at age 40, or 10 years before the youngest case in your immediate family, whichever is earlier.”

Avoid alcohol & cigarettes: “Alcohol is known to increase cancer risk. According to the National Cancer Institute, people who regularly drink 3.5 drinks per day have 1.5 times the risk of developing colorectal cancer as nondrinkers or occasional drinkers.”

“Long-term cigarette smoking is also associated with increased risk of colorectal cancer. The longer a person smokes, the greater the risk.”

Source: <https://www.ccalliance.org/screening-prevention/>

*Spend an hour
with me.*

-Jesus

HOLY HOURS

*7-8 pm, Thursdays
in the Church*

and streaming live online at
stjoan.church and on
Facebook @sjascs

First and third
Thursdays include
Praise and Worship
music, second and
fourth are silent.

Calendar of Events / Words on the Word

Weekly Calendar of Events

Monday, March 8th

7:00 am Public Morning Mass - Live Streamed

Tuesday, March 9th

7:00 am Public Morning Mass - Live Streamed

8:30 am School Mass (5th –8th Gds) Live Streamed

6:30-8 pm Reconciliation

Wednesday, March 10th

7:00 am Public Morning Mass - Live Streamed

8:30 am School Mass (1st –4th Gds) Live Streamed

1-2:30 pm Reconciliation

Thursday, March 11th

7:00 am Public Morning Mass - Live Streamed

Friday, March 12th

7:00 am Public Morning Mass - Live Streamed

7:00 pm Stations of the Cross - Live Streamed

Saturday, March 13th

11:00 am Reconciliation

11:00 am Baptism of Penelope Bruss

12 pm Baptism of Charles Roa

1:30 pm Baptism of Charles Gross

4:00 pm Public Mass - Live Streamed

6:00 pm Public Mass - Live Streamed

Sunday, March 14th

8:00 am Public Mass - Live Streamed

12:00 pm Public Mass -Live Streamed

Words on the Word

March 7, 2021 – Signposts

There is a crucial scene near the end of one of Alfred Hitchcock's best known films in which a doctor explains the psychological underpinnings of the movie's main character.

In doing so, he observes that matricide is among the most horrific of crimes.

How much more troubling, then, would be the murder of both parents?

That was the charge brought a few weeks ago on the west side of the state against a man alleged to have taken the lives of his parents. At the time of this writing, there had not been a motive offered for the crime, although some media reports provided other details that may have given clues.

There are, to be sure, few scenarios one could imagine that would justify an action such as this; it all seems pretty black and white.

Sometimes simplicity is what we need as a guidepost in leading our lives, which is why the conciseness of the ten commandments is so powerful.

"Honor your father and mother, that you may have a long life in the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you," we hear in one of the choices for today's first reading, from the book of Exodus.

And that one is immediately followed with, "You shall not kill."

Two simple rules, both allegedly violated in one action in the news story from Portage.

Not every sin one might commit, of course, rises to the level of such extreme violence; thank God. And not every sin is committed in such seeming black-and-white circumstances. But all sins are, nevertheless, a turning away from God.

And every commandment, from the admonition to love the Lord our God to the reminder not to be covetous, is a signpost to keeping on the right path, or to finding our way back.

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Mass Intentions / Weekly Readings

Mass Intentions

Monday March 8, 2021 Lenten Weekday, Saint John of God, Religious (Purple)

7:00 a.m. Gene Lemanski and Dr. Naira Hemein

Tuesday March 9, 2021 Lenten Weekday, Saint Francis of Rome, Religious (Purple)

7:00 a.m. Larry Yandel and Mary and Frank Fleming

Wednesday March 10, 2021 Lenten Weekday (Purple)

7:00 a.m. Special Intention for Regina Baur and Robert Bidigare

Thursday March 11, 2021 Lenten Weekday (Purple)

7:00 a.m. Danielle Somes and Mary and Stephen Fattore

Friday March 12, 2021 Lenten Weekday (Purple)

7:00 a.m. Marie Champine and Josephine Lucchese

Saturday March 13, 2021 Lenten Weekday (Purple)

4:00 p.m. Bonnie Batche, Victor Quayle, Marian Parker, Virginia Curran, Helen Jara, Marlene Downey Gesmondi, Allen Hayosh and special Intentions for the Thomas Family and the J. Champine Family and Louise Knaus

6:00 p.m. Dorothy Shuder

Sunday March 14, 2021

8:00 a.m. For the Intentions of St. Joan of Arc Parishioners

12:00 p.m. Helen Jara, Lou Mascia, Clara Sugamele, Patty LaPrese, the deceased members of the Giroux and Carroll Families

Weekly Readings

Monday, March 8

2 Kings 5:1-15b
Luke 4:24-30

Tuesday, March 9

Daniel 3:25, 34-43
Matthew 18:21-35

Wednesday, March 10

Deuteronomy 4:1, 5-9
Matthew 5:17-19

Thursday, March 11

Jerimiah 7:23-28
Luke 11:14-23

Friday, March 12

Hosea 14:2-10
Mark 12:28-34

Saturday, March 13

Hosea 6:1-6
Luke 18:9-14

Sunday, March 14

2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23
Ephesians 2:4-10
John 3:14-21



I Am The Resurrection & The Life

"Heavenly Father, welcome home those who you have called from this world and grant peace and consolation to their families."

**Sr. Clement Stine, CSJ
Victor Quayle (Father of Patty Vaughn)**

"I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year: Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown. and he replied: Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way."

~Minnie Louise Haskins



Can Tab Recycling

We are back to recycling can tabs. All proceeds will benefit the Ronald McDonald House Charities.

How you can help: Spread the word! Let your family, friends, co-workers, and classmates know that their small pop tabs, food can tabs all can make a big difference for Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Donations can be dropped off in the buckets at church, brought to the Parish Center, or pick-up may be arranged by calling:

Frank Poeschel at #586-776-8746.





Home to God: I was saddened recently to learn that the priest who had been my spiritual director for my 30-day silent retreat back in 2014, Msgr.

Richard Mahowald, passed into eternal life at the end of last year. He had just celebrated his 90th birthday. I knew Monsignor for just a month, but he really made an impression on me. I liked him a lot. He was a priest for the Diocese of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, a humble and kindly man who had lived a long and colorful priesthood.



During the 30 days, I would encounter Monsignor 3 times a day, once at mass and twice we would meet every day for 30 minutes of spiritual direction. I was initially a little frustrated because all the other retreat spiritual directors would meet once a day for an hour with their directees, and meeting twice split the day. I had taken my mountain bike out to South Dakota with me and liked to head-out in the afternoon (if you've ever been to South Dakota you'll know you often have to go a long way to find a change of scenery. But I had plenty of adventures on my bike that month. Splitting the day made getting a good bike ride more difficult, needing to get back for another meeting, but Monsignor insisted that he didn't want to let his directees get too far off-track, spiritually-speaking, if our prayer was not going well, so he wanted to meet twice a day. It was really a sign of how much he cared and took seriously his role as a spiritual father. In my morning meetings, I would always delay Fr. John, who also had Monsignor as his director for the same retreat. My meeting was 10:30am and poor, patient Fr. John was always sitting waiting for me to finish, as I ran over into his 11am meeting, a smile on his face. He was very gracious!

Part of our daily meetings, and I admitted it to Monsignor, was me just telling him all things that I had no-one else to tell

because I wasn't allowed to speak to anybody else! But he always made me laugh, while at the same time offering great insight and wisdom and some wonderful stories of his life as a priest. As humble a man as Monsignor was, he had a great sense of humor but was a terrible name-dropper! And he had certainly met some big names. He said to me one day, "When I was living in Europe, I held a Thanksgiving dinner one year, and I invited a man by the name of Karol Wotija to dinner. And he came." (He said it like I didn't know who he was talking about!) He continued, well aware of what he was doing, "and there were some bishops and priest there, and they were from Detroit. (He said it like he didn't know where I was from!). He continued, "And they were in charge of the wine. And they were having a great time! And I couldn't help but wonder what Karol, who came from nothing, sitting down there at the end of the table, was thinking about all this." And "Karol" was not the only Pope or Saint Msgr Mahowald had met. He certainly loved his stories. He'd make a point and then pause and look at you with a little jutting-out of the head that came right from the back of his neck, and his eyes would get big and his jaw open, and in that momentary pause he was looking at you and mentally saying, "Huh? What d' you think about that?!"

Monsignor told me one day toward the end of the retreat that he did his 30-day silent retreat back in 1978. While we were at a comfortable retreat house with 400 open acres of farmland, he was at a monastery for his. And whereas we had two "days of repose" during the month, in which we could break the silence and leave to go get dinner as a group, his retreat had been silent straight-through. He said on the 28th day, one of the monks came to see him and said "Father, you have to come watch the TV!" He said he really didn't want to break his retreat. Maybe it was a trap! But the monk insisted, so he went with him. On TV was live coverage of the election of Pope John Paul II, the man who years before had accepted his Thanksgiving dinner invitation.

There was a look on the face of many of my classmates near the end of the retreat that told me they were very ready to be done. I had experienced that in the first week, but had found my rhythm and by the end I was actually quite content to stay longer. I told Monsignor, "I could do another 30 days." His response was, "Well, just become a Carthusian!" The

Carthusian order is a religious community that lives in almost total silence. It is an austere contemplative order founded by St. Bruno in the 11th Century. I replied, "I said 30 days, not 30 years!" There was a movie a number of years ago called "Into Great Silence" about the life of the Carthusians - a 3-hour movie with almost no sound other than the repeating refrain of a wobbling dinner plate as it's being washed and left to dry. Someone loaned me the movie when I first talked about a religious calling. That, I assured him, after watching the movie, was NOT my vocation!

But I did learn to appreciate the silence, that July in South Dakota. Time to think, time to pray, time to take-in the amazing pilgrimage to the Holy Land we had all just returned from a month earlier. Time to hear God, without all the static of a busy world. Time to see God in the wonder of His beautiful Creation. One day my story for Monsignor was of my bike ride the previous afternoon. I had been riding down an anonymous long dirt road when a hawk flew over - not unusual. But what stopped me in my tracks was something I knew happened, but had never seen before. A red-winged blackbird was flying "chase plane" to the hawk and I watched it land on the back of the hawk and stand there, hitching a ride. I encountered these blackbirds daily on my bike. They are highly territorial and will literally fly at you and attack you to protect "their corner." And they make a pest of themselves to the hawks to warn them off too. God's Creation is just amazing to witness at work. I love it.

Not everyone has the luxury of being able to take 30 days to immerse themselves in silence and prayer. (Maybe you don't imagine you'd want to! 30 days of silence?!! Some of us thought the same before we went.) But during Lent, can you find 10 minutes each day to be quiet with the Lord? That 10 minutes would pay far more in spiritual dividends. As the weather is, right now, mercifully, a little warmer and milder, maybe a 10-minute walk with Jesus during your lunch-time, to notice and thank God for His Creation and for those who have taught us to listen. "Huh? What did you think about that?!" God bless you Msgr. Mahowald.

You are in my prayers this week.
Fr. Andrew adawson@sjascs.org

An Act of Spiritual Communion

It has long been a Catholic understanding that when circumstances prevent one from receiving Holy Communion, it is possible to make an Act of Spiritual Communion which is a source of grace.

Spiritual Communion means uniting one's self in prayer with Christ's sacrifice and worshipping him in his Body and Blood. The most common reason for making an Act of Spiritual Communion is when a person cannot attend Mass.

Acts of Spiritual Communion increase our desire to receive sacramental Communion and help us avoid the sins that would make us unable to receive Holy Communion worthily.

A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

*My Jesus, I believe that you are present
in the Most Holy Sacrament.*

I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally,

Come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there

And unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen.



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 14 B

Reading 1 – 2 Chronicles

In those days, all the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all the abominations of the nations and polluting the LORD's temple which he had consecrated in Jerusalem.

Early and often did the LORD, the God of their fathers, send his messengers to them, for he had compassion on his people and his dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised his warnings, and scoffed at his prophets, until the anger of the LORD against his people was so inflamed that there was no remedy. Their enemies burnt the house of God, tore down the walls of Jerusalem, set all its palaces afire, and destroyed all its precious objects. Those who escaped the sword were carried captive to Babylon, where they became servants of the king of the Chaldeans and his sons until the kingdom of the Persians came to power. All this was to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah: "Until the land has retrieved its lost sabbaths, during all the time it lies waste it shall have rest while seventy years are fulfilled."

In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD inspired King Cyrus of Persia to issue this proclamation throughout his kingdom, both by word of mouth and in writing: "Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD, the God of heaven, has given to me, and he has also charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever, therefore, among you belongs to any part of his people let him go up, and may his God be with him!"

Responsorial Psalm 137

R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

By the streams of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. On the aspens of that land we hung up our harps.

R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

For there our captors asked of us the lyrics of our songs, and our despoilers urged us to be joyous: "Sing for us the songs of Zion!"

R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

How could we sing a song of the LORD in a foreign land? If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand be forgotten!

R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

May my tongue cleave to my palate if I remember you not, if I place not Jerusalem ahead of my joy.

R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

Reading 2 – Ephesians

Brothers and sisters: God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ — by grace you have been saved — raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.

Gospel – John

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

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GOSPEL MEDITATION

ENCOURAGE DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

Many prefer a “create as you go” approach to life where laws and protocols primarily exist to secure and protect liberties rather than dictate and outline proper and right behavior. There are no real benchmarks for acceptable ethical and moral behavior, with a “you can’t tell me what to do” attitude prevailing. Parents are even limited in what they can request of their children, and dealing with threatening behaviors, especially from adults, are a challenge as well. Acceptable and expected conduct seems to amount to safeguarding each other’s space rather than increasing awareness of necessary relationships that require a more refined and higher response.

We have lost our axis to the world of “anything goes” and no longer see the Ten Commandments as practical and wise guideposts to effective living. We live on “relativism island” where only a possible suggestion to “love and do not harm” may be the only standard able to be preached. While Jesus most certainly emphasized love above anything else, it was never about warm fuzzy feelings or halfhearted humanitarian efforts. The love of which Jesus spoke establishes an intimate connection with God, neighbor, self, and creation. Because this love, who is God Himself, is at the foundational core of our lives, it demands actions and attitudes that serve to build up, increase, and

free up those relationships. Love requires proper conduct. Preserving and enhancing these love centered relationships is at the heart of the Ten Commandments (and the Beatitudes) and the reason for Jesus’ display of anger in the temple.

The Ten Commandments can save the world from turmoil and conflict by instilling basic moral and relational principles within us. They also hold a healthy sense of sin in balance and always remind us of our relationship with God and the freedom God offers. Our faith preserves these jewels of truth that we often look beyond, dismiss altogether, or seek to remove from public view. Human beings can be so arrogant at times.

Our Lenten journey, especially when embarked upon with sincerity and resolve, can restore all of our essential relationships. When we get absorbed in life’s preoccupations and demands, things can quickly get distorted and we can find ourselves way off track. In short, we find ourselves in sin. Humanity is losing a sense of both grace and sin. We need both to understand what is real and true. Until we do, the oppressive systems and ideologies that hurt so many will never change. We will never change. We are grateful for those courageous souls who willingly embrace the conversion and hard work Lent demands and stand against antiquated systems and ideologies. They give us hope that all is not lost.



Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area. - Jn 2:13b-15a

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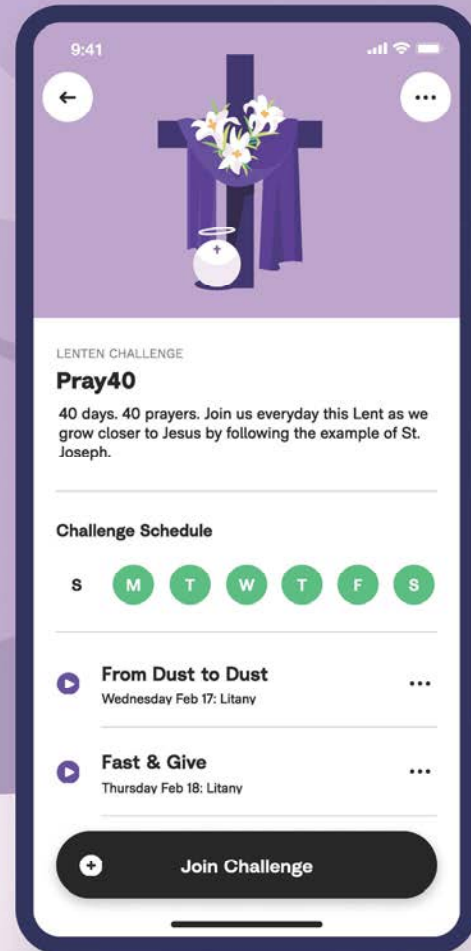
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March 7, 2021

Written by
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DISCIPLE

Third Sunday of Lent

Ex 20:1-17 or Ex 20:1-3, 7-8, 12-17 | 1 Cor 1:22-25 | Jn 2:13-25

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

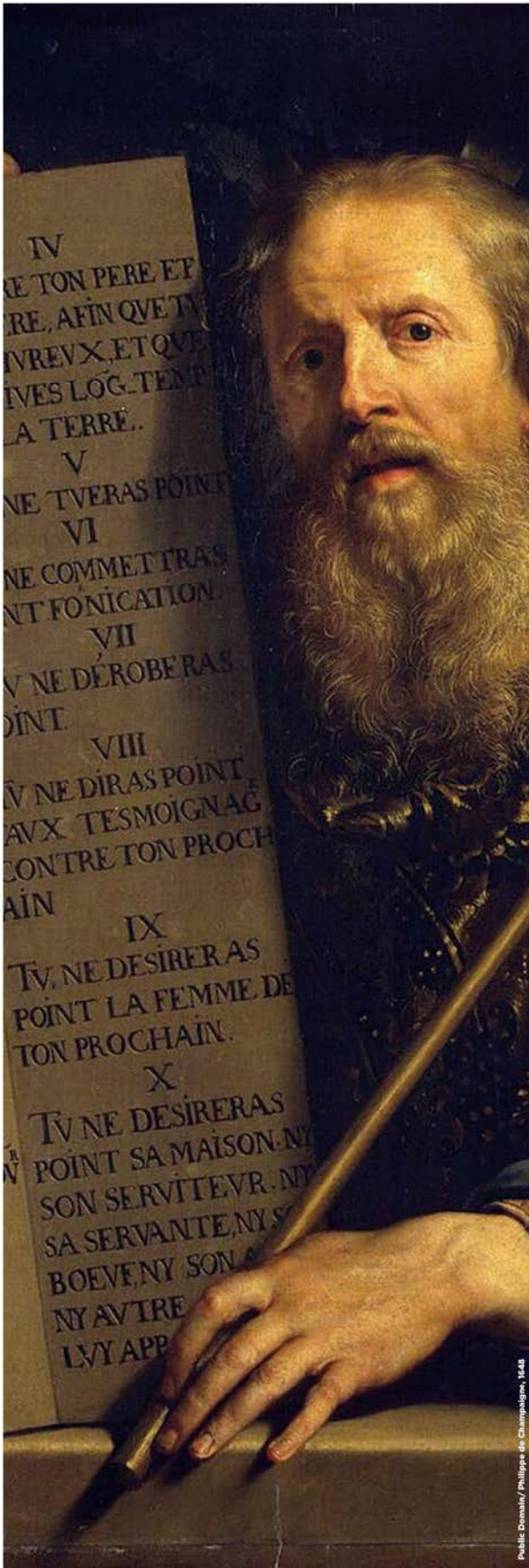
We have rules in our house. Every family does. “No back talk. Do your chores. Bedtime. Curfews. Respect one another. Be kind.” Rules bring order out of chaos, forge a shared identity, and set standards to which everyone is held. Not surprisingly, life in God’s family has rules, too. Hence the Ten Commandments, which we hear today. They begin with these words: “I, the Lord, am your God.” If we miss that line, we miss the point of the rules – of the law. God’s law is about God’s love. Through his laws, God taught the Israelites a new way to live based on God’s values: humility, justice, love, sacrifice, simplicity, kindness, and mercy – values they rarely saw when enslaved in Egypt. This Lent, we give thanks to God for the law of love and we pray to grow in this love, and be strengthened in virtue.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Today’s Gospel reminds me of the time my older son helped his younger brother understand the rules of a game we were playing. He did so by showing his own cards, which meant he would lose that round. While not done under the same circumstances, or with the same anger with which Jesus cleansed the temple, my older son did what he did for the same reason and with the same effect: love. When Jesus cleansed the temple, he did so out of love: love for God the Father, and love for those being exploited by the marketers. We have an opportunity this Lent to witness to this same love of Christ by putting the needs of others first. Sure, our kids demand our time, energy, and resources. Our spouses and parents sometimes do, too. To follow Christ means to choose to sacrifice for others with love, not simply because it has to be done. Christ infused the world with love through his sacrifice. We have the opportunity to be Christ today when we make our sacrifices out of love.

ACTION Read the Ten Commandments this week and imagine God giving you all the wisdom you could ever want in those rules. Think about the chaos those rules have protected you from in your life. Imagine telling your loved ones how to find happiness by following the way God guarantees will lead to joy. (Read John 3:16)



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Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Lent (B)
March 7, 2021

Wisdom, Strength

By Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

The ceiling painting by Laureti, *The Triumph of Religion*, is found in the Constantine Room of the Vatican papal apartments. It is a symbolic celebration of the triumph of Christianity over paganism, set in a classical architectural space. The remains of a crushed Hermes lie broken in pieces on the floor, while a crucifix of Jesus Christ sits upon the pedestal.

It is fitting that this painting crowns the papal hall honoring Constantine, the first Roman emperor to leave paganism and be baptized a Christian. Constantine had four basilicas built in Rome—including St. Peter's—and gave

Christians freedom of religion in the Roman Empire.

The message is clear. The Romans worshiped statues of gods who were mere human creations and projections. In the statue's place is not just another statue but a crucifix that reminds us of a reality, a historical event. God himself became human in Jesus Christ and showed his divine strength by emptying himself and being crushed by our sins in order to forgive and win back a rebellious humanity.

This show of godly power through weakness is foolishness to the Gentiles and inconceivable to the Jews. Yet this humility and love is the wisdom that confounds and the strength that saves.

Religion isn't a business or human invention for personal enthronement. Jesus overturns this idea like he overturns the moneychangers' tables. Worship of God is all about accepting his initiative and humbly responding in the obedience of faith and the purifying joy of love. +

***Religion isn't a business
or human invention for
personal enthronement.***

Sunday Readings

**Exodus 20:1–17 or
Exodus 20:1–3, 7–8, 12–17**

You shall not have other gods beside me.

1 Corinthians 1:22–25

Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified.

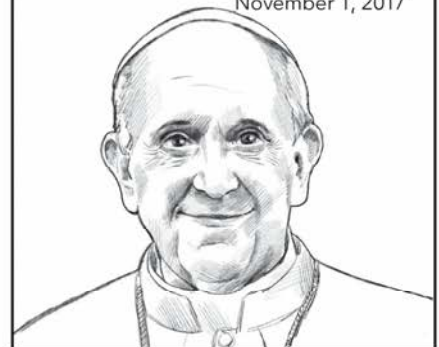
John 2:13–25

[Jesus said,] "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace."

A Word from Pope Francis

I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with enthusiasm, sustained by almsgiving, fasting, and prayer. If, at times, the flame of charity seems to die in our own hearts, know that this is never the case in the heart of God! He constantly gives us a chance to begin loving anew.

—Lenten message for 2018,
November 1, 2017



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- How does my faith foster humility in me?
- Are my Lenten practices helping me to be purified from sin?

God Behind the Scenes

By Kathleen M. Basi

Several times in the past few years, I've made major life shifts on the spur of the moment. For instance, starting a weight-loss program for myself, or potty training a toddler. One day, without any discussion or preparation, I said, "That's it, I'm doing this now." And I did.

As time passes, though, I'm beginning to realize that these seemingly abrupt direction changes aren't as sudden as they appear on the surface. Always, in the weeks or months before the turning point, there's an undercurrent of awareness buried deep down, where I'm not always cognizant of it. Quiet questions form in unguarded moments but go unanswered. Solutions whisper, but I resist. Around and around it goes, until the day when, without realizing it, I reach a fork in the road and—as Yogi Berra advised—take it.

Weight loss and toilet training may seem like trivial examples, but I think they illustrate a deeper truth. God is always working in the background, like a computer processor that whirs and whirs. You don't always know what it's doing. Actually, you hardly ever know what it's doing! But you understand it's doing something that keeps the whole system running, and when it needs your attention it's going to throw a pop-up in your face, and you'll be forced to respond.



Likewise, God will eventually punch through our distractions and nudge us in a new direction.

That's not to say we can just sit by complacently and wait for God to beat through the tangled web of busyness we build around our consciousness. It's our job to clear the roadblocks; to navigate the "undercurrent" until it melds into smoother waters. We have to nurture the spiritual life and be open to God's guidance—on his timeline, not ours. The most important insights and decisions in life cannot be rushed. God works through processes, and there just aren't any shortcuts.

Embrace these times, even when they make life uncomfortable. There's a purity of mind in discerning and pursuing new directions that automatically brings our focus toward God. In these moments, when we become aware of that deep, quiet current running beneath the clutter and static of life, we can feel—really feel and not just know—that God abides within us. And that is a great blessing. +

Often, seemingly abrupt decisions aren't as sudden as they appear.

PRAYER

Lord, you instill within me your power and wisdom. Help me to discern more clearly how to use your power and wisdom in service of my brothers and sisters.

—From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day of Lent and Easter*, Rev. Warren J. Savage and Mary Ann McSweeney

WEEKDAY READINGS

March 8–13

Monday, Lenten Weekday:
2 Kgs 5:1–15ab / Lk 4:24–30
Tuesday, Lenten Weekday:
Dn 3:25, 34–43 / Mt 18:21–35
Wednesday, Lenten Weekday:
Dt 4:1, 5–9 / Mt 5:17–19

Thursday, Lenten Weekday:
Jer 7:23–28 / Lk 11:14–23
Friday, Lenten Weekday:
Hos 14:2–10 / Mk 12:28–34
Saturday, Lenten Weekday:
Hos 6:1–6 / Lk 18:9–14

Bringing Home
the Word 
March 7, 2021

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