

# **The Fourth Sunday of Lent**

## **March 10, 2024**



**Transfiguration of the Lord Parish**

**Saint Mary 14 Park Street + Sacred Heart 58 Church Street + Saint Mark 105 Stanley Street  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts**

## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish

Rev. David A. Costa, Pastor  
Rev. Deacon Joseph E. Regali, Parish Deacon  
Sister Kathleen A. Corrigan, S.U.S.C., Pastoral Associate  
Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. & Rev. R. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., Weekend Assistants  
Mrs. Martha O'Neill, Administrative Assistant  
Mrs. Jean Howard, Business Manager  
Mrs. Elaine Corvese, Director of Religious Education  
Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal, Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School  
Mr. Adam Turcotte, Director of Music  
Mr. Miguel Peixoto, Buildings Supervisor  
Mr. James Kitsock, Building Maintenance

### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School

Mrs. Lisa Serak, Principal  
57 Richards Avenue,  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760  
(508) 695-3072 FAX (508) 695-9074  
[smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org](mailto:smsh@smsh.dfrcs.org) [www.smshschool.com](http://www.smshschool.com)

### Saint Mary Cemetery

Mr. Jarrod Ward, Superintendent  
Towne Street  
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760  
(508) 695-1173 or email [ripco@comcast.net](mailto:ripco@comcast.net)

### Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saint Mary Church • Saturday 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

### Sacrament of Baptism

Baptisms are celebrated on designated Sunday afternoons at 12:30 pm, with a limit of four families at each baptism. Please contact the office at [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com) for more information and available dates/locations.

### Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage is usually celebrated on Saturday morning and afternoon. Please contact the Parish Office at least nine months in advance to begin preparation.

### Sacrament of the Sick

Pastoral care to those in need of the sacrament of the sick is arranged through the parish office. Please call to arrange a visit.

### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered on the first Friday of each month in **Saint Mark Church** beginning at 9:00 am and ending at 6:00 pm with Benediction.

### Parish Offering

If you are attending in person, you may drop your contribution in the collection basket. You are welcome to mail your budget envelope to the parish office, at 14 Park Street, North Attleborough, MA 02760. You may also leave your envelope in the drop box located outside the parish office door, to the right on the landing. Or you can use this link for online giving:  
<https://chms.ecatholic.com/guest/mafrdiocese/31>  
Thank you for your ongoing support!

### Weekend Masses

Saturday 4:00 pm **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Sunday 9:30 am **Saint Mary Church**  
Sunday 11:00 am **Sacred Heart Church**

### Weekday Masses

Monday 8:00 am **Saint Mark Church**  
Tuesday 4:30 pm **Saint Mark Church**  
Wednesday 6:30 pm **Saint Mark Church (Lent)**  
Thursday 8:00 am Communion Service  
**Saint Mark Church**

**Links to:** Transfiguration of the Lord Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/Transfiguration-of-the-Lord-Parish-North-Attleborough-106529317647894/>

YouTube at <https://tinyurl.com/ysfaxaty>

### Parish Office

14 Park Street, North Attleborough,  
Massachusetts 02760  
Parish e-mail • [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com)  
Parish website • [www.saintmaryna.com](http://www.saintmaryna.com)  
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248  
Faith Formation • [TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com](mailto:TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com)  
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823  
Music Ministry • [transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com](mailto:transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com)



### *March 9/10 – The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent*

<b><u>Saturday</u></b>	<b><u>March 9 – Vigil (St. Mary)</u></b>
4:00 pm	Deceased Members of the Hastings Family
<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>March 10 (St. Mark)</u></b>
8:00 am	Paul Charpentier
<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>March 10 (St. Mary)</u></b>
9:30 am	Rita DiRenzo
	Bobby Delaney, Jr.
	Americo “Rico” Sbardella
<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>March 10 (Sacred Heart)</u></b>
11:00 am	People of the Parish

+++++

<b><u>Monday</u></b>	<b><u>March 11 (St. Mark)</u></b>
8:00 am	People of the Parish
<b><u>Tuesday</u></b>	<b><u>March 12 (St. Mark)</u></b>
4:30 pm	People of the Parish
<b><u>Wednesday</u></b>	<b><u>March 13 (St. Mark)</u></b>
6:30 pm	Harold Edgar
<b><u>Thursday</u></b>	<b><u>March 14 (St. Mark)</u></b>
8:00 am	People of the Parish

+++++

### *March 16/17 – The 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent*

<b><u>Saturday</u></b>	<b><u>March 16 – Vigil (St. Mary)</u></b>
4:00 pm	John D. Bradley, Jr.
	Charles Baillargeon
<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>March 17 (St. Mark)</u></b>
8:00 am	People of the Parish
<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>March 17 (St. Mary)</u></b>
9:30 am	William & Margaret Spadoni
	Deceased Members of the Berger Family
<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b><u>March 17 (Sacred Heart)</u></b>
11:00 am	Rev. Michael W. MacEwen

+++++

### **Parish Contributions**

Collection for March 2/3: \$12,673.59

+++++

### **Stations of the Cross**



*Join us for the Stations of the Cross*

Join us this **Friday evening, March 15**, for Stations of the Cross. Fr. Costa will lead this week's devotions which will include Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Our prayer will begin at 7:00 p.m. at Saint Mary Church. All are invited!

### **Lent 2024**

#### **Lenten Bible Study:**

This Wednesday evening, **March 13**, Fr. Costa will present part 2 of a two-part study of Saint Mark's gospel and in particular, the Passion account found therein. The Passion of Saint Mark's gospel is the gospel we will participate in at our Palm Sunday Masses this year. Having a knowledge and understanding of this Marcan text can greatly assist as we enter into the most holy days of our Church year.

Fr. Dave's presentation will be held upstairs at Saint Mark Church beginning at 7:00 p.m. this Wednesday. Reminder: Mass will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m. The presentation should last approximately one hour. The text of the gospel will be provided, so you need not bring your Bible. Even if you were not able to join us last Wednesday for part 1, please feel free to participate this week. Review materials will be available.

#### **Our Lenten Charity: The Holy Union Sisters in Tanzania:**

In addition to staffing schools, the center for disabled children, and the house of formation, the Holy Union Sisters in Tanzania also offer a ministry of presence and support to a wide variety of people. The Sisters help university and college students from poor families with bridging loans and fees so they may remain in school. They reach out to the local primary schools, overpopulated and under-resourced, where the younger Sisters work as volunteers, helping to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio. They sometimes provide books and teaching aids, as well as laptop computers and printers. Sports equipment and musical instruments have also been provided by the Sisters. Holy Union works in solidarity and friendship with their Muslim colleagues and neighbors, promoting understanding and unity.

The Sisters also help those in need with food, rent and basic requirements. They assist the elderly with health care and reach out to those elders who are caring for orphaned or abandoned children. Single mothers with dependent children are assisted with school uniforms and school supplies. The Sisters are also helping women with small grants or loans to generate income for their families. In Tanzania there are no unemployment benefits, little or no old age pension, and little to no health insurance. The Sisters, through their generous benefactors in England and Ireland, and now us in North Attleborough, assist with life's emergencies and struggles, bringing joy and hope into the lives of individuals and families. As the Sisters say in native Swahili:

**Mungu awabaiki sana...** may God bless you abundantly!





## Women's Guild Evening of Reflection



All women of the parish are invited to join us this **Tuesday evening, March 12**, for an evening of reflection led by Sister Kathee. The theme of the evening is: "Women of the Cross." You need not be a member of the Guild to participate. The evening begins at **6:00 p.m.** in the **Saint Mary Parish Hall** (with easy access by the front ramp entrance.) Join us and bring a friend!

### Easter Flowers

We are gratefully accepting memorial donations for Easter flowers. All who use our budget envelope system should have received a designated envelope for your donation. If you do not use the budget system, please place your memorial donation in a separate envelope along with the names you would like inscribed in our Easter Memorial Book. Please print these names legibly. Your assistance is appreciated.



### The Sacred Triduum



The most sacred days of our entire Church year, the Sacred Triduum will soon be upon us. Plan now to join us for these inspiring and beautiful liturgies. The Sacred Triduum will be celebrated on March 28, 29, and 30/31. Thursday, Friday and Saturday liturgies will be held at Saint Mary Church. Easter Sunday Masses will follow our usual Sunday schedule of times and places.

#### Holy Thursday, March 28:

Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:00 p.m.  
Prayer before the Repository, St. Mary Church Hall  
Night Prayer will be prayed at 11:00 p.m., St. Mary Church Hall.

#### Good Friday, March 29:

Stations of the Cross at 3:00 p.m.  
Service of the Lord's Passion at 7:00 p.m.

#### Holy Saturday, March 30:

Easter Vigil at 7:00 p.m.

NOTE: there is no 4:00 p.m. Mass on Saturday, March 30

#### Easter Sunday, March 31:

Masses at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

## Irish Night: Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>



Get ready to immerse yourself in the spirit of the Emerald Isle at our much-anticipated Irish Night Event! It's time to don your best green attire and embrace the warmth of Irish hospitality, complete with a scrumptious corned beef dinner, live music entertainment, and exciting raffles that could bring a touch of luck your way. The Irish Night event will be held on **Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>** starting at **6:30 p.m.** in **St. Mary Church Hall**. Tickets cost **\$20.00** per person and will be sold at all weekend Masses on the weekend of March 9<sup>th</sup>, or by calling Karen Smith at (508) 212-7377. Those of you who have attended this wonderful event in the past can attest to how much was had by all. We hope you can join us!

### 2024 Mass Intention Book

The 2024 Mass Intention Book is open. The current Mass schedule provides for fewer opportunities for parishioners to remember their beloved dead at weekend Masses. For this reason, we will schedule, when necessary, multiple intentions for weekend Masses. There is no limit on the number of daily Mass intentions. Please contact the office via email, phone, or in writing with your requests.



### Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



#### **Tuesday, March 12, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)**

Tuesday, March 19, 2024: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)

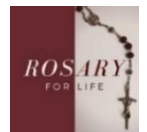
Tuesday, March 26, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)

Tuesday, April 2, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)

Tuesday, April 9, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)

### Rosary for Life

The Respect Life Committee of Transfiguration of the Lord Parish is pleased to announce that we will lead a Rosary for Life at 4:00 pm, prior to the 4:30 pm daily Mass in **Saint Mark Church** on the *first, second, fourth, and fifth Tuesday* of each month. The communal Rosary is also livestreamed for any participants who wish to join us remotely.



### Lenten Reconciliation Opportunities

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) is celebrated every Saturday afternoon from 3:00 to 3:30 p.m. at Saint Mary Church. We will be scheduling an evening later in Lent where a number of priests will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As soon as this date is set we will post information in the parish bulletin and on our social media sites.

# SAINTS

## SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

Apply now to be a SSMH scientist!



An important component of our science program is utilizing inquiry as a tool to understand scientific concepts. Pictured here are some Grade 7 students creating an edible cell. This is just one of the ways our seasoned middle school science teacher, Mrs. Burns, enhances how the Saints learn each and every day. We invite you to discover more about our school's strong curriculum by visiting our website at: [www.ssmhschool.com](http://www.ssmhschool.com). Accepting applications for the 2024-2025 academic year.

+++++

### SSMH Forms Committed Student-Athletes:



Here at Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School we recognize the influential role Saints athletics plays in our community. In a continuing effort to foster the philosophy of commitment and hard work of student-athletes, we invited Mr. Stephen McGonigle, teacher and coach at Bishop Stang High School to speak to our Saints. His inspiring message included the importance of the spiritual and academic formation that they are receiving at SSMH and how they can serve strong positive leaders. His presentation and others like his highlight how teamwork, commitment, perseverance, selflessness, Saints pride, and a sense of shared values are what SSMH is all about. Our Saints Athletes stay true to these ideals in sports and in life. Shine on SSMH, Go, Saints!

+++++

### Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School Alumni:

Did you, your child, grandchild or other relative graduate from St. Mary's School, Sacred Heart School or Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School? If so, please go to the Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School website [www.ssmhschool.com](http://www.ssmhschool.com) and under the Alumni tab fill in the form on reconnect with SSMH. We appreciate your support in this important part of our school's history!

## Faith Formation Program 2023-2024

Director of Religious Education ~ Mrs. Elaine Corvese  
508-695-3823; [transfigurationreled@gmail.com](mailto:transfigurationreled@gmail.com)

### Faith Formation Office hours:

**Monday – Thursday: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

### Class Schedule:

March 10<sup>th</sup>: **Grades 1 & 2**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

March 10<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 9**, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

March 11<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 6**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

March 17<sup>th</sup>: **Grades 3 & 4**, 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.  
(following the 8:00 a.m. Mass)

March 18<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 7**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

March 25<sup>th</sup>: **Grade 8**, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Please see website: [saintmaryna.com](http://saintmaryna.com) for the 2023-2024 calendar for all grades. Faith Formation classes are held at Saint Mark Church hall in Attleboro Falls.

### Date of Confirmation:



CONFIRMATION

**April 7, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mary Church**

### Dates of First Communion:



HOLY EUCHARIST

**May 4, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church**

**May 4, 2024: 1:00 p.m. Saint Mary Church**

**May 11, 2024: 10:00 a.m. Saint Mary Church**

**Cancellation of classes:** In the event of cancellation of classes due to inclement weather, the Faith Formation Office will notify parents/guardians by email and the cancellation notice will also be on the answering machine of the Faith Formation office at 508-695-3823. Please note: if the North Attleboro School Department cancels school, Faith Formation classes are automatically canceled.

### From the Diocesan Office of Child Protection:

Did you know... All members of the clergy, Directors of Religious Education and teachers in our schools are Mandated Reporters in Massachusetts and required by law to report any suspected child abuse. Many children will not tell anyone they are being abused. Because the Diocese believes in our moral obligation to protect children, we extend the safe environment training to all who minister, work or volunteer. Watch for signs of abuse and, if you are concerned about a child, share those concerns with a mandated reporter at your parish or school. Let us all be a voice for children who may not be able to speak for themselves.



## Transfiguration of the Lord Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society

Inspired by Gospel values, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic lay organization, leads women and men to join to grow spiritually by offering person-to-person service to those who are in need or are suffering, in the tradition of its founder, Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, and patron, St. Vincent de Paul. The Society meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month in the parish hall in Saint Mary Church. Please join us!

### Call for Assistance:

If you need assistance, please call the help line for our parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. They can offer information about the types of assistance available. Please call 508-212-4755 for help or more information.

### Job Fair: March 14, 2024

St. Vincent de Paul Reentry Program, Bristol County Sheriff's Office, Attleboro Chamber of Commerce, + City of Attleboro Mayor's Office

## CORI-FRIENDLY JOB FAIR

OPEN TO ALL, INCLUDING JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS

**DATE:** Thursday, March 14, 2024

**TIME:** 1-3pm

**PLACE:** Bristol Community College  
11 Field Road, Attleboro, MA 02703



QUESTIONS ABOUT ATTENDING AS A JOB SEEKER OR PARTICIPATING EMPLOYER?

Sean Costello, Director  
SVdP Attleboro District Immersion Reentry Program  
scostello3086@comcast.net  
(508)369-8627

### PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS:



### SPONSORS:



## Baptismal Preparation Classes Have Resumed



Parents requesting the baptism of their child should be registered members of the parish who attend weekend Mass here at Transfiguration of the Lord Parish on a weekly basis. Please pick up and complete one of the Parish Census forms if you have not already registered with the parish. If this is your first Baptism here at Transfiguration Parish, parents are asked to attend a brief baptismal preparation session. The next session will be held on Sunday, **April 14 at 12:30 pm** in the Sacred Heart Meeting Room. Advanced registration is required. Please call Martha at the parish office or email at [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com) for more information.

## Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

### RESPECT LIFE

### Monthly Meeting:

The next meeting of the Respect Life Group will take place on Thursday, **April 4, 2024 at 6:30 pm in Sacred Heart Church's Library**. We hope to see you there!



## Knights of Columbus®

### Knights of Columbus Monthly Meeting:

Council #330 of the Knights of Columbus has been serving the Catholic Community of North Attleborough for 125 years. The Knights meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm, in the St. Mary Church Hall. Please drop by on meeting nights if you'd like to learn more about the Knights. Council #330 is committed to assisting local charities that align with the values of our Faith such as the Parish, the Parish school, and Abundant Hope. Contact Jim Schromm with any questions: [jim.schromm@verizon.net](mailto:jim.schromm@verizon.net).

### Knights of Columbus Fundraiser:

Knights of Columbus Assembly 398 will earn **20%** of all qualifying sales from orders placed on **Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 PM – 9:00 PM** at the local **Papa Gino's/D'Angelo** locations specified below:

**Papa Gino's:** Attleboro, South Attleboro, Foxboro (2), Franklin, Raynham, Taunton (2), & Plainville

**D'Angelo:** Raynham, Taunton, & Plainville

This offer is valid for all Dine-In, Carry Out, Online, & Delivery orders! For **walk-in or phone orders**, mention this fundraiser when you place your order for the organization to get credit for your order. For **online orders**, enter **code 19** at the payment screen and then click redeem. Please note that fundraiser orders are only valid with regular priced menu items and cannot be paired with coupons or deals. Fundraisers are not valid on third party orders.



Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said:

*"Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration with exposition needs a great push. People ask me: 'What will convert America and save the world?' My answer is prayer. What we need is for every parish to come before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in holy hours of prayer."*

Please join us at **Saint Mark church** on Friday, **April 5<sup>th</sup>**, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m. with Benediction. Remember, as we share in the work of Redemption, so will we be rewarded with our own redemption.

For more information call Joanne Regali (508-643-3821) or Arlene Hall (508-801-2243). Please leave a message if the call is not answered immediately.

### Friends of SSMH Outing

As announced in our parish bulletin a few weeks back, the Friends of SSMH is offering various one day and multi-day outings. Join us on Wednesday, April 24 for *The Beach Boys Ultimate Tribute* show, at Lake Pearl in Wrentham, MA. Price per person is \$89.00 and includes luncheon, tax and gratuity, and show ticket. Information flyers are available at the doors of the church or you may contact Nancy Chapman or May Courbron at 508-243-2904 or by email: [friendsofsmsh@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsmsh@gmail.com) for more information.

### 2023 Donation Statements Are Now Available

The 2023 year-end tax reports will be available, PER YOUR REQUEST, for those parishioners using the budget envelope system. **Loose checks mailed or placed in the collection are not recorded by the budget company.** Please contact Martha in the office at [stmaryna@noozi.com](mailto:stmaryna@noozi.com) or call 508-695-6161 and leave a message with your name and address if you would like your statement. Contribution letters will be mailed. Thank you for your support of our parish community.



### Part-Time Position Available



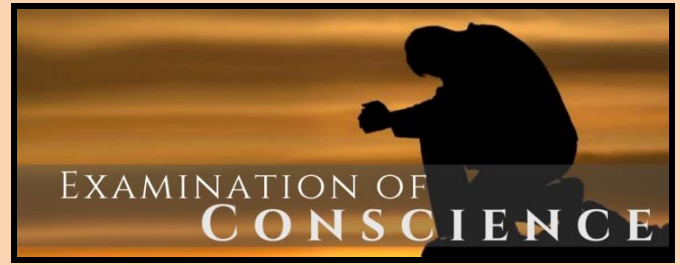
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Parish in Seekonk is offering a part-time position (19 hours a week) for someone to oversee the workings of St. Stephen's Cemetery, the bookkeeping for Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Parish, and other odds and ends of parish life. The office hours are Mon-Thurs 9:00-1:00pm and Fridays 9:00-12:00pm. The position requires the skillsets of being well organized, having an understanding of QuickBooks, a warm personality, and the ability to share the Faith with others. If you are interested in this position, please email a resume to Fr. Kevin Cook at [frkcook@diocese-fr.org](mailto:frkcook@diocese-fr.org).

### Catholic Men's Conference: March 16, 2024

The Catholic Men's Conference returns to Worcester's DCU Center in 2024 with a program entitled: **'You Shall Know the Lord.'** Men (*of all ages, including teens and college students*) are invited to this important conference, scheduled to take place at Worcester's DCU Center on **Saturday, March 16, 2024**. Adult tickets are \$50 until March 4, 2024; afterwards \$60. Student tickets are always \$30. Tickets will not be available at the door this year because of advance planning for the luncheon. Visit the conference website at <http://www.catholicmenworc.org> for information and to purchase tickets online. Come and hear dynamic talks from Catholic leaders: Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, James Wahlberg, Michael Nicholson, Bishop Robert McManus and Msgr. Thomas Sullivan. Adoration available all day. Closing Mass at 4:00 pm. For further information you can email [cathmenworc@gmail.com](mailto:cathmenworc@gmail.com).



### An Examination of Conscience



An Examination of Conscience is a way to think, pray, and prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Here are some specific questions to think about and perhaps share in confession:

#### Selfish

Have I ignored people around me and only cared about myself? Have I chosen what I wanted even if it hurt others?

#### Dishonest

Have I been untruthful with myself or others? Have I lied to anyone on purpose? Have I taken something that was not rightfully mine?

#### Greedy

Have I been unwilling to share what I have with other people, especially those in need - such as my time, my money, my love? Have I only wanted more for me?

#### Disrespectful

Have I been disrespectful to myself, God, and others, especially to my parents and family members, friends, people in authority, people who are different than me?

#### Uncaring

Have I been too busy to care when people needed me - when they needed someone to listen to them, care about them, share with them? Have I been insensitive to people around me?

#### Jealous

Have I been jealous of other people or their possessions and not appreciated the gifts I have in my own life?

#### Hurtful

Have I put people down and made fun of others just to feel better about myself? Have I hurt others physically or through violence in my words?

#### Untrustworthy

Have I broken trust with anyone, and not done what I said I would? Have I shared something that was told to me in confidence? Have I gossiped?

#### Unforgiving

Have I been unforgiving with people who have hurt me? Have I prevented reconciliation with others or held a grudge?

#### Apathetic

Have I been apathetic in my relationship with God and with others? Has my attitude been negative?



# *The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent - March 10, 2024*



Excerpts from the *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, second typical edition* © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. Used with permission. All rights reserved. No portion of this text may be reproduced by any means without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

## *First Reading*

### **A reading from the second Book of 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!"

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

## *Responsorial Psalm*

### **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!**



## *Second Reading*

### **A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the 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.

The word of the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*



## Gospel Acclamation

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

*God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so everyone who believes in him might have eternal life.*

**R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!**

## Gospel

The Lord be with you.

**And with your spirit.**

† A reading from the holy Gospel according to John  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

***Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.***



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

### Salvation:

Salvation is all but unimaginable. It is unconditional, unfettered, no-strings-attached love. It is a love no one can earn. It is a boon, freely given, reserved for lovers. It is powerful, powerful enough to bring life out of death.

### Comment:

The reading from 2 Chronicles highlights the faithfulness of God, even though God's people were unfaithful. In faithful love, God sent messengers and prophets to warn Israel, to call the people to faithfulness, and to love God in return. These overtures were spurned. Because of Israel's infidelity and lack of love, Jerusalem was destroyed, the people lost their home, and the nation was taken into captivity. Still, God remains faithful and loving. In their suffering, the people recognize this. God's anger abates, and God extends salvation from a totally unexpected source—through Cyrus, a foreign conqueror. The promise of a new Jerusalem and a rebuilt temple is given. Salvation comes from the loving hand of God and the people are brought home safe.

In his Letter to the Ephesians, Paul reemphasizes God's faithfulness and abiding love. Even in the face of our sins, God loves us and rescues us through the suffering and death of Christ. Paul stresses that we are alive because of Christ; salvation is sure if we have faith in him. John's Gospel rounds out this Sunday's treatise on the salvation that comes to us through the love of God. The evangelist makes it abundantly clear that it is through the Son of God, the firstfruit of God's love, that the light of salvation is now ours. At the same time, John warns us that we must not flee the light, but embrace it. God's love seeks the response of acting in the light and living in truth. Only by such living do we recognize the salvation that God extends to us in our lives, in the sacraments, in the Church. Only then will we come to live secure in God's saving light, safe at home at last.

### Reflection:

Some dramatists deal with the meaning of life by giving us a glimpse of it from the side of death. In the classic play by Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*, dead characters speak to one another about the meaning of life. When a young woman who has died in childbirth joins their number and voices her desire to return to visit the living, her deceased companions counsel her not to do so. In spite of their advice, the young woman returns to the scene of her life. She discovers that the living really do not prize the gifts of life at all. She returns to her companions in death, who do understand and appreciate life's worth.

We need not succumb to physical death to recognize the meaning and import of life. Rather, as today's readings remind us, we need but die to old ways of living and accept the gift of salvation that God offers us. This means recognizing that salvation—new life—is not something that comes after this life or something that is divorced or isolated from life. Rather, it is intrinsically linked to life, to real, everyday, even humdrum life. Salvation does not happen somewhere “beyond” the pale of physical life or apart from the mundane. It happens here and now. That's the whole meaning of the Incarnation, isn't it? All things are God-touched, packed with salvation, gifts waiting for our acceptance, our treasuring, our enjoyment, and our sharing with others.

If we believe God loves us and loves us first, what a difference that “truth” will make in our lives and what “light” that truth will bring to our lives! The God we dare to believe in loves us no matter what. The God we dare to believe in rends the heavens with a divine and loving invitation to come home. All we need do is respond to the call and come live with God in Christ, safe at home forever.

*Copyright © 2002, World Library Publications. All rights reserved.*

# Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, March 10, 2024



Invest time each week to  
expand your vocabulary and  
deepen your faith.

10 March 2024

## WORD OF THE WEEK

### Joy ˈjɔɪ

A fruit or mark of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the faithful. While pleasure comes through the senses and happiness from human interaction, Christian **joy** is experienced in loving God and neighbor.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-joy>

### CONTEXT

**Joy** is a net of love by which we catch souls.  
—Saint Teresa of Calcutta

**Joy**, with peace, is the sister of charity. Serve the Lord with laughter.  
—Saint Pio of Pietrelcina

The gospel is a proclamation of **joy**. Ideologies don't make people smile, but the gospel is a smile. It makes you smile because it touches your soul with the Good News.  
—Pope Francis

### WHY IT MATTERS

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen once divided the world into those who have found God and those who are still hungering, thirsting, and seeking. Religious practices in themselves may or may not bring a person to genuine holiness. But the life that exhibits true **joy** proves to be radiant with the life of God.

From *Gaudium et spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: "The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and of civilization, the center of the human race, the **joy** of every heart and the answer to all its yearnings."

### RELATED WORDS

Rejoice | Alleluia | Fruits of the Spirit

## QUESTION OF THE WEEK

### Will my faith make me happy?

The biblical idea of happiness is linked to *beatitude* (Latin for "bliss"). Jesus offers beatitudes in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's gospel. Often the primary word of each beatitude is translated as *blessed*. A more literal rendering might be the cry, "Happy you!" who are just, pure of heart, merciful, a peacemaker, and so on. God is the source of happiness, therefore doing as God does brings bliss.

So, the short answer to the question is, yes, living according to God's will makes you happy. It's the only thing, in fact, that does; or as Saint Thomas Aquinas declared, "God alone satisfies." Saint Paul lists **joy** as one of nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. Saint Francis de Sales went so far as to warn against giving in to excessive sadness as it's a counter-witness to the **joy** that comes in the life of faith.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-happy>

## REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, LAETARE SUNDAY (MARCH 10)

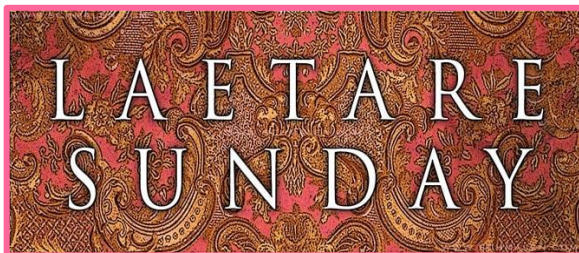
### Rejoice and be glad

Most of us aren't crazy about being told to "cheer up." Yet today is called Laetare ("rejoice") Sunday because even though it's Lent, the church urges us to cheer up in the words of Isaiah 66:10: "Rejoice with Jerusalem all you who love her." We may feel affection for the memory of biblical Jerusalem or concern for the current sorrows of the city. But it's the heavenly city, where justice and peace reign, that gives us reason to rejoice.

READINGS: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23; Ephesians 2:4-10; John 3:14-21 (32 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/031024-YearB.cfm>). "Whoever lives the truth comes to the light."

### FAITH IN ACTION

Remember our **joy** and hope lies in the land where Christ rules.



©2024 TrueQuest Communications. All rights reserved. Noncommercial reprints permitted with the following credit: *Reprinted with permission from TakeFiveForFaith.com*. Scripture citations from the New American Bible Revised Edition. Sign up to receive free weekly email at [TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe](http://TakeFiveForFaith.com/subscribe). To receive Take Five Weekly in advance, subscribe to [PreparetheWord.com](http://PreparetheWord.com).