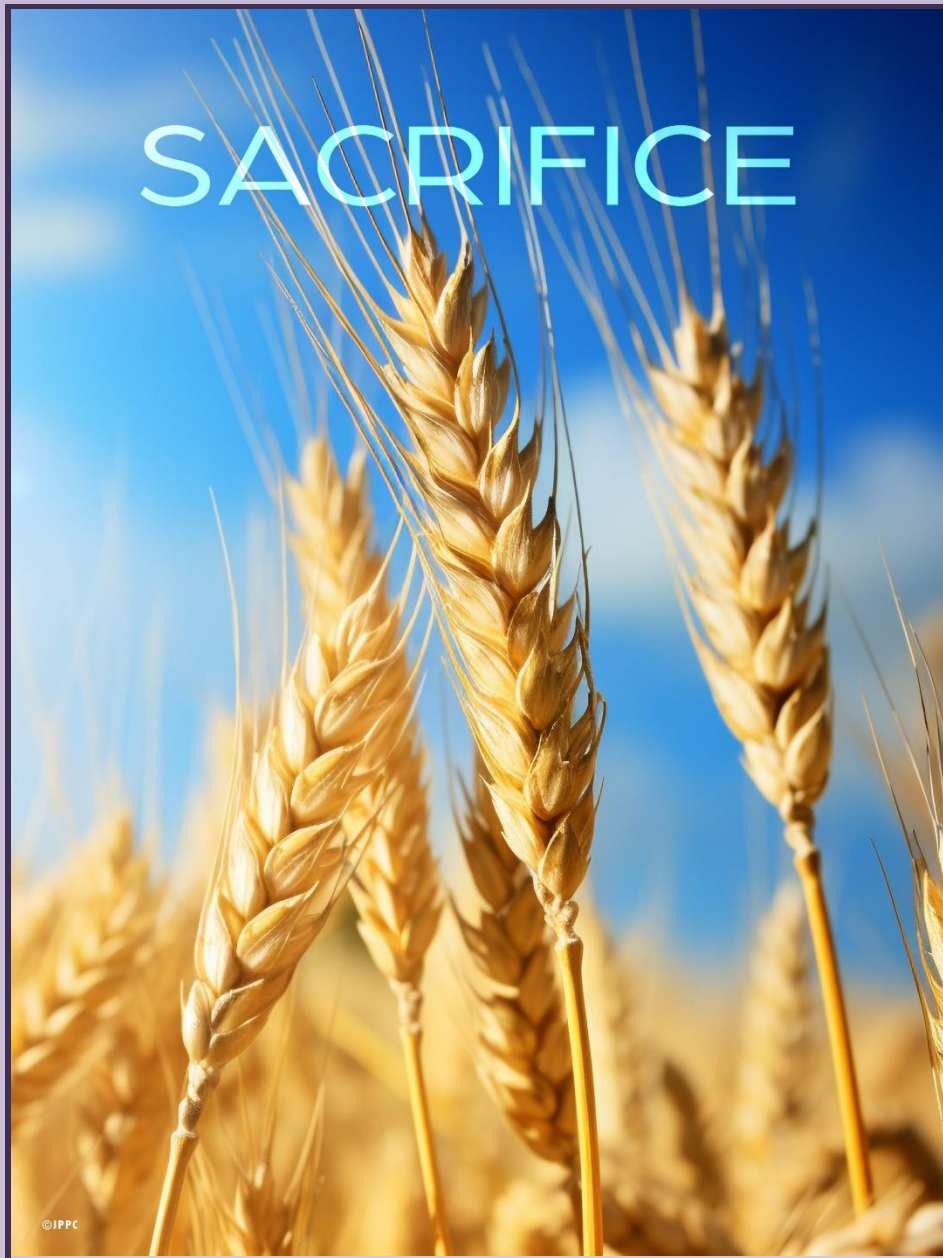


The Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 17, 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 www.smshschool.com

Saint Mary Cemetery

Mr. Jarrod Ward, Superintendent
Towne Street
North Attleborough, Massachusetts 02760
(508) 695-1173 or email 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 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
Parish website • www.saintmaryna.com
Phone 508-695-6161 Fax 508-695-5248
Faith Formation • TransfigurationRelEd@gmail.com
Faith Formation • 508-695-3823
Music Ministry • transfiguration.na.music@gmail.com



March 16/17 – The 5th Sunday of Lent

Saturday

4:00 pm

March 16 – Vigil (St. Mary)

John D. Bradley, Jr.

Charles Baillargeon

Sunday

8:00 am

March 17 (St. Mark)

People of the Parish

Sunday

9:30 am

March 17 (St. Mary)

William & Margaret Spadoni

Deceased Members of the

Berger Family

Sunday

11:00 am

March 17 (Sacred Heart)

Rev. Michael W. MacEwen

+++++

Monday

8:00 am

March 18 (St. Mark)

People of the Parish

Tuesday

4:30 pm

March 19 (St. Mark)

Manuel & Maria Pereira

Wednesday

6:30 pm

March 20 (St. Mark)

People of the Parish

Thursday

8:00 am

March 21 (St. Mark)

People of the Parish

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March 23/24 – Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Saturday

4:00 pm

March 23 – Vigil (St. Mary)

Tony Giglio

George E. Landry

Sunday

8:00 am

March 24 (St. Mark)

Paul J. Briggs, Sr.

Sunday

9:30 am

March 24 (St. Mary)

William, Richard, & Raymond

Vandette, Jr.

Sunday

11:00 am

March 24 (Sacred Heart)

Maura O'Heir Chapman

Jose & Maria Jose Botelho

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Parish Contributions

Collection for March 9/10: \$13,644.60

Catholic Relief Services Collection: \$2,454.00

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Stations of the Cross



Join us this **Friday evening, March 22**, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in Saint Mary Church, for the Stations of the Cross. This week, Sister Kathee will lead the prayer. All are most welcome to join us for this traditional Lenten devotion!

Lent 2024

Lenten Bible Study – third night added!

Fr. Costa will conclude his presentation on the Passion of Jesus as found in Saint Mark's Gospel this Wednesday evening, **March 20**, following the 6:30 p.m. Mass (around 7:00 p.m.). All are invited to attend, even if you were not able to participate last week. The presentation will take place upstairs in Saint Mark Church.

Lenten Charity: Holy Union Sisters in Tanzania, Africa:

Over the past weeks of Lent, we have highlighted the ministry of the Holy Union Sisters in Tanzania. Since 1973, Sisters have served in education (elementary, high school, and college levels), parish ministry, and social services. The Sisters also conduct a center for children with physical disabilities/needs which serves both children and their families. The Tanzanian area of the Holy Union congregation is one of the fastest growing areas for vocations to religious life, with over 16 women in formation.

A few years ago, at the request of the people of the village of Churwi, where the Sisters conduct a school, Holy Union donated a parcel of land near the school for a Health Center. The locals struggled to build a foundation and unfortunately failed to proceed with the building. The Sisters have now stepped in, advocating with both local and regional government agencies to help the people to access their right to a health service.

The population of the village has grown significantly to over seven thousand people, with two thousand primary school children. When Holy Union built the primary school in 2008 (through the generosity of their Irish benefactors), the pupil population was 59! More classrooms and toilets are sorely needed. Despite those physical limitations, the school is one of the most successful primary schools in the entire district. Our generous donations will assist in both the building of the Health Center and the expansion of the school in Churwi.



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.



Tuesday Communal Rosary Schedule



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)

Tuesday, April 16, 2024: Prayer & Pizza (5PM)

Tuesday, April 23, 2024: Rosary for Life (4PM)

Prayer and Pizza

Are you looking for another way to deepen your spirituality? Do you have “knots” in your life that you need help undoing? Please join us on the third Tuesday of each month for “Prayer and Pizza.” Following the 4:30 pm Mass this **Tuesday, March 19**, we together will pray the rosary, which will be offered up to Mary, Undoer of Knots (maryundoerofknots.com). Whether you pray the rosary daily or have never prayed it before, please consider joining us for “Prayer and Pizza.” All are welcome! Please contact Rick Leco (508 930 9264) or Vicky Curran (508 930 3306) with any questions.



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.

At the heart of Christianity is a powerful ethic.

It is what the first followers of Jesus called *the Way*—
a way of living based on
love and compassion,
reconciliation and forgiveness,
inclusion and acceptance,
peace and nonviolence,
generosity and justice.

This ethic is what makes Christianity good.

Without it, Christians can become
rigid and intolerant,
self-righteous and condemning,
hate-filled and violent,
selfish and unjust.

In other words, without the ethic of Jesus,
Christians can represent
the worst humanity has to offer.

— Kurt Struckmeyer, *A Conspiracy of Love*

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.



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.

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 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.



SAINTS

SAINT MARY-SACRED HEART

Flourish with FAITH, Family and Fundamentals!
Saint Mary-Sacred Heart School: Celebrating 100
Years of Catholic Education in North Attleboro



A Catholic education is one of the best gifts you could ever give your children. From preschool through Grade 8, our SMSH students grow in faith, knowledge, character, and grace, thriving in an atmosphere where they feel respected and loved by their teachers and fellow Saints. We invite you to learn more about our school by visiting our website www.smschool.com.

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SMSH Auction 2024:



Three cheers for our successful Saints fundraising event! The funds raised at this year's auction will directly impact our Saints and aid the administration and faculty of SMSH in carrying out the mission entrusted to us.

As we celebrate the 100-year anniversary of Catholic education, we recognize all of the families, parishioners and benefactors of our parish and school that have given so generously of their time, talent and treasure. This legacy of important work is what sustains our school for future generations. We say thank you!!

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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.smschool.com and under the Alumni tab fill in the form on reconnect with SMSH. 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

Faith Formation Office hours:

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

Class Schedule:

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

March 18th: **Grade 7**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

March 25th: **Grade 8**, 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Please see website: 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.

Friends of SMSH Outing

As announced in our parish bulletin a few weeks back, the Friends of SMSH 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 for more information.

Please Remember our Deceased Parishioners:

Mary L. (Tally) Curran
H. William "Bill" Donnelly



*Eternal rest grant unto our beloved dead, O Lord.
Let perpetual light shine upon them.*

Support Janet's Mafia in the Pan Mass Challenge!

Help support the Pan Mass Challenge team of Janet's Mafia and get a chance to win a MacBook Air 13" with M2 Chip. Raffle tickets will be sold after all Masses on the weekend of **April 6/7**. Tickets are **\$10** each, with 100% of sales supporting funding for research to change breast cancer protocols to include brain MRI's as part of the initial screening diagnosis. Janet's Mafia team thanks you for your support. John, Matt and Ed Kent, Michael, Maura, Maddy and James Thursby and Kelsey Rode.



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 2nd 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.

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**, immediately following the 11 am Mass in the Sacred Heart Church Meeting Room. Please use the side door by the elevator to enter the church building. Advanced registration is required. Please call Martha at the parish office or email at stmaryna@noozi.com for more information.

Transfiguration of the Lord Respect Life Group

Abundant Hope Baby Bottle Drive: Thank You!

Thank you for your generous donations totaling **\$5,309.60** received from the Baby Bottle Drive in January. The kindness and generosity of parishioners is very much appreciated. Your contributions will benefit many women, men, and babies in our local community.

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 Council #330

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.

Knights of Columbus Fundraiser:

Knights of Columbus Assembly 398 will earn **20%** of all qualifying sales from orders placed on **Thursday, March 28th 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.

Marriage Congratulations!

Our prayerful congratulations are extended to **Courtney Kipp and Daniel Nardo** who were united in the Sacrament of Marriage, Saturday, March 9th, in Saint Mary Church. *May God's choicest blessings come upon you as you begin to live this sacrament of love.*



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 5th**, 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.

Saint of the Week: Saint Patrick

Legends about Patrick abound; but truth is best served by our seeing two solid qualities in him: He was humble and he was courageous. The determination to accept suffering and success with equal indifference guided the life of God's instrument for winning most of Ireland for Christ.

Details of his life are uncertain. Current research places his dates of birth and death a little later than earlier accounts. Patrick may have been born in Dunbarton, Scotland, Cumberland, England, or in northern Wales. He called himself both a Roman and a Briton. At 16, he and a large number of his father's slaves and vassals were captured by Irish raiders and sold as slaves in Ireland. Forced to work as a shepherd, he suffered greatly from hunger and cold.

After six years Patrick escaped, probably to France, and later returned to Britain at the age of 22. His captivity had meant spiritual conversion. He may have studied at Lerins, off the French coast; he spent years at Auxerre, France, and was consecrated bishop at the age of 43. His great desire was to proclaim the good news to the Irish.

In a dream vision it seemed "all the children of Ireland from their mothers' wombs were stretching out their hands" to him. He understood the vision to be a call to do mission work in pagan Ireland. Despite opposition from those who felt his education had been defective, he was sent to carry out the task. He went to the west and north—where the faith had never been preached—obtained the protection of local kings and made numerous converts.

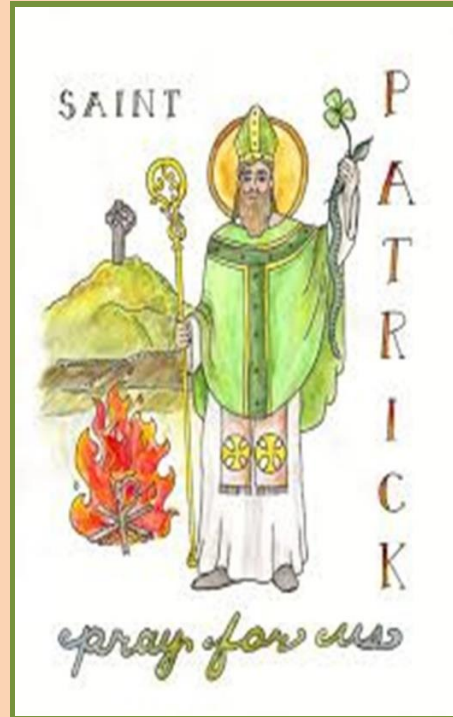
Because of the island's pagan background, Patrick was emphatic in encouraging widows to remain chaste and young women to consecrate their virginity to Christ. He ordained many priests, divided the country into dioceses, held Church councils, founded several monasteries and continually urged his people to greater holiness in Christ.

He suffered much opposition from pagan druids and was criticized in both England and Ireland for the way he conducted his mission. In a relatively short time, the island had experienced deeply the Christian spirit, and was prepared to send out missionaries whose efforts were greatly responsible for Christianizing Europe.

Patrick was a man of action, with little inclination toward learning. He had a rock-like belief in his vocation, in the cause he had espoused. One of the few certainly authentic writings is his Confessio, above all an act of homage to God for having called Patrick, unworthy sinner, to the apostolate. What distinguishes Patrick is the durability of his efforts. When one considers the state of Ireland when he began his mission work, the vast extent of his labors, and how the seeds he planted continued to grow and flourish, one can only admire the kind of man Patrick must have been. The holiness of a person is known only by the fruits of his or her work.



The Feast Day of Saint Patrick: March 17th



"Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me."

-St. Patrick

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.

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.

The 5th Sunday of Lent - March 17, 2024

READINGS FOR THE WEEK



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 Book of the Prophet Jeremiah

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Responsorial Psalm

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me.

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall return to you.

R. Create a clean heart in me, O God.



Second Reading

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

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

*Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord;
and where I am, there also will my servant be.*

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.

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus." Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

"I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it and will glorify it again." The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

TURN MY HEART, O GOD

Marty Haugen

Refrain



Turn* my heart, O God. Turn my heart, O God.



Take my pain and broken-ness; shape my life for



you. Come and turn my heart, O God.

Verse response (3 times)



Come and turn my heart, O God.

* If desired, the first word of this phrase may be changed each time it appears.

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FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Comment:

In today's first reading, Jeremiah, who had seen the fall of Jerusalem, now predicts its rise and the reestablishment of God's people. Those in exile will return home. The uprooted will be replanted. God will make a new covenant written not on tablets of stone, but on hearts of flesh. In other words, the will of God will not be something imposed from without, but something discovered from within. What's so radically "new" about this covenant, then, is its universality. No longer shall God's will and law be the purview of a few "chosen;" it shall be accessible to each and every person—to all people: "All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD."

Likewise, this new covenant will not rely on the fidelity of fickle people but on the constancy of the God of faithfulness. Because of this new covenant, all people will know, from the bottom of their hearts, that God is their God and that they are God's own. This new covenant will be so powerful as to cause the God of all remembrance to forget—to forget the sins and failings of God's people—to forget and to forgive. This new covenant is ours if we but open our hearts. And how do we open our hearts? The author of the letter to the Hebrews gives an answer, but it is not a simple one: obedience, a word most of us do not like to hear. Yet the personification of the new covenant, Jesus Christ, is also the personification of perfect obedience, obedience to death, even to death on a cross. Only the openhearted can afford to obey. Only the openhearted can trust enough to obey. Today's second reading calls us to be openhearted, to trust enough to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Through such obedience, salvation is guaranteed. We claim our share in the benefits of the new covenant by doing as Christ did, that is, by becoming obedient to him, by dying and rising as he did.

The Gospel graphically demonstrates the meaning of God's new covenant and the obedience it requires. Only through obedience will the grain become what it was meant to become. Only through obedience will the covenant flower. John tells us that Jesus himself is the seed who is buried and dies in obedience to God's will. Then, when John relates that Jesus says, "Whoever serves me must follow me ... The Father will honor whoever serves me," the evangelist is telling us that the covenant established by Jesus' death and resurrection is our covenant if we but follow Jesus in obedient service. Here John is inviting us to claim our share in the paschal mystery, the source and proof of the new covenant, and to realize that the salvation wrought by adherence to the covenant is no cheap grace. It will require sacrifice and suffering. Jesus himself will suffer, will give himself over to death as does a grain of wheat, only to rise, blossom, and produce grain on which others may feed. John reminds us that such is the lot of all who, through obedience, claim a share in the covenant—a dying, to be sure, but then a resurrection to a new and more glorious life.

Reflection:

Obedience is not a popular term these days. To our ears, obedience smacks too much of subservience, of giving up and giving over one's free will. And yet, Jesus was clearly the model of obedience. Can we really claim that Jesus is our model, too? We can if, like Jesus, we recognize that God's new covenant with us is one that is heartfelt and heart-written. We can if we realize that God's new covenant with us is one that asks no limits of and places no limits on us. Then, as heart of our hearts, God's new covenant will surely lead us to obedience. It will prompt us to give of ourselves to others, to be "lifted up" for others, even to die for others, all for the sake of the love that exists both between us and God and among all of us whose hearts God has embraced.

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Reflections for the Week beginning Sunday, March 17, 2024



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

17 March 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Veneration \və-nə-'rā- shən\

Respect or awe inspired by the dignity, wisdom, or dedication of a person. Specifically, honor shown to Mary, the apostles, martyrs, saints, and others viewed as faithful witnesses to Christ by telling their stories, celebrating their feast days, praying for their intercession, displaying their likeness, and performing acts of devotions, including visits to shrines and pilgrimages to a holy sites. **Veneration** is distinct from the homage we give to God.

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

CONTEXT

Veneration of the saints, respect mingled with awe of these spiritual giants, is a recognition of the supernatural excellence of those who substituted their own ideas for those of Christ.

—James McGrath

Venerating the memory of the saints, we hope for some part and fellowship with them.

—Pope Paul VI, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*

WHY IT MATTERS

Our present culture too often celebrates the vulgar, the cynical, and the rude. **Veneration** is an exercise in humility as it honors those holy ones whose virtues invite us to reach higher, whose lives are signs of faithfulness and hope.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Christian **veneration** of images is not contrary to the first Commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, whoever **venerates** an image **venerates** the person portrayed in it. . . . Images [lead] us to God incarnate (2132).

RELATED WORDS

Adoration | Hyperdulia | Honor | Worship | Devotion

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What do we know about Saint Joseph?

In terms of facts, almost nothing. Matthew alone highlights Joseph's role. Here we meet Joseph the dreamer who, like his namesake in Genesis, learns of heaven's purposes while he sleeps. The earliest gospel calls the adult Jesus "son of Mary" rather than "son of Joseph." Luke and John prefer to call Jesus "son of Joseph." However, Luke adds, "as was thought." Joseph's last appearance is when Jesus is 12. Jesus is called the carpenter's son, revealing his father's occupation. Tradition says Joseph died when Jesus was 18 with the art of the Eastern Church depicting the death of Joseph.

Matthew describes Joseph as a righteous man who considers divorcing his pregnant betrothed. Then heaven intervenes. Joseph takes Mary home and gives her his full protection. It's an enormous concession to the divine will, especially crediting Mary's perpetual virginity. We always want more from Joseph. He's already given quite a lot.

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

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

SOLEMNITY OF JOSEPH, HUSBAND OF THE VIRGIN MARY
(MARCH 19)

The strong, silent type

Joseph never uttered a word in scripture. Instead, he let his actions speak for what was going on in his heart. By his actions we know that Joseph not only believed in God but listened for God's promptings and was willing to be led—even to some confusing and difficult places.

READINGS: 2 Samuel 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22; Matthew 1:16, 18-21, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a (543 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/031924.cfm>). "When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him."

FAITH IN ACTION

If you have trouble keeping an open mind, look to Saint Joseph for guidance.



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