

WEEK OF MARCH 31, 2019

MONDAY

Is 65:17-21 * Ps 30:2,4-6,11-13 * Jn 4:43-54

TUESDAY

8:00am Word & Communion

Ez 47:1-9,12 * Ps 46:2-3,5-6,8-9 * Jn 5:1-16

WEDNESDAY

7:00pm Mass

Is 49:8-15 * Ps 145:8-9,13-14,17-18 * Jn 5:17-30

THURSDAY

8:00am Mass

Ex 32:7-14 * Ps 106:19-23 * Jn 5:31-47

FRIDAY

7:00pm Stations of the Cross

Wis 2:1,12-22 * Ps 34:17-21,23 * Jn 7:1-2,10,25-30

SATURDAY

4:30pm Mass

Jer 11:18-20 * Ps 7:2-3,9-12 * Jn 7:40-53

SUNDAY

9:30am Mass

Children's Liturgy of the Word & Nursery

Is 43:16-21 * Ps 126:1-6 * Phil 3:8-14 * Jn 8:1-11



PARISH ACTIVITIES

Mon., Apr. 1	6:30pm	Choir Practice
Tues., Apr. 2	10:00am	Scripture Study
	6:30pm	RCIA
Wed., Apr. 3	6:00pm	Soup Supper & Mass
Thurs., Apr. 4	7:00pm	Baptism Prep II - PC
Sun., Apr. 7	6:30pm	Lent Scripture Sharing

Blood Drive at St. Gabriel - April 30 - 3:00-8:00pm: Blood is a most precious gift that anyone can give another person – the gift of life. A decision to donate blood can save a life or even several lives. Parishioners and community members are encouraged to donate! The donation process takes one hour from start to finish. Appointments are preferred; walk-ins are welcome as well. Scheduling is easy – visit versiti.org/michigan (St. Gabriel Parish event) or call the Parish Office to schedule. If questions, call the Parish Office.

Personnel Needs: The parish is going to have to do some serious searching for next year's staff. The school Principal has indicated he will not be returning. We have announced that one of the combined classrooms will be split into two stand-alone classrooms necessitating an additional Teacher. Connie Kaczynski, our RCIA Coordinator, is going to "retire" from her position. We are also seeking a Pastoral Care Coordinator, a person to devote themselves primarily to visiting the homebound and nursing homes – the Job Description is posted on both the parish and diocesan websites. Pray for successful searches!
Fr. Tom

St. Anthony Cemetery Clean-Up: In preparation for annual clean-up, please remove all decorations by March 31. Items remaining will be removed between April 1-15.

EDUCATION/FORMATION

Family Talk Time Celebrating Sunday for Catholic Families, Sara McGinnis Lee
Have you ever felt lost? Have you ever felt the love of acceptance?

► **Reflecting on the Word:** No matter our sin and no matter how long we have been away from God, our return is celebrated. In this parable, Jesus portrays God as a father who not only waits for the son but runs to meet him. Such is the father's joy that he embraces and kisses his son before receiving an apology. We, too, can always return to God after we have fallen away from the path and neglected our relationship with Him. Our Lord is always waiting for us.

► **Living the Word:** Explain to the family that sometimes we can be physically close to someone but still need to return to them. Ask your family to take time to consider what has been lost in their lives. Perhaps someone has lost joy in simple things. Another person might

have lost the ability to see the gift that even a younger sibling can be. Have a coming-home celebration for these things. Ask your family members to add a physical object to sit near their portrait to symbolize what is making a return in their lives.

► **LENT** Frequently Asked Questions with Joe Paprocki

Joe Paprocki, National Consultant for Faith Formation at Loyola Press, provides simple answers to frequently asked questions about Lent.

Why do we practice prayer, fasting, and almsgiving during Lent?

We call these three practices - prayer, fasting, and giving alms - the Lenten disciplines. You will notice that the word disciple and discipline share the same root from the Latin word "discere," which means to learn. It takes discipline to learn to be a disciple of Christ. And these three Lenten disciplines help us learn how to follow Christ more closely. Prayer opens us up to God. Fasting purifies us. If we can control basic desires like hunger, then we can learn to control stronger desires that pull us away from God. And finally, giving alms allows God's mercy to flow freely through us. We don't give alms to earn grace but in response to God's abundance and merciful grace that we ourselves have received.

Why do we give up things during Lent?

We give things up during Lent as another way of practicing discipline. By exercising self-control, we can free our minds from desires for material possessions and pleasures and focus on the true happiness that can only come from faith and Jesus Christ. So, we give up things that are obviously unhealthy for us, such as smoking or excessive eating and drinking, swearing, and things like that.

We can also give up things that are not bad in and of themselves but that clutter up our lives, such as watching TV, listening to music, shopping, and so on. With less clutter, we can focus on what's really important, our relationship with Jesus.

AUBURN AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

► **AACS School and Office** will be closed for Spring Break April 1-5.

► **AACS Endowment Fund: Help keep Catholic Schools alive for future generations.**

What is it? The Endowment Fund consists of funds invested for our Catholic school through the Catholic Community Foundation of Mid-Michigan. The principal of the fund remains untouched, however, semi-annual interest earned is used to supplement the school's operating income.

How can my gift help? A gift to the AACS Endowment Fund will "last a lifetime." Your gift provides a long-term, perpetual income stream for the school. Uses of the income include tuition assistance, professional development for staff, textbooks and equipment for classrooms.

How can I contribute? We have two funds: (1) general school endowment and (2) the Don and Jean Bouchaert Memorial Scholarship fund (restricted for scholarships). You can make gifts in ways such as cash, memorials, stocks, bonds, real estate and through a trust. Call AACS for more information at 662-6431.

FROM FR. TOM'S DESK 4th Sunday of Lent

Carol Dempsey, Celebration

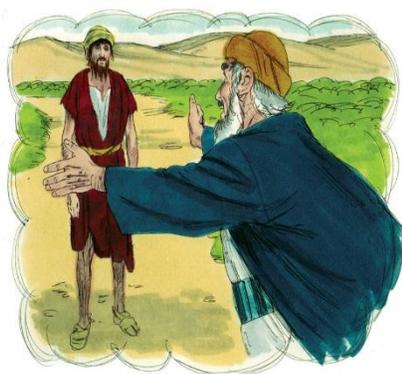
The tone for this Sunday's readings capture the essence of celebration and reconciliation. In the reading from Joshua, we hear that God has freed the Israelites from the reproach of Egypt. Their newfound freedom and their deepening relational experience of their God brings them to the point of celebrating Passover while they are encamped at Gilgal on the plains of Jericho.

The reading from 2 Corinthians celebrates the good news about reconciliation. According to Paul, God is reconciled to the world through Christ. Paul calls the community at Corinth, and by extension, all Christians, all people, to be reconciled to God. Paul envisions a God who is full of compassion, who keeps no tally of transgressions, and who does not hold offenses against those who have done them.

The themes of celebration and reconciliation come together in the parable of the prodigal son heard in this Sunday's Gospel from Luke. Jesus addresses this parable to a group of complaining Pharisees and scribes who take issue with Jesus' interaction with sinners. In this story, we hear about the precocious younger son of an estate owner making bad decisions about the inheritance given to him by his father. He sets off to a distant country but because of poor choices, he becomes destitute. Meanwhile, his older brother remains at home and fares well because of the good choices he made with respect to this inheritance.

As the story progresses, we see the struggles of the younger son, his decision to return home, and his father's warm welcome much to the chagrin of his older brother. Significant is the point that when the younger son does return home, the father's warm embrace allows the wayward son to be honest, open and make amends with his father.

Thus, in all of Sunday's readings, we hear about the graciousness of God, especially embodied in the estate owner. The intersection of celebration and reconciliation leads to deeper and fuller union with the sacred, divine presence many of us call God. This in turn leads to life becoming a new creation.



The Land of Canaan (Jos 5)

Celebration

This story opens with a focus on Joshua whom God addresses directly. This biblical character is the son of Nun, the young apprentice and successor to Moses. In this book that bears his name, he functions as military commander in the "conquest" of Canaan and as administrator of the allotment of that land to the tribes.

The celebration of Passover in Gilgal ties the so-called "conquest" to the deliverance from Egypt while also signaling transition to a new era. The journey out of Egypt begins and ends with Passover. The original Passover marks the end of slavery in Egypt. Here, Joshua's Passover occurs as Israel enters its land.

Only In Christ (2 Cor 5)

Celebration

Paul's address to the community at Corinth begins on a positive note: Whoever is in Christ is a new creation. This idea of the Christian life as a "new creation" is quite common in Paul's writing. This phrase, coupled with the thought that the old things have passed away and new things are coming, has a twofold purpose. First, by using these ideas, Paul seems keen on moving the Corinthians away from a scale of judgment based on outward appearance. Second, Paul seems to have known that the renewing love of Christ is the only power that can truly restore broken relationships in the church.

Paul presents his readers with several lessons. First, reconciliation is God-given. The reconciliation of which the Gospel speaks is not a human attempt to placate a distant and disaffected God. Reconciliation starts with God, reaching out to the world in the person of Jesus, taking on the flesh of humankind, and entering into all of

humankind's conflicts and pains to the point of even taking on death. Paul reminds his listeners that "all this is from God". Hence, the possibility of living a new life and entering a new creation starts with God's initiative and involvement.

A Florida Court Sets Atheist Holy Day

In Florida, an atheist created a case against Easter and Passover holy days. He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days. The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood and objected to the ruling saying, "Your Honor, how can you possibly dismiss this case? Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah. Yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays." The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, counselor, is woefully ignorant." The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists." The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fool's Day. Ps 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' Thus, it is the opinion of this court that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned."

You gotta love a judge who knows his scripture!

St. Timothy Catholic Church, The Villages, FL

STEWARDSHIP

Weekly Target: \$10,961.54 * Offering: \$8,147.44
Easter Flowers: \$245.00 * Catholic Relief Service: \$125.00
In Memory of Chris Hunt: \$100.00
In Memory of Bob Soldan: \$300.00

C.S.A. Begins: Last week, the mailing from the diocese arrived at the homes of registered parishioners. You are asked to take some quality time looking over the letters and brochure and make a decision on your level of support for this annual appeal. Once you determine your gift and how you are going to give it (as a donation or pledge), fill out the form and return it to the parish via the collection basket or by mail. Fr. Tom

Children's Good Deeds: My Good Deed was...

...helped my Mom by doing chores. ...helped a friend.
 ...helped with laundry. ...giving someone my candy.

THE PARISH IN THE COMMUNITY

- ▶ **K of C Fish Fry and Bake Sale:** April 5, 2:30-7:00pm. Take-out only (no buffet) – can be eaten on site. Cost \$10
- ▶ **The Saginaw Catholic Men's Conference** Sat., April 6, 7:30am to 3:00pm at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Saginaw. The conference will feature national speaker Fr. Donald Calloway. Register at www.eventbrite.com or in person. Visit www.thecatholicmen.com or email thecatholicmensaginaw@gmail.com. Sponsored by the Catholic Men's Fellowship of Saginaw. Cost \$30
- ▶ **Poland Tour/Pilgrimage 2019:** The annual trip to Poland sponsored by the Tri-City Polish Heritage Society will be July 18-30. Itinerary may be viewed at www.tricitypolishheritage.org. For more information, contact Deacon Stanley Kuczynski at 989-397-7370 or stankucz@aol.com.

