



ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

www.stromuald.org

dear Padre

Parish Office:

Phone: 756-2356

Fax: 756-2099

Hours: Monday - Friday

8:00am - Noon, 1:00 - 3:00pm

Email: stromuald@bbtel.com

Pastoral Staff:

Pastor, Father Brian Johnson

Email: Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org

Deacon, Tony Anthony

Deacon, Mike Wiedemer

Administrative Asst, Jane Haynes

CRE: Adult, Rosa Hockenberry

CRE: RCIA, Lyvenia Anthony

CRE: 7-12, Gayle Poole

CRE: K-6, Kim Brumfield

Pastoral Council:

Dana Bland, Harry Mattingly,

Janet Bland, David Morton

Christi Brooks, Kevin Oelze

Chris Brumfield, Don Payne,

Jerry Dowell, Gail Pollock

Betty Heavrin, Pam Pollock

St. Romuald

Interparochial School:

Phone: 756-5504

Website:

www.stromualdschool.org

Principal, Rob Cox

School Board

Representatives:

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

Is it ever OK to use "God" and "damn" together?

When we pray "hallowed be thy name" in the Lord's Prayer, we give God the reverence he is due. Because the Lord's name is holy, we mustn't abuse it. The Second Commandment tells us not to "take the name of the Lord...in vain" (see Exodus 20:7). With our tongue, "we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. This need not be so..." (James 3:9-10).

What happens, when our reverence is contradicted by cursing? For some, cursing is a cathartic response to pain or anger. Those who view it as a form of stress management or as a substitute for physical aggression may contend that condemning in this context is neither literal nor deliberate. If God knows our hearts, that our misuse of his name is insincere, what's the harm?

"A sharp tongue is the only edge[d] tool that grows keener with constant use," wrote Washington Irving. In other words, if we constantly and carelessly misuse God's name, we may stop feeling sorry that it offends him. That irreverent attitude is more offensive—and more dangerous—than the vocabulary. Scripture warns, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue; those who choose one shall eat its fruit" (Proverbs 18: 21).

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR.sundaybulletin@liguori.org

February 19, 2017 - Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Masses for the Week

February 20th—26th

Tues	1:00 pm	William Robert Henning (Extended Care)
Wed	5:00 pm	Mary Jean Hudson (DW)
Thurs	9:30 am	John Roberts (JP) (Medco)
Fri	9:00 am	John Mudd
Sat	5:00 pm	Fred & Jean Askins (JM)
Sun	7:00 am	Harold Beard
	10:00 am	Roy H. Bennett (MB)

CONFESSIONS

Wednesday 4:00-5:00pm

Saturdays 4:00 pm

Readings for the Week

Sunday: Lv 19:1-2, 17-18/Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13/1 Cor 3:16-23/Mt 5:38-48

Monday: Sir 1:1-10/Ps 93:1-2, 5/Mk 9:14-29

Tuesday: Sir 2:1-11/Ps 37:3-4, 18-19, 27-28, 39-40/Mk 9:30-37

Wednesday: 1 Pt 5:1-4/Ps 23:1-3a, 4-6/Mt 16:13-19

Thursday: Sir 5:1-8/Ps 1:1-4, 6/Mk 9:41-50

Friday: Sir 6:5-17/Ps 119:12, 16, 18, 27, 34-35/Mk 10:1-12

Saturday: Sir 17:1-15/Ps 103:13-18/Mk 10:13-16

Next Sunday: Is 49:14-15/Ps 62:2-3, 6-9/1 Cor 4:1-5/Mt 6:24-34

Liturgical Publications Inc

Stewardship of Finance

Last Sunday's Collection

Sunday Collection	\$7,206.50
Building Fund	\$70.00
Children	\$6.60
Loose change for the Poor.....	\$44.37

St. Romuald Parish Financial Summary

July-December, 2016

Total Income	\$320,300
Total Expenses	\$288,000
	\$ 32,300

Thank you for your financial stewardship!



© J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.

February 25th & 26th

	Eucharistic Ministers	Lectors	Ushers	Servers	Rosary Leaders	Music Ministers
5:00 pm	Amy Flood Millie Whittler	Melissa Oelze Jenny Pile	C-Corey Masterson* C-Pat O'Reilly S-Danny O'Reilly S-Carroll Whitfill	Claire Flood Cameron Geeding Caleb Masterson	Minnie Nimmo	Shannon
7:00 am	Cathy Lewis Jean Oelze	Denise Smith	C-Blake Flood* C-Byron Flood S-Michael Flood S-Doug Flood	Madison Anthony Darrian Flood	Mike Wiedemer	
10:00 am	Ort Critchelow Sharon Hale Mona Hinton Sally Hinton	Barbara Critchelow Nora Dailey	C-James E Henning* C-Chase Robbins S-Chuck Robbins S-Jim Sills	Parker Davis Tyler Davis	Pat Whitfill	PJ/Choir Cantor Alison
Radio Minister: Donny Wethington Children's Liturgy:						

Words from the Pastor

+JMJ+

"I am going to sue!" "You owe me!" We hear such claims all the time in our society that is lawsuit-happy, and easily offended. SO, many people find Jesus' words today of "Turn the other cheek", "Walk an extra mile" or "Go ahead and give your shirt, too" as too dreamy or fantastic to actually perform. But before we ignore and consider Jesus' words impossible to follow, we may need to remind ourselves why Jesus came to earth at all! **To save us and all: and that includes offering salvation even to one's opponents!** Jesus reveals to us the **'high road to the Kingdom'** of God's way of dealing with enemies! Like the church sign announced, "Get rid of your enemies, by making them friends!" Jesus perfectly embodies such saving goodness. He converts evil in our hearts to good, not by coercion and force, but by the free-will drawing of his own merciful example. A person, who persecutes someone else, deadens a part of his own heart, too. And Jesus wants to soften that hardened heart of the persecutor. Loving one's enemies seeks to convert them to good, and helping them, to help their own selves not disfigure the image of God within their own hearts (they hurt themselves through their mean cruelty dished onto others). Maybe this is not what we think of when we are attacked, but a Christian should ask, "Okay, forget my hurt, but how can I help this opponent turn to God and love good, and stop their childish and cheap power game?" No doubt, this is not a beginner's Christianity. Yet, by the grace of Christ's help we can become instruments of conversion.

Often, divisive commentators like to strike flint to spark controversy. At times, religious people make a lot of noise creating a false opposition between an Old Testament conception of Justice and a New Testament conception of Mercy. But ever since the Fall of humans, God's patient desire has been for we humans to be converted away from evil tendencies to goodness itself (& good acts), not by the terrifying threat of punishing condemnation but by through the faithful offer and receipt of redeeming forgiveness. So even as far back as God providing better clothing to Adam and Eve (Gen 3:21), or God marking Cain for his protection (Gen 4:15), we can see God offering redemptive opportunity to those opposing Him with their sin. God planted redemption and forgiveness all throughout the Old Testament. References abound of God's desire for evil to be converted to good, with the least amount of loss possible. We find an example in Psalm 102:9 saying, "God has not dealt with us as our sins merit..." Throughout the Old Testament we find God's wish that **the good remain saved**, and that **the bad become good!** God spoke to the prophet Ezekiel twice saying that He doesn't want a sinner dead. God wishes that a sinner be alive, converted to good! Reminds me of the story of the little girl who was sad by the sight of a dead bird beside the road and her mom tried to cheer her up, saying "Don't worry, bird will be okay, God will take it" and the girl responded "What does God want with a dead bird?" Of course, the mother meant that God would raise up to new life the bird in the kingdom (Revelation 21:1 "new heaven and new earth"), but the child in her wise heart knew that God doesn't glory in death. So Ezekiel says in 33:11 "I God, take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but **rather that they turn from their ways and live!**" Also, we read in Ezekiel 18:23 "Do I find pleasure in the death of the wicked? Do I not rejoice when they turn from their evil way and live?" Yes, God doesn't want anyone's death. God's will is that all be saved in goodness and live with Him forever!

So we Christians don't have the luxury of avoiding the pain of persecution for the sake of our convenience. We need to seek the conversion of offenders and wrongdoers against us. Remember two of our Catholic Spiritual Works

of Mercy include to "Bear wrongs patiently" and "Forgive offenses willingly". Even though many people disregard Jesus words as too high a bar to rise up to, and say "I am not Jesus!", still serious Christians know that they have signed on to **all of** Christ's life and example. Again, throughout the Old Testament we find examples of 'pre-Christ-like' heroic forgiveness of enemies. Consider that when King Saul pursued David to kill him, David forgave, not retaliating when he was handed the chance- (1 Sam 24:4). Or consider how Joseph forgave his brothers to all but left him for dead (Genesis 45:1) and Esau forgave his brother Jacob for Jacob's thieving treachery against him (Genesis 33:10).

But we can even see the good effort and effect of converting enemies in the Roman Stoic philosophers. Some of them had picked up on the Christian value of overcoming evil with good (maybe influenced by Jesus' words!). Epictetus wrote in his Discourses Book 3 chapter 20 **"Can advantage then be derived from bad things?** Yes, from all; and **from him who abuses you.** The bad man becomes my exerciser before the combat: he exercises me in endurance, in mildness. If a man exercises me in keeping my temper, does he not do good to me? Learn the art of doing good. **Is my neighbor bad? Bad to himself, but good to me: he exercises my good disposition.**" Converting enemies is not for the weak, as it is certainly challenges all the world's ideas about exacting vengeance and feeling glee over the vanquished! But Jesus and His Cross are the Standard for us! "Forgive them as they know not what they do? (Luke 23:34)

I will give Pope Francis the last word on loving enemies into friendship. He said recently in a homily, "Another way of doing justice is not only 'checking' the wrong in a court, but **'overcoming' it in the heart's sanctuary.** Allow the victim to face the culprit directly and invite him or her to conversion, helping the offender to understand their hurtful act, thus appealing to their conscience. **Only by maintaining relationship,** can the offender come to acknowledging their wrong freely, opening themselves to the forgiveness that the injured party is offering them. And this is beautiful. The offended party loves the guilty one and wishes to save the bond that unites them. Do not sever the bond of relationship. For God wants no one's condemnation, but their salvation" (Audience 2-3-2016).

Here are some daily questions to consider in our prayer time!

Sunday: What message did I hear at Mass today? How can I share it with others?

Monday: How is my Monday? Have I started this work-week by asking God to stay in it?

Tuesday: How do I exercise forgiveness? How do I exercise power? Is Jesus my example for motivating others for good? How do I influence others?

Wednesday: Have I made an examination of conscience lately? Who am I offending?

Thursday: How can I serve as a bridge or peacemaker & seek reconciliation among opponents?

Friday: Perform an act of penance for the conversion of opponents or aggressors.

Saturday: Consider coming to Mass early to spend time pre-reading the gospel or pray the rosary for world peace. For what am I going to thank God for at Mass?

Peace and Prayers, Fr Brian Johnson

Marriage Enrichment Retreat: The Family Life Office is pleased to bring Mario Sacasa, to our Diocese for a "Married Couple's Retreat-Living the Gift of Marriage" on March 25-26, 2017 at Lake Barkley Lodge in Cadiz, Kentucky. TO register or for more info, please call the Family Life office 270-683-1545

A Word from Pope Francis:

When asked how he keeps peace amid tension and conflict in the Vatican, the Pope joked, saying "I don't take tranquilizers!" I've learned to take the advice the Italians give me which is to maintain a healthy 'surrender-my-problems-to-God' attitude. The sources of much resistance and conflict in the Vatican are the current pastoral reforms. When I was elected there was much talk of reforms. Everyone wanted them, yet as reforms are moving into place, there arises resistance to any new way. There is corruption in the Vatican but I'm at peace. If a problem comes up, I write it down on a piece of paper and put it underneath a statue of a sleeping St. Joseph I have in my room. Now St Joseph sleeps on a mattress of notes! But with his prayer and intercession, I sleep well: it is the grace of God!"(Homily 2-9 -2017)

Al-Anon Meeting: Mondays 7:00 pm St Romuald Parish Hall. Come find support and understanding to recover a sense of serenity in your life.

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time - February 19

"for the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God, for it is written: God catches the wise in their own ruses"

Through the eyes of our contemporary world, it might seem foolish to live a life of prudence and simplicity, a life of prayer and service. When we realize that our final end is communion with God, living a life of virtue becomes a desire. Let us be foolish in the ways of the world and seek to become wise in the ways of God. If you have thought of serving God as a Catholic Priest, contact the vocations office:

www.owensborovocations.com, 270-683-1545,
jason.mcclure@pastoral.org

Celebration

BIRTHDAYS: Martha Elder, February 26th.

ANNIVERSARY: Mark & Cindy Rhodes, February 22nd, 25 Years.



St. Romuald PTO Fish Fry will begin Friday, February 24th from 4 to 7 p.m. in the school gym. The dinner includes your choice of fried or baked fish, or jumbo or popcorn shrimp, and two sides: baked potato, green beans, baked beans, macaroni and cheese, or seasoned potato wedges with a side of slaw, hush puppies, dessert and drink. Carry out or dine in are available as well as adult and child dinners. Come on out and enjoy delicious food and support the St. Romuald School! Thank you for your continued patronage!

Family Movie Night: We will be showing Disney's "The BFG (Big Friendly Giant)." It is an imaginative story filled with magic, wonder and an unexpected friendship. A young girl is thrown into an enormous adventure when she crosses paths with a mysterious being called the Big Friendly Giant. Join us on Friday, February 24, for a night of family entertainment, grab a drink and some popcorn, bring your friends and join in the fun. As always movie night and snacks are free to all who wish to come.

Coming Soon—The Catholic's Divorce Survival Guide:

A program that brings about great healing and reconciliation for individuals with themselves, their families and the Church. The program is complete with DVD teachings, personal survival guide and Leader Guides (Deacon Mike Wiedemer and Rosa Hockenberry). Sessions will begin on Monday, March 6 from 6 pm to 8 pm, this is a 12 week program open to anyone who needs guidance, whether you've been divorced 1 month or 30 years we are here for you, so come join us.

Matthew 25:36 "I was sick and you cared for me..." Are you being called to be a Communion Minister to the Sick? If you are interested in joining this caring ministry to the sick and administering Holy Communion please contact Deacon Mike 270- 756-0120 or Fr Brian 270-756-2356.

We thank our advertiser for making the bulletin possible! Please take a moment to read the back of the bulletin and note the generous advertisers from the business community who provide our bulletin each week! Each time you visit their business, let them know you are thankful for their support of our parish's weekly bulletin!

Advertiser of the week:
Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance
Brad Norsworthy 270-756-5135

Thank you for supporting St Romuald Church!

THIS WEEK:

Mon	1:00 pm	Blue Army Rosary
	6:00 pm	Jail Ministry Training
	7:00 pm	Al-Anon Meeting
Tues	10:00 am	Scripture Study
	10:00 am	Senior Day
	1:00 pm	Mass (Extended Care)
Wed	8:00 am	Jail Ministry Training
	4:00 pm	Confessions
	5:00 pm	Mass
	6:00 pm	Picnic Meeting
Thur	9:30 am	Mass (Medco)
	6:00 pm	Family Holy Hour
	6:00 pm	Jail Ministry Training
Fri	9:00 am	School Mass
	6:00 pm	Family Movie Night
Sun	8:30 am	K-6 Religious Ed Classes

UPCOMING:

Feb 28 6:00 pm Pastoral Council

Rosary Leaders: We are in need of Rosary Leaders at all the Masses. Please volunteer for this ministry. Call the church office if you would like to volunteer!

Family Information: If you have a new address or phone number, please call the office at 270-756-2356 to update your information. Thank you.

We Pray For:

Gene Aldridge, Paula Anthony, Gene Bennett, Joe Bennett, Juanita Burch, Billy Carwile, Jerry Carwile, Russel Carwile, Cindy Cashen, Martha Cashen, Mallorie Collins, Debbie Critchelow, Roger Dowell, Kenneth Dowell, Treyten Drake, Davye Duggins, Tijuana Duncan, Rhett Flener, Ginny Flood, Pat Flood, Cindy Getz, Bill Greenwood, JoAnn Henning, Lisa Henning, Karen Herbert, Kitty Himmelhaver, Bill Hinton, Doug Hinton, Rugene Hinton, Rick Hurley, Braddock Inman, Mary Lois Irwin, Barbara Jarboe, Virginia Jeffries, Mary Ann Johnson, Tracy King, Patricia Lane, Angie Lawrence, Annette Lucas, Dorothy Manning, Red McClellan, Oleta McDaniel, Bevan Michael Miller, Richard Miller, Blaise Mills, Dorothy Morris, Don O'Donoghue, Eddie O'Donoghue, Joe Oelze, Earl O'Reilly, Libby Osborne, Martha Payne, Peggy Phillips, Doris Priest, Joe Priest, Robert Priest, Sandy Priest, Rita Roach, Shirley Robbins, Suzanne Rose, Jerry Sosh, Virginia Stanford, Lucye Stupak, Pam Sturgeon, Loretta Swink, Adalee Taul, Becky Taul, Beavin & Gina Thornsberry, Paul Tucker, Gil Urban, Buddy Weatherholt, Greg Wethington, Raymond Wethington, Jimmy Whitworth, Mary Rita Whitworth, Carolyn Wilcheck, Kevin Wilcheck, Robert D. Wilson, Anne Wolfe, Sandra Zanone. **Serving in the Armed Forces:** Mandie Adams, Kevin Arnold, Fred Barham, Austin Brown, Timothy Cashen, Cody Garst, Parker Findlay, James Hanor, Jack Hayes, Stevie Higgs, James Howard, Charles Kuhlman, SSgt Bradford O'Reilly, Jordan Pate, Cody Simmons, Liana Tindle, Chase Upchurch, Garrett Wadsworth



Ash Wednesday is coming! The ashes come from *last year's palms!* You can bring in your old palm and place it in the baskets by the church doors to help provide the ashes for this Lent! Many see this as symbolic of spiritual progress, that from last year's failed attempts at spiritual growth in Lent, we can start again and make further progress this year!



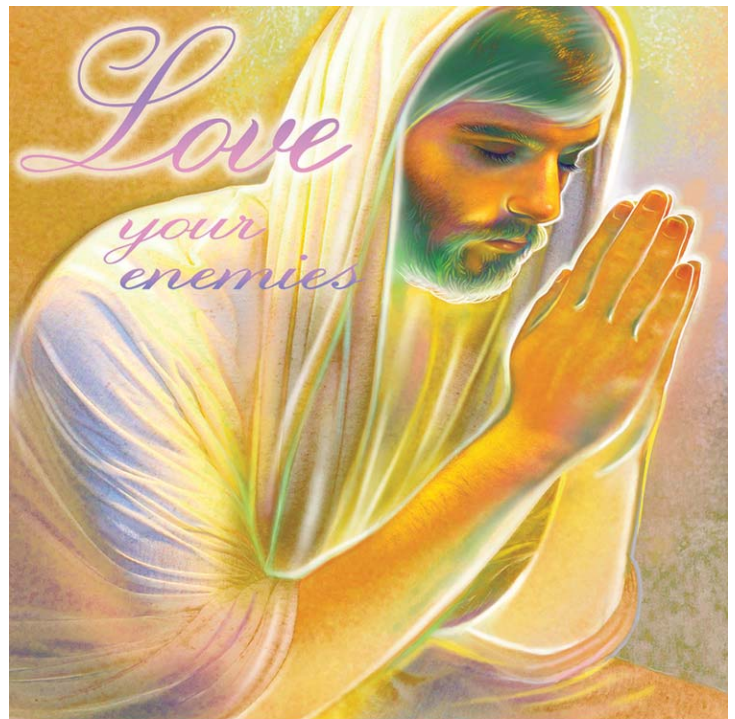
Journey through Lent:

Beginning, Wednesday, March 1, 2017, weekly scripture reflections for Lent will be offered. "Journey through Lent" by Art Zannoni will be offered as a study group during the Lenten season by Father Brian and Deacon Mike. Everyone is encouraged to join in as we journey through Lent every

Wednesday from March 1st through April 12th. Sessions will start at 6:00 pm with light refreshments being served. So make it a family affair during Lent or come with your friends, this is a chance to give of yourself during this 40 days and 40 nights as we walk with our Lord.



Sympathy: Please pray for the repose of the souls of Sonny Burch, Judy Seelye (niece of Hella Ables) and Rod Henning (brother of Robin Alexander). Please keep their families in your prayers.



© J.S. Paluch Co., Inc.



Eucharistic First Friday 24-hour Adoration:

Following the 9:00 am Mass on March 3rd, we begin the 24 hour adoration until Saturday morning mass at 8:00 am. We are blessed with dedicated adorers for each hour, but can use extra people for some hours. Please call Minnie Nimmo 270-617-0297 or Patsy Whitfill 270-617-2557 to volunteer spending an hour in prayer with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Praying the Psalms in the Office-St Meinrad Retreat

Thursday, March 9- Sunday, March 12, 2017. The office is a place for work, but in the liturgy the Office is also a time for prayer. While the office staff/team might or might not pray together, the Psalms offer lots to reflect on in a given day. This retreat will examine some of the psalms to help sustain the work of the office by Fr. Jeremy King, OSB For more info or to register, email mzoeller@saintmeinrad.edu

"I was in prison and you visited Me"

Jesus says in Matthew 25:36. Is Jesus calling you to join in jail ministry? We visit, offer prayer and study the bible every first Sunday and First Thursday at Breckinridge County Detention Center. Pray about joining one of the teams. Please call Deacon Mike at 270-756-0120 with any questions about what is involved in this needed and rewarding ministry.

Pray to end abortion: Join other Catholics and those from other faiths that gather each Saturday at 2nd and Market in Louisville from 7:00-8:00 am (EST) to pray for families entering the abortion clinic. Many children have been saved and mothers spared future grief by this prayer action and support. With God, all things are possible! Archbishop Kurtz is known to show up and pray with everyone too!

Abortion Update: Last week 101 women went into EMW Clinic for abortions at 2nd and Market Street in Louisville. **Please pray to end abortion.**

St Vincent DePaul Report: St Vincent DePaul conducts works of mercy for our community. The Society is thankful for the generosity of parishioners who contribute monthly to their outreach ministry. Their monthly report for January included the following services and help given: Assistance was provided to a total of 23 families amounting to 72 persons (of which 36 were children). The aid totaled just over \$1,803.48 given to help struggling families and individuals. May God continue blessing the generous donors and all of the recipients of their care.

Mass Etiquette Column

Being at Mass on time is important! Try to arrive 5 or 10 minutes before Mass begins, this allows everyone to have a few moments for prayer and to be ready to participate in the Mass. Certainly, some things cannot be helped or foreseen, that result in a late arrival. Such a situation is different from being perpetually late.



Seniors Valentine Celebration!

Come join us in March for the St. Patrick's Day Celebration.





SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2017 SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Right neighborly of you

It's easy to love our neighbors when they are friends or family. It gets a little dicier, however, when our neighbor is particularly unpleasant or has wronged us. Jesus invites us to sidestep the temptation of repaying violence or unpleasantness with more of the same and instead to do the unexpected. He calls us to be creative and take a fresh look at the situation and respond with our best selves. Does this mean we become doormats for another's aggression or irrationality? No, but it does mean being willing to love, trusting that love can make a difference even if it is not returned in kind.

TODAY'S READINGS: Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 3:16-23; Matthew 5:38-48 (79). "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Share the dream

We honor great presidents today who enabled the dream: a land of opportunity for tired, poor, huddled masses "yearning to be free" as the Statue of Liberty proclaims. The United Nations has also designated today as the World Day of Social Justice. Nations must work toward creating a new "economics that respects planetary boundaries," recognizing that our well-being depends "on social relations and fairness." Catholic social teaching calls this goal the "common good." Decide with others in mind.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 1:1-10; Mark 9:14-29 (341). "Jesus said to him, 'If you can!' Everything is possible to one who has faith."

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

MEMORIAL OF PETER DAMIAN, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Sit quietly in God's salon

Peter Damian (1007-72), doctor of reform and renewal, theologian, cardinal, and trusted counselor to popes, was above all a man of prayer. He preferred the hermit's life of austere fasts, detachment, and solitude, in which his cell became the "salon" where he conversed with God. In commenting on Peter Damian, Pope Benedict XVI said: Peter's love of monasticism "is also important for us today, even though we are not monks: To be able to be silent in ourselves to hear the voice of God; to seek a 'salon' where God speaks to us; to learn the Word of God in prayer and meditation is the path for life."

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 2:1-11; Mark 9:30-37 (342). "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all."

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

FEAST OF THE CHAIR OF PETER THE APOSTLE

Thou art Peter

The church celebrates a couple of feast days for buildings, but today is the only one dedicated to a piece of furniture! Of course the "chair" of Peter is a symbol of the pope's authority, much like a "chairperson" has charge of a meeting. Peter and his successors, the popes, ensure the unity of the church. Because the pope is the "rock" of Matthew's gospel, it is he who affirms what is believed. He holds the "keys to the kingdom" in that he teaches the world the way of life that leads to fulfillment.

TODAY'S READINGS: 1 Peter 5:1-4; Matthew 16:13-19 (535). "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church."

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

MEMORIAL OF POLYCARP, BISHOP AND MARTYR

Faith creates the future

A passage from Philippians says that, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (4:13). Faith in God and communion with God in Christ unites us so closely with the Creator that God creates a future to accommodate our faith. God's creative power is without limit and God's love for us is infinite. Trusting in God we can literally accomplish anything. Saint Polycarp (d. 155) was so convinced of the power of faith that he chose death rather than renounce his belief. We make the same choice every day when we opt for hope rather than despair.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 5:1-8; Mark 9:41-50 (344). "Keep salt in yourselves and you will have peace with one another."

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

We're only human

In a 1976 interview that created quite a stir, then-President Jimmy Carter said: "Christ set some almost impossible standards for us." Falling into that category would be the gospel teaching that remarriage after divorce is equivalent to adultery. In an age where divorce and remarriage are quite common, how are we to understand this teaching? Perhaps by referencing a phrase President Carter used just before the above-quoted line: "Because I'm human . . ." Because we are human, our promises—including those exchanged in matrimony—are not always fulfilled. Our imperfect lives are clear evidence of our humanity, just as God's infinite ability to forgive is clear evidence of God's divinity. Forgive someone who has fallen short—and start with yourself!

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 6:5-17; Mark 10:1-12 (345). "Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter: whoever finds one has found a treasure."

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

MEMORIAL OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Don't leave hungry

Some folks will always set out food when you visit their homes no matter what time of day it is. If you're smart you learn to drop by when you're good and hungry! Jesus never let anyone walk away hungry either—even if it meant setting the table for 5,000. His mother foretold that fact in her great song, the Magnificat: "He has filled the hungry with good things." When tired of the junk food the world has to offer, pray Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:47-55) in faith that God will fill you with good things.

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 17:1-15; Mark 10:13-16 (346). "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

©2009 by TrueQuest Communications, L.L.C. PHONE: 800-942-2811; E-MAIL: mail@takefiveforfaith.com; WEBSITE: www.TakeFiveForFaith.com. Licensed for noncommercial use. All rights reserved. Scripture quotes come from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.