



# ST. ROMUALD CATHOLIC CHURCH

394 N HWY 259 · HARDINSBURG KY 40143

[www.stromuald.org](http://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](mailto:stromuald@bbtel.com)

### **Pastoral Staff:**

*Pastor*, Father Brian Johnson

Email: [Brian.Johnson@pastoral.org](mailto: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](http://www.stromualdschool.org)

Principal, Rob Cox

### **School Board**

### **Representatives:**

Jamie Barr, Amy Flood,

Jennifer Payne

### ***What happened to "hellfire and brimstone" preaching, like I remember from parish missions in my younger years?***

Hellfire and brimstone recalls Genesis 19:24: "The Lord rained down sulfur upon Sodom and Gomorrah, fire from the Lord out of heaven." It refers to a harsh preaching style and "doom and gloom" content focused on God's wrath, punishment, and hell. Puritans—those English Calvinists who colonized Massachusetts in the 1600s—adhered strongly to their belief in eternal damnation, innate sin, and diabolical power. Likewise, American Baptists were known to "out-Calvin Calvin" in their preaching.

While Catholics also adhere strongly to our belief in the possibility of eternal damnation, innate sin, and evil forces, we believe in the grace of baptism to remove original sin, the outpouring of God's grace to strengthen our weakness due to original sin, and in the extraordinary power of conversion to prevent everlasting damnation. To that end, parish missions and revivals strengthen the spiritual life of the faithful and welcome lapsed Catholics.

Preaching orders have been conducting missions since their earliest days in America. Saint Alphonsus encouraged his Redemptorist missionaries to be lions in the pulpit and lambs in the confessional. One preacher in the 1850s described the fires of hell with such intensity that the nearby fire engine crew was mistakenly dispatched to the church to extinguish the conflagration. Yet the fire most desirable during a mission is the one in people's hearts for God. "Fear of God" means a dread for God's judgment, but it can also mean a reverential marvel for God. Many preachers today prefer to instill that awe for God's inviting mercy instead of a paralyzing fear of God's anger

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR [sundaybulletin@liguori.org](mailto:sundaybulletin@liguori.org)

April 2, 2017 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

## Masses for the Week

April 3rd - 9th

|              |          |                                  |
|--------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| Tues         | 1:00 pm  | Edwina Neel (Extended Care)      |
| Wed          | 5:00 pm  | Bernard & Teresa Wethington (DW) |
| <b>Thurs</b> | 9:30 am  | Colin Whitfill (Medco)           |
| Fri          | 9:00 am  | Special Intention (WB)           |
| Sat          | 8:00 am  | Casey Mattingly                  |
|              | 5:00 pm  | Fred & Mami Sulpa (MW)           |
| Sun          | 7:00 am  | Sharon Winkler (DS)              |
|              | 10:00 am | Sue Crouch (FR)                  |

### CONFESSIONS

**Wednesday** 4:00-5:00pm

**Saturdays** 4:00 pm

## Readings for the Week

Sunday: Ez 37:12-14/Ps 130:1-8/Rom 8:8-11/Jn 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

Monday: Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62/Ps 23:1-6/Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday: Nm 21:4-9/Ps 102:2-3, 16-21/Jn 8:21-30

Wednesday: Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95/Dn 3:52-56/Jn 8:31-42

Thursday: Gn 17:3-9/Ps 105:4-9/Jn 8:51-59

Friday: Jer 20:10-13/Ps 18:2-7/Jn 10:31-42

Saturday: Ez 37:21-28/Jr 31:10-12abcd, 13/Jn 11:45-56

Next Sunday: Mt 21:1-11/Is 50:4-7/Ps 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24/Phil 2:6-11/Mt 26:14--27:66 or 27:11-54

Liturgical Publications Inc

## Stewardship of Finance

### Last Sunday's Collection

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Sunday Collection .....        | \$7,938.00 |
| Building Fund .....            | \$5.00     |
| Children .....                 | \$7.51     |
| Loose change for the Poor..... | \$45.00    |
| Catholic Relief.....           | \$335.00   |
| St. Vincent de Paul.....       | \$906.00   |

### St. Romuald Parish Financial Summary

July-February, 2016

**Total Income** **\$357,100**

**Total Expenses** **\$321,500**

**\$ 35,600**

**Thank you for your financial stewardship!**



## April 8th & 9th

|  | Eucharistic Ministers   | Lectors                             | Ushers  | Servers                                      | Rosary Leaders    | Music Ministers                 |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 5:00 pm  | Jerry Jarboe<br>Shelly Jefferies                                | Jennifer O'Reilly<br>Jenny Pile     | C-Jim Bland*<br>C-Sam Bland<br>S-Will Bland<br>S-Arnold O'Reilly                    | Emma Foran<br>Cameron Geeding<br>Andrew Tate | Minnie Nimmo      | Shannon                         |
| 7:00 am  | Jean Oelze<br>Cara Wilson                                       | Cathy Lewis                         | C-Chuck Hardesty*<br>C-Greg Wethington<br>S-Scott Wilson<br>S-Tom Winchell          | Gabe Carwile<br>Luke Carwile                 | Margie Wethington |                                 |
| 10:00 am   | Sally Hinton<br>Sandy Horsley<br>Lisa Kennedy<br>Mary Jo Rankin | Dolores Mattingly<br>Joellen McGary | C-Raymond Critchelow*<br>C-Patrick Critchelow<br>S-Chase Robbins<br>S-Chuck Robbins | Mary Grace Mattingly<br>Sydney Mattingly     | Sandy Horsley     | P.J./Choir<br>Cantor:<br>Carlos |
| Radio Minister: Donny Wethington      Children's Liturgy: Jessica Lewis and Andrea Masterson |   |                                     |   |  |                   |                                 |

## **Words from the Pastor**

**+JMJ+**

Lazarus, Come out!, Jesus said! The next words out of the mouth of Jesus were, "Untie him and let him go!" Way more, than just setting Lazarus free, Jesus raised Lazarus from the **dead**. We have been hearing about the gifts of Easter in our three week cycle of readings. The Woman at the Well revealed the **gift of forgiveness** and *having our past reconciled*, the Man born Blind revealed the **gift of enlightenment** and *our eyes being opened to new things* and today Lazarus reveals the **gift of new life, and being set free from death and decay**. 'Set Free!' That is a powerful phrase! Jesus tells us in John 8:32 'the truth will set you free!' We may ask, 'Set free from what?' Each person will provide the answer. Whatever is untrue, whatever is illusory, whatever is 'fake' about us, Jesus removes those burdens that 'take life' from us. What do you need to be set free from? Maybe we need release from a particular sin, a haunting guilt-ridden event from our past, a binding addiction, an abusively possessive relationship, an oppressive judgement imposed upon us by others' opinions, or a consuming bitterness over a past injury we just can't let go of ourselves? Whatever binds us: the Lazarus experience reveals that Jesus can break through and overcome. I notice an increasing progression each week in these stories as Jesus' power of love overcomes greater and greater obstacles. First, his forgiveness and honesty breaks through past guilt and emotional brokenness of the woman in addition to the already *burdensome, hurtful gossip the villagers judged against her*. Then, Jesus' healing and courage breaks through *the physical blindness and social exclusion of the blind man*. Jesus also offered healing to the self-righteous double vision of the Pharisees and crowds. And today, Jesus' almighty creativity, and through his vulnerable sharing of his own heart with Mary, Martha and the others, Jesus breaks through the grip of death and the cynical doubt of the Jewish mob to raise Lazarus to new life. At the same time, He challenged the community to rise out of the past, opening themselves to new life in Him (not the stale, old security of the Pharisaic Law). Jesus' progressive revelation of life with Him leads us to Easter. Jesus invites us to reflect upon **what these Easter gifts can do for us**: forgive, heal and endow with power to begin anew!

*Many details link these three readings together*. I simply point out one of them today: Christ's love 'in extremis'. Christ's **'farthest reach'** of love to overcome the steepest obstacle. St John in the 4th gospel says it this way, "He loved his own in the world and **he loved them to the end**" (13:1). St Paul describes **God's extreme love of us**, and this love's extreme power to overcome all obstacles in Romans 8:38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus." Basically, **nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, except our own refusal of His Offer!** If we accept his offer, no sin, no blindness, no hardness, no

obstacle, not even death is greater than the almighty love of God to reach our lives, forgive us, open us and raise us to new life! These three stories show us the extremes that Jesus overcomes. For example, notice that the woman did not have one broken relationship needing healing, she had six. The man was not just temporarily blind after some accident, or slowly losing his sight. No, he had been blind from birth-never had sight, never had seen anything, not even light. And then Lazarus is not just recently passed, not in some deep comatose state, not sick to death. No, Lazarus is dead-dead, and been in the tomb for over four days! All of these cases are extreme! But, Jesus doesn't flinch; he doesn't back away from complication. He embraces these messy human situations and overcomes them! If we have similar messes, Jesus loves us through them-to the end! While we may be opposed or put down by many things, Jesus overcomes if we let Him! Notice the woman at the well was put down by the prejudice and unfair judgements of her village, the blind man was put out and excommunicated by the Pharisees and shunned by the crowds/family, and Mary & Martha were belittled by the neighbors and ridiculed by the Jews. We didn't hear it today but if you read into John's next chapter, you will hear that Lazarus will even be hunted down to be killed because he testifies to Jesus (see John 12:10-11). But Jesus overcomes, loving us into true lasting friendship and overcoming all sin, personal and social! This Easter Jesus says to us all, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." What do we need to have forgiven in our lives; what do we need to have our eyes opened, to see new, and what do we need to be set free from to rise new with Christ?

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

**Sunday:** Following Mass, did I feel God call me to any different action in my life? Did I hear a call to greater service of Him through some specific act I can share with someone?

**Monday:** As I begin a new work week, what am I taking to the shop or the office in my heart? Do I have a good word or attitude to spread among my co-workers?

**Tuesday:** Jesus expressed his feelings openly and honestly. He both wept and became perturbed in this reading. Am I open and honest with myself about feelings?

**Wednesday:** Martha was outside of the house and Mary was inside. What does that say about each of their personalities? Do we identify more with one or the other?

**Thursday:** Jesus said 'Untie him!' is there anything I need to be untied from (addiction, binding stress or weighty worry) and set free from by Easter?

**Friday:** Perform an act of sacrifice or penance for the good benefit of someone else today.

**Saturday:** For what am I especially thankful for this week? Prepare a list of thanks to share with God in prayer at Mass tonight, and let someone else know of your gratitude.

Peace and Prayers, Fr Brian Johnson

# Picnic News

**Picnic Time is here again, well in 3 months.** We need donations for the beautiful Green "Nothing Runs Like A Deere" Booth, The New Sporting Goods Booth and The Memory Wagon. This year we will be debuting our new booths thanks to T.G.H.

Drop off items at the parish office.  
Thanks and God Bless.

**Family Movie Night:** "Trolls" will be featured on Saturday, April 8, at 6:15 pm in the parish hall. Come join Poppy (Anna Kendrick) and Branch (Justin Timberlake) in a music filled original adventure to save their pals from the giant Bergens. This is a great storyline with great music (original music is by Justin Timberlake), a movie worth seeing and is highly recommended., I don't know who loves "Trolls" more, me or my granddaughter! One of the best movie we've ever shown, so put us on your calendar. Popcorn and drinks for all who come...

**Celebrate Forgiveness!** Confession times available for Lent include, every Saturday 4:00-5:00 pm, every Wednesday 4:00-5:00 pm and every Thursday 6:00-7:00 pm. Also, our Area Communal Penance Services are Tuesday April 4th 6:00 pm St Mary's, McQuady, Wednesday April 5th 6:00 pm St Anthony, Axtel, and Thursday April 6th 6:00 pm St Romuald. The light is on in the confessional, or simply call Fr Brian for another time or appointment. Come celebrate forgiveness!

**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.

The Catholic Church teaches that sexual abuse is a grave moral evil. In addition to reporting incidents of sexual abuse to civil authorities, please contact the Pastoral Assistance Coordinator to report any instance of sexual abuse by a person working, either paid or unpaid, for the Church. Please use the confidential phone line: 270-852-8380.

A full explanation of the diocese's response to sexual abuse concerns can be found in the revised sexual abuse policy, which can be found in the back of church, parish office, religious education classrooms, or school office and also on the diocesan web site ([www.rcdok.org/safe](http://www.rcdok.org/safe)).

## Celebration

**ANNIVERSARY:** Carl & Thelma Jarboe will be celebrating 56 years of marriage on April 8th.

## A Word from Pope Francis:

"Business is obliged to protect peoples' dignity – and those who lay off employees solely for economic gain commit a serious sin. Again, he who shuts factories and closes companies as a result of economic operations and unclear negotiations, depriving men and women from work, commits a very grave sin. Human dignity is manifest in the expression of human labor. Managers are obliged to do all possible so that every man and woman can work and so carry their heads high and look others in the eye with dignity. Never eliminate work only to increase profit. Labor is a personal and human resource. So managers, workers, and businesses are called to cooperate in order to grow an entrepreneurial spirit of subsidiarity, to deal with the ethical challenges of the market and, above all the challenge of creating good employment opportunities."

(Address to Italian Christian Union of Business Executives in 3-2015)

**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!

## FATHER BRIAN'S BIRTHDAY:

The parish will be celebrating Fr. Brian's birthday on Sunday, April 9, 2017, by hosting a potluck lunch following the 10:00 am Mass. The church will provide the meat and drinks. Please join us with your family and bring a covered dish of vegetables, salads and desserts. Let's celebrate!!

## 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:

**Hardinsburg Chiropractic**  
**270-756-1700**

Thank you for supporting St Romuald Church!

## THIS WEEK:

|      |          |                                      |
|------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Mon  | 1:00 pm  | Blue Army Rosary                     |
|      | 7:00 pm  | Al-Anon Meeting                      |
| Tues | 10:00 am | Scripture Study                      |
|      | 1:00 pm  | Mass (Extended Care)                 |
|      | 6:00 pm  | Penance Service (St. Mary, McQuady)  |
| Wed  | 4:00 pm  | Confessions                          |
|      | 5:00 pm  | Mass                                 |
|      | 6:00 pm  | Journey through Lent Study Group     |
|      | 6:00 pm  | Penance Service (St. Anthony, Axtel) |
| Thur | 9:30 am  | Mass (Medco)                         |
|      | 6:00 pm  | Penance Service (St. Romuald)        |
| Fri  | 9:00 am  | Mass                                 |
|      | 10:00 am | 24 Hour Eucharistic Adoration        |
|      | 6:30 pm  | Stations of the Cross                |
| Sat  | 8:00 am  | Mass                                 |
|      | 6:15 pm  | Family Movie Night                   |

## UPCOMING:

|        |          |                                      |
|--------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Apr 9  | 11:30 am | High School Religious Ed Classes     |
| Apr 11 | 6:30 pm  | Chrism Mass (Owensboro Sportscenter) |

## We Pray For:

Gene Aldridge, Paula Anthony, Gene Bennett, Joe Bennett, Juanita Burch, Billy Carwile, Jerry Carwile, Russel Carwile, Mallorie Collins, Debbie Critchelow, Jim Curtis, **Rick Dale**, **Amanda Douthitt**, **Marolyn Dowell**, Roger Dowell, Kenneth Dowell, Treyten Drake, Davye Duggins, Sammy 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, Merri Hurt, Braddock Inman, Barbara Jarboe, Virginia Jeffries, Mary Ann Johnson, Tracy King, Patricia Lane, Angie Lawrence, Annette Lucas, Margaret Lyons, Red McClellan, Oleta McDaniel, Bevan Michael Miller, Richard Miller, Blaise Mills, Dorothy Morris, Don O'Donoghue, Eddie O'Donoghue, Joe Oelze, Earl O'Reilly, **Janet O'Reilly**, Libby Osborne, Martha Payne, **Brian Phillips**, Peggy Phillips, Doris Priest, Joe Priest, Robert Priest, Sandy Priest, Joe Ed Ray, Rita Roach, Shirley Robbins, Suzanne Rose, **Eric Severs**, Jerry Sosh, Virginia Stanford, Lucye Stupak, Pam Sturgeon, Loretta Swink, Adalee Taul, Becky Taul, John N. Taul, Beavin & Gina Thornsberry, Paul Tucker, Gil Urban, David Walz, Buddy Weatherholt, Greg Wethington, Raymond Wethington, Jimmy Whitworth, Mary Rita Whitworth, Carolyn Wilcheck, Kevin Wilcheck, Rebecca Wilson, 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



## Journey through Lent:

**Wednesday, April 5, 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 8th

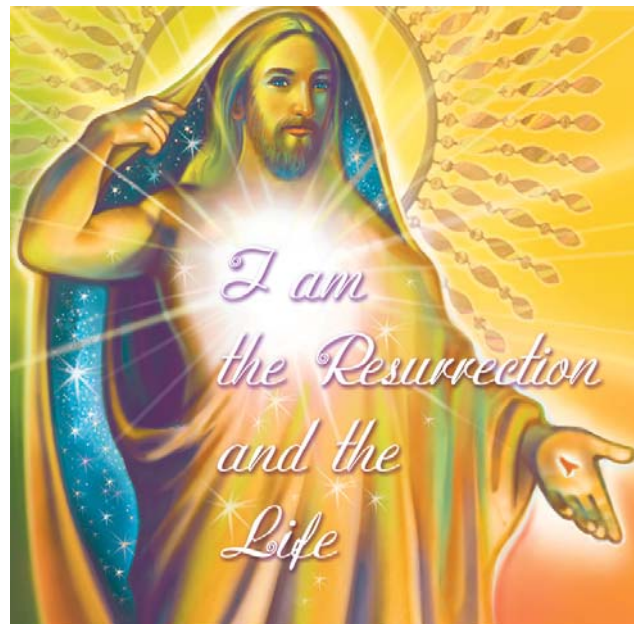
through April 12th. Sessions will start at 6:00 pm with light refreshments being served. So make it a family affair during Lent or come with your friends, this is a chance to give of yourself during this 40 days and 40 nights as we walk with our Lord.

## Communal Penance Services:

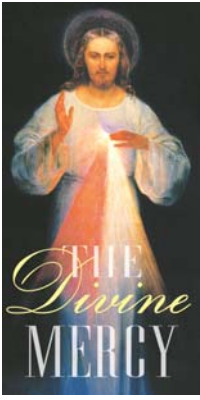
Our Area Communal Penance Services are Tuesday April 4th 6:00 pm St Mary's, McQuady, Wednesday April 5th 6:00 pm St Anthony, Axtel, and **Thursday April 6th 6:00 pm St Romuald.**

**Operation Rice Bowl:** Traditionally, Rice Bowl donations are turned in at the end of Lent, either on Holy Thursday or Good Friday. However, they can be dropped in any time during Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday.

**Passion Play:** We will begin rehearsals for the passion play on Mondays at 6:00 pm in the church starting March 13th. We'd love to have any middle school through adult who would like to participate for the Good Friday service. Contact Deacon Tony 270-617-8032 or Patty Curran 270-945-8155.



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## **Divine Mercy Sunday:**

Plan to celebrate God's Mercy towards us on the Sunday following Easter. We will be having a special celebration of divine forgiveness on April 23, with a 3:00 pm Mass. We will begin at 2:00 with Holy Hour and praying of the Chaplet, and confession will be available through the hour. Mass will begin at 3:00 (the Mercy Hour-Jesus' death on cross for us!) Plan to come!

**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!

**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.

**Nuts, Nuts, Nuts:** The Altar Society has bags of Light Walnuts, Black Walnuts, pralines, trail mix, almonds and more. Nuts are available at the parish office. Beginning the weekend of April 1st we will be selling after all the Masses. Make sure to stop by for all your baking needs. With Easter and Mother's Day coming soon it's always good to have them handy for your favorite cakes or candy.

## **SRIS Announcements**

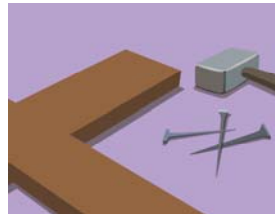
Attention Grandparents and Parents: 2017 Spring SRIS Tuition Raffle is going on now and will be until March 31st. Winning ticket will receive 1 year K-8th Grade Tuition Valued at \$2,800, and the winning ticket has control over when and who the paid tuition is given to. Only 250 Tickets will be sold at \$40 each so see a faculty member of SRIS or purchase one at our fish fries. If you have questions please feel free to call [270-756-5504](tel:270-756-5504).

**IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!!!**

St. Romuald Interparochial School and Pre-school are now accepting applications for anyone wanting to pre-register their children for next year. We welcome your inquiries about an education at St. Romuald Interparochial School. A quality education at SRIS is truly a family experience. We have a proud "tradition of excellence." Call 756-5504, email Lori Carwile [lcarwile@hotmail.com](mailto:lcarwile@hotmail.com) for pre-school or Sheila Drane [srissecretary@hotmail.com](mailto:srissecretary@hotmail.com), or come by the school to pre-register your children.

# Mass Etiquette Column

**What should a parent do with a fussy/crying child?** While we always welcome and desire to have **children** be an active part of our parish community, we ask that parents help to keep children well behaved. Patience is always afforded to crying infants, but parents are asked to be as courteous as you can be for others trying to pray and listen. If a child is fussy, then the parent should quickly take the child to the vestibule or the "cry room" and let the child calm down before returning. Children should not be allowed to rattle keys, drop toys, kick the pews or run in the aisles. These behaviors are distracting to the worshipping community. We have a "cry room" available for parents and their children, when needed, so that parents will be able to stay for Mass. There is seating and a speaker in the cry room.



**STATIONS OF THE CROSS: Every one is invited to join the SRIS students on Wednesday at 12 Noon for the Rosary**

**and the Stations of the Cross and every Friday come retrace the steps of Jesus to the cross, by praying the stations with others and meditating on our Lord's Passion at 6:30 pm.**

## **SENIORS GROUP ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION**





**SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

### **Earthen vessels**

When we hear talk of *flesh* in scripture, we usually think of it as the human body, our flesh and bones. Saint Paul often pits flesh against spirit in his Letters. If at those times we understand Paul's references to flesh to be referring to the body only, we would believe our bodies to be rather nasty indeed. But the news isn't that bad. By *flesh* Paul means "self-centeredness" versus *spirit*, or "God-centeredness." Are we oriented toward ourselves or to the ways of God? If the first option is true for us, then our physical existence, bodies included, can be a drag on our spirit. If we look to God, though, before all else, then our material lives, bodies included, become sacred vessels that house the divine.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45 (34). "You are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you."*

**MONDAY, APRIL 3**

**LENTEN WEEKDAY**

### **Drop it!**

In one of the most dramatic moments in scripture, Jesus comes face-to-face with a woman caught in adultery. But because her accusers are only using her as a tool to trap Jesus, he confronts a second and greater sin: the eagerness to judge. At Jesus' invitation—"let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her"—at least those in the crowd were honest enough to let the rocks drop. Being sinless does not lead Jesus to condemn sinners. It leads to forgiving them, showing them how to live without the sin that can destroy. In Lent we scrutinize ourselves for signs of self-righteousness—something we must drop like a heavy stone.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Deuteronomy 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11 (251). "In response, they went away one by one."*

**TUESDAY, APRIL 4**

**MEMORIAL OF ISIDORE, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH**

### **School yourself in divine wisdom**

There are some who would like to add Divine Intelligence theory, or creationism, to the curriculum to counter the teachings of the theory of evolution, which they contend is contrary to the biblical teachings of the origin of man. Saint Isidore 1,500 years ago assured us that there is no contradiction in God's world between so-called book learning and heart wisdom, what we learn about the world and how we experience God. We can see God's presence in all creation and in all that we learn from science and faith.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30 (252). "The one who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him."*

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5**

**MEMORIAL OF VINCENT FERRER, PRIEST**

### **Gracefully reconcile**

Reconciliation means bringing things or people into some kind of harmony. The Dominican Saint Vincent (1350-1419) practiced reconciliation on many levels. He traveled around preaching repentance. "When you have realized your true worth," he said, "you will be able to judge your faults sanely . . . and the faults of your neighbor will remain in shadow." Seeing the shortcomings of others, Vincent reminds us, begins with seeing our own limitations clearly. That perspective can then

lead us to gracefulness in accepting criticism and tact in giving it.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; John 8:31-42 (253). "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works of Abraham."*

**THURSDAY, APRIL 6**

### **Pleased to meet you**

The second Commandment warns against using the Lord's name in vain. When Jesus refers to himself as "I AM," as he does many times in John's gospel, he is deliberately associating himself with God, who revealed the divine name to Moses as "I AM WHO I AM." This strange-sounding name declares that God's absolute existence depends upon nothing and no one. It puts God in a unique category, because the rest of us are dependent and fragile creatures. Give thanks today for all the ways your life is nourished and sustained by God's unshakeable presence.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59 (254). "Very truly, I tell you, before Abraham was, I am."*

**FRIDAY, APRIL 7**

**MEMORIAL OF JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE, PRIEST**

### **What to do?**

Most churchgoing folks are people of good will. We, like the folks around Jesus, try to do what is right in the eyes of God. But we're not always clear on what the expectations are. Some of us are minimalists who hope that not doing anything really wrong is the same as living right. Some are legalists, comfortable with obeying and enforcing moral laws. Some struggle to shed a few more bad habits every year so as to creep closer to the spiritual ideals over a lifetime. Jesus says if we trust in him, we'll always know what to do.

*TODAY'S READINGS: Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42 (255). "Understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father."*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 8**

**LENTEN WEEKDAY**

### **The Caiaphas inside us all**

Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest who presided at the trial of Jesus, saw Jesus as a threat to his own power and privilege. So he took advantage of his close relationship with Pontius Pilate to persuade the latter to condemn Jesus to crucifixion. Though it is easy enough to dislike Caiaphas based on the biblical testimony, we do well to recognize a bit of ourselves in him. Lent is a good time to reflect on how we protect our power and privilege in ways that hurt others. Before condemning Caiaphas let's make sure we haven't done the same thing to Jesus in our own hearts!

*TODAY'S READINGS: Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56 (256). "It is better for you that one man should die instead of the people."*

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