

**For The Bulletin Of
January 24, 2016**

**THE THIRD SUNDAY IN
WINTER'S ORDINARY TIME**

From Father Robert

Writing an autobiography is not as easy as it sounds. We are immediately faced with choices: do we strictly tell the facts of our lives, or do we help people get an insight into our likes and dislikes, emotions and feelings, ambitions and goals? How much of who we really are do we want to reveal? If the autobiography is meant for family legacy, both facts and self-revelation are important. If the autobiography is by a political figure, then facts are what count. If the autobiography is by an entertainment personality, then personal revelation is more interesting. How we write depends on what we want to convey.

At the beginning of St. Luke's gospel he explicitly states that he sets out to "compile a narrative of the events" of Jesus' person and mission. He claims that he has "investigated everything accurately anew." Luke wants to get it right. He knows how important his writing is – its purpose is to "realize the certainty of the teachings" Jesus brought us. Luke's story of Jesus, however, is more than facts.

In this gospel Jesus clearly proclaims Who He is and what He comes to bring. He is One Who lives "in the power of the Spirit"; He comes to bring a new teaching. He is god's anointed; He comes to bring the human community glad tidings, liberty, sight, freedom, favor. He is the long-awaited Messiah;

He comes to bring manifest signs of salvation.

The "eyes of all...looked intently at Him." Do our eyes look intently upon Him? Why should we? Because in Jesus is fulfilled all our longings, all our hopes, all our expectations.

The same intensity with which the people of Nehemiah's time heard the Law proclaimed by Ezra is focused on Jesus in the synagogue. Their intense anticipation is met by Jesus' dramatic assertion that the Scripture passage from Isaiah "is fulfilled" in their hearing. In the first reading Ezra reads from the book of the Law; in the gospel Jesus *is* the book, the Good News, the Word made flesh. Ezra interprets what he read; in the gospel Jesus Himself *is* the interpretation. Ezra's word was an inspiring word that had power and moved the people to worship and praise. Jesus' word is a creative word fulfilled *in Him* and continues in the gospel in which *we ourselves* encounter Jesus and are moved to be disciples. The feasting, joy, and new strength on the holy day when Ezra read the Law are now fulfilled in a new order in which the feasting is on Jesus and the strength comes from our sharing in the same Spirit.

Living The Paschal Mystery

Jesus is enfleshed today in the lives of those who encounter Him, the gospel's very fulfillment, throughout the ages. Now we – our very own lives – announce the meaning of the Word proclaimed and enfleshed. We can do so because, like Jesus, in our baptism we also have been anointed with the Spirit. By our baptism we have received a share in Jesus' saving deeds. As His

followers, we make present His saving mystery.

Living the paschal mystery means that we continually look for the poor, captive, blind, and oppressed among us. We don't have to look very far! "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled" is now true only when we ourselves respond to those around us and who need a nourishing, strengthening, joyful word. This means that God's word isn't something we only hear on Sunday, but becomes a living word in our hearts, inspiring us to be in our very selves, living gospels. As we gradually grow into being anointed by the Spirit, we, like Jesus, are the fulfillment of the Scriptures.

How will we respond?

- I look intently upon Jesus when... What I see is... What I hear is...
- The power of the Spirit moves me to... drives me to...
- I continue Jesus' mission to the poor, captives, blind, and oppressed whenever I...

About Liturgy: The Eucharistic Word and Its Fulfillment

Each Sunday during the Liturgy of the Word we hear God's word proclaimed. Would that this Word so moved us, that, like the people of Ezra's time, we would prostrate ourselves before the Presence of God. Yet, even when our hearing the Word is less intent, God still fulfills it.

The Liturgy of the Word always opens onto the Liturgy of the Eucharist. There is a very real pastoral danger that we focus, during this part of the Liturgy, only on receiving Holy Communion. Important as that moment is, we cannot

neglect the Eucharistic prayer. In this prayer narrative we hear the story of God's faithful deeds in bringing about our salvation. The Eucharistic Prayer is Jesus "autobiography" writ small. Now, with our 20/20 hindsight, we are hearing a narrative of salvation *already fulfilled in Christ* and in this are encouraged and strengthened to respond to the Word that we have just heard. We come forward in the Communion Procession, toward the Altar-table which is a symbol of the Messianic banquet, to feast and have our fill at God's table, knowing that God nourishes us to be ourselves, the fulfillment of the Word in our daily lives.

Coming to Communion without paying due attention to the Liturgy of the Word and the salvation narrative of the Eucharistic Prayer is like coming late for a banquet meal and missing all the conversation that brings the joy and satisfaction to the meal. This gospel challenges us to prepare well for Sunday liturgy – not just to reflect on the readings but also occasionally to read prayerfully the Eucharistic Prayers so that they are truly *prayers*. Eucharistic Prayer IV borrows words from today's gospel and it would be a good choice to begin our prayerful reflection on these beautiful narratives of salvation.

About Liturgical Music

Both the first reading and the gospel today relate occasions when the Word of God is proclaimed in the midst of the community. This offers a good opportunity to examine the meaning and importance of the Gospel Acclamation. While we remain seated during the proclamation of the first and second readings, we stand for the proclamation of the gospel, reverencing it with a

profound bow when it is shown to us, and we greet its proclamation by singing an acclamation. Singing this acclamation announces our belief that the person of Christ becomes present in our midst in the very proclamation of the Gospel. The accompanying verse sung by the cantor (and/or the Choir) is usually taken from the gospel text and acts as an invitation that we open our hearts to truly hear what will be proclaimed and let ourselves be transformed by it. The most suitable gesture during the singing of the acclamation is always to turn our bodies toward the *Book of Gospels* as it is carried in procession to the Ambo.

The Floral Arrangement that graces the Altar today is placed to the Glory of God and in Honor of a Very Special Wedding Anniversary of Keith and Jennifer Hrabchak. Congratulations! And may God continue to bless you with many more happy years, the best of health, and the deepening of your love for one another.

Annual Report and Presentation of the Budget for 2016

As required by Diocesan Statute, The Annual Report and Presentation of the Budget for 2016 will take place at each liturgy the weekend of January 30th and 31st. Hard copies of the report will be made available to all our parishioners. I hope you will plan to be with us that weekend as we reflect on 2015 and look ahead to 2016.

City of Antioch Neighborhood Clean Up

Please mark your calendars to join me in the next City of Antioch Neighborhood Clean Up which is scheduled for Saturday, February 6th, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. This is a great way to

involve yourself in creating civic pride, cleaning up our city one neighborhood at a time, and meet new friends. Please watch next week's bulletin for the flyer and map of the neighborhood in which we will be working.

Ash Wednesday and The Beginning of Lent

The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 10th. For the convenience of our parishioners, we have scheduled four liturgies that day:

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

12:00 Noon Liturgy of the Word, Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

5:30 p.m. Liturgy of the Word, Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

7:30 p.m. Sung Evening Prayer, Blessing and Imposition of Ashes

The offering at each liturgy on Ash Wednesday is designated for our adopted parochial school of St. Peter Martyr in Pittsburg as a way for our parish to support Catholic School Education. Our goal of financial support for them in 2016 is once again \$10,000.

Please watch my Insert for more information regarding the three-fold discipline of Lent – Prayer, Fasting, and Alms-giving – as we get closer to the beginning of Lent. Other information regarding Adult Faith Formation opportunities and spiritual growth as well as Lenten Devotions will be published in both my Insert as well as the Bulletin.

Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry

Once again this year our Knights of Columbus will be offering their signature Lenten Friday Fish Fry each Friday, beginning February 12th. Fish Fry's will take place each Friday beginning at 4:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. There will be "Take Out" as well as "Dining In." For those who "Dine In," Bingo will be played and who knows what other exciting surprises await us! All proceeds benefit the charitable programs of the Knights of Columbus.

Dishes From The Open House At The Rectory

For those of you who brought dishes to the Rectory, they are washed and on the stainless steel table in the church kitchen. Please come and claim them as soon as possible. Thank you!

Catholic Schools Week: January 31st thru February 6th

Catholic Schools Week is a long-standing tradition throughout the United States. This year Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationally from January 31st through February 6th. The theme of this year's observance is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service." The theme encompasses concepts that are at the heart of a Catholic education. Catholic schools are communities, small families in their own right, but also members of the larger community of home, church, city, and nation.

We are blessed to have "adopted" St. Peter Martyr School in Pittsburg where the students are openly taught about God and where students and faculty put their faith into practice on a daily basis. In addition to learning the practical knowledge of reading, writing,

and math, the students receive spiritual knowledge of God and truth. They are also a Community of Service, a place where helping one another and aiding those in need are the normal way of living life.

St. Peter Martyr will celebrate this special week with many activities and events that will include an Open House and special School Liturgy next Sunday, January 31st; spirit activities, a Pasta Dinner, auction, and raffle.

In addition to our support of St. Peter Martyr, they also support our social justice outreach programs, and especially our Thanksgiving Basket Outreach. Let us keep them, their faculty, parents, and community in our prayers as they celebrate this special observance.

Antioch Shelter Project – Current Status as of January 4, 2016

Happy New Year! May God bless you in abundant ways so that you can bless others in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

God's church and the community continued to respond as warming centers to the homeless and needy in December through the New Year. Thank you to our host churches: Cornerstone Christian, GHCC Community Outreach Center, Seed of Faith Fellowship, and St. John Lutheran. They provided two weeks of shelter to 80 individuals some nights during the past month's cold spell. Thank you to all the churches, organizations, and individuals who stepped forward to provide volunteers and resources, as it takes a village to do God's will through God's way of community.

Please let us know if your church wishes to host a warming center for women and children, men, or both. We want to be prepared for any additional cold spells in January and February. If your church does not have a facility, can you provide a team to share the burden with a host site? What resources has God given you to share with those in these centers?

If you would like a copy of the Trinity Center (our partner in Walnut Creek) operating procedures for a winter shelter/warming center, please let us know. It is a very comprehensive document that was approved by the City of Walnut Creek. Ultimately the host site can operate their warming center in a manner that fits and works for them.

Our women's group to help mothers of homeless students in the Antioch Unified School District (AUSD) continues to grow. These women come alongside these mothers with prayer, possible resources, and a partner to assist them. Please contact **Gary Kingsbury** for more information or to participate in this group, or to just talk to one of the group mothers.

We hope and pray that our efforts for a permanent emergency shelter in Antioch will move forward quickly in 2016. Home Aid Northern California has publicly committed to 50% or more of the building costs for the shelter facility. They have provided a "pro bono" architect to develop design plans which have now been presented to the City of Antioch Planning Commission.

We are continuing our neighborhood outreach in the Delta Fair community for community awareness and support in 2016. A separate announcement

will notify you of our next outreach time & place. Hope that you can join us! Contact Tamika Peters if you have an interest or questions.

☐ Thank you to our five sponsoring churches for the permanent emergency shelter: New Life Church, His Presence Church, St. Ignatius of Antioch Catholic Church, Victory Outreach Antioch, and Light Ministries. We need more!

☐ To be a sponsoring church, the church leadership needs to officially declare its support for ASP; give ASP an opportunity to share the project with the congregation regarding awareness and ways to support our efforts; and help ASP through their sphere of influence, resources, and prayers. We are available to discuss further or present on our warming center efforts, assistance to AUSD students & their mothers, as well as our permanent emergency shelter project.

☐ Our website is www.antiochshelter.org. Our email address is antiochsp@gmail.com. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 3114, Antioch CA 94531. And, follow us on Facebook: Antioch Shelter Project. Tamika's phone number is 510-384-4292, and Gary's phone number is 206-962-1496. Our office is located at 2006 A Street, Suite 214, in Antioch.

☐ Thank you for all your prayers and support in 2015 as we followed God's call to provide emergency shelter to the homeless and those in great need in the greater Antioch and East Contra Costa County. We trust that God Who began this great work will be faithful as we are faithful to Him and to those He calls us to serve.

East County Pastoral Planning Committee

Summary for January 6, 2016
St. Anne Church in Byron

Next meeting: **Thursday, March 3rd
at St. Peter Martyr School – 425
West 4th Street**

Several pastors were unable to attend the meeting, but we had some new committee members, so our numbers stayed around fifteen. We had a very lively, informative, and engaging conversation about the educational, social, economic, and spiritual needs of the deanery. The conversation challenged us to rethink the previous four goals and to simplify them into two broad long-range goals. Goal #1 remains with a few minor changes.

Goal#1 To develop a comprehensive plan for Catholic Education in East County

Objectives:

- a) Support and strengthen the two elementary schools
- b) Investigate future educational needs for elementary and high school
- c) Make Catholic education affordable
- d) Strengthen faith formation programs
- e) Develop a scholarship committee

Goal#2 To create/expand advocacy and action for human needs throughout East County

Objectives:

- a) Facilitate dialogue on homelessness with other agencies
- b) Connect with efforts to promote public education
- c) Create an understanding of catholic (small c) – interfaith
- d) Involve Catholic Charities of the East Bay in East County
- e) Explore possible programs for aging population

In order to develop these two goals we decided to form a task force for each. Below is the list of those who volunteered or were suggested to serve on the task forces. If you are not listed on a task force, you can join the task force of your choice on March 3rd. You can also switch tasks forces if you are so inclined. At the March meeting, the members of each task force can spend time reviewing their goal and objectives, and then developing strategies.

To prepare for the next meeting please reflect on your goal, objectives and consider (strategies) ways of implementing the objective.

Catholic Education Task Force
Father Roberto Corral
Kip Trombley
Thurston Brice
Tim Hooke
Mylee Perkins
Father Peter
Joe Siino
Father Ken Sales

Human Needs Task Force

Father Ron Schmidt
Catherine Kutsuris
Father Robert Rien
Jackie Hooke
Will Avitabile
Brian McCoy
Carolyn Krantz
Lori Ogorchock

The following (and anyone else I missed) can choose their task force

Father Jerry Brown
Jose Ibon
Ray Neubauer
Ruben Rodriguez

I appreciate the very energizing conversation that we shared.
From Chuck Siebenand, Facilitator

Thank You

...to those who continue to come very early each Saturday morning to clean both the church and parish hall and get them ready for the weekend and the week ahead: **Jun Bajet, Carole Miller, Angela Bueno, Mency Osborne, and Steve Rojek.**

...to those who continue to clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Harlan Young, Gino Ramos, and Geri Abaya.**

Deanery Diocesan Pilgrimage

At our Deanery Meeting this past Tuesday, one of the decisions that was made was to participate in a **Deanery**

Pilgrimage to the Cathedral on Saturday, August 27, 2016 as a part of our participation in the Jubilee Year of Mercy. The pilgrimage will take place at the Cathedral from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. Each parish will arrange for busses to transport parishioners from each site to the Cathedral. The music for the liturgy will reflect the ethnic diversity of our Deanery and liturgical ministers will be selected from each parish. All the priests of the Deanery will concelebrate the Eucharist. I have offered to coordinate this event. Please watch both my Insert and the bulletin for more information as details become available. Please mark the date on your calendars *now* and plan to be with us.

CCISCO Night Walk Against Violence

The next Night Walk will take place on Friday, February 12th. Bishop Barber will be joining us for this walk, which will begin with an Ecumenical Prayer Service at Most Holy Rosary Church and then proceed to the intersection of E. 18th and A Street for the one hour witness. All those who wish to be a part of this witness are welcome to join us. The Prayer Service will begin at 6:00 p.m. and the Walk will follow at 6:30 p.m. Following the Witness and Walk, we return to the church for an evaluation and Closing Prayer. I hope you will join us and The Bishop for this event.