

**For The Bulletin Of
January 31, 2016**

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

From Father Robert

Whose side do we want to be on? The winners, of course! But unwittingly the people in today's gospel story choose to be on the wrong side! At first they "all spoke highly of" Jesus. But then they heard Him say what they didn't like and turned on Him. "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." However, more than one Scripture passage is being fulfilled in this gospel. The words and actions of Jesus fulfill the Scripture passage from Isaiah about the coming of salvation: glad tidings for the poor, liberty for captives, sight for the blind, freedom for the oppressed. The words and actions of the people fulfill the Scripture passages about rejecting and killing God's prophets: they questioned Jesus' origins, become furious at His words, and act to destroy Him. The people choose the wrong side! Which Scripture passages do we hear? Which do we fulfill?

When Jesus challenges the people's narrowness with the examples of Elijah" and Elisha's outreach to Gentiles, they grow furious. Jesus challenged the crowd because the Good News is always broader than selective preferences or limited understanding – yes, salvation would be for Gentiles as well as Jews. While the gospel is always good news, it is not always comfortable because it ever stretches us beyond where we are now. Which Scripture passages do we hear? Which do we fulfill?

The demise of the prophets came about because they forced choices; the challenge of the gospel is also that it forces choices. The comforting thing about God's word is that we have always had the reassurance that God will protect and deliver us. The disturbing thing is that the protection and deliverance don't always come as quickly as we might like or in the way we might like. Jeremiah ended up in a cistern and some of the prophets were killed; Jesus ended up on a cross. Prophets may be rejected and destroyed, but God's word is always enduring. One symbol of this is that Jesus does escape the crowd in today's gospel, demonstrating that, like God's word, the gospel will prevail. And what is our response to the challenge of the gospel? Amazement or fury? Welcoming Jesus or expelling Him from our midst? Growing in discipleship or stagnating in narrowness? Choosing the winning ways of the gospel or the losing ways of narrow-mindedness? Which Scripture passages do we hear? Which do we fulfill?

Living The Paschal Mystery

If we never meet doubt or opposition over values in our daily living, then we must examine how committed to the Gospel we are. Most of us aren't called "professionally" to preach the Good News. All of us, however, because of our baptism, are committed to living it. Living the Gospel is what must shape our everyday choices and responses. This means, for example, that if the chatter around the watercooler at work grows uncharitable or coarse, we have the courage to walk away. Another example: if prejudice exists among our friends and acquaintances, we have the courage to extol the dignity of the minority. Dying to oneself means that

we place Gospel values before any others and are willing to stake our lives on them. We might not always concretely experience God's protection and deliverance in the given moment; but we know from Jesus' life that God is there when it really counts – leading us to Life everlasting.

Today's Gospel is especially challenging. Have we allowed ourselves to truly hear it?

- Words that anger me are...I react by...
- Words of Jesus that are amazing and "gracious" to me are... Words of Jesus that I would rather not hear are...
- My words and actions reveal that I listen to these Scripture passages when...

About Liturgy: Liturgy of the Word

When we claim that God's word is enduring, we are saying more than the fact that it is proclaimed throughout the world every Saturday evening and Sunday and weekdays, too! The mere saying or proclaiming God's word isn't what makes it enduring; it is receiving, internalizing, and living God's word that makes it enduring. God's word endures as each of us is transformed, realizing ever more perfectly the spread of God's reign. God's word endures in us.

Almost always on Sundays the Lectionary selections include both a prophetic word and a comforting word. First challenge: we must truly hear God's word and not let it simply go over our heads. The best way to hear (receive) God's word is not to come to liturgy cold; if this is our first hearing, we probably won't get much out of the Liturgy of the Word. A good spiritual

practice for all of us is to read the Scriptures well in advance of Sunday so that we can be thinking about them as we go through our normal everyday routines.

Second challenge: we must hear God's word in terms of how it challenges each of us personally. This means that almost every Sunday we will hear something in the word that calls us to change (internalize the word) some behavior or attitude. We must help ourselves get into the habit of truly listening for that personal word to us. Let our prayer during the rest of the Liturgy then be one in which we beg God's help to live this word.

Third challenge: we must let that internalized word help us see what in our personal lives and the world in which we live needs to be addressed (living the word). Sometimes our world is so complex that we don't even recognize the hurts and injustices around us. God's enduring word within us helps us see our world with new eyes – God's eyes. We will no longer be able to take things for granted; we will begin to understand that hearing God's word each Sunday makes demands on us.

The Annual Pastoral and Financial Report

At each liturgy this weekend I have the privilege to present the Annual Pastoral and Financial Report. Each member of the parish will receive a printed copy. I am grateful to the Office Staff who have reviewed, corrected, edited, and formatted the report. Much more than statistics and figures, it helps us to see how God has worked through our lives, ministries, programs, and outreaches during 2015. Additionally, it is an

accounting to you for your Stewardship of Time, Talent, and Treasure. On behalf of the Pastoral Staff, the Pastoral Council, and the Finance Council, we thank you for all you do to make our parish the amazing community of faith that it is.

The Memorial Funeral Liturgy For Mary J. Cannata

This coming Friday morning, February 5th, at 10:30 a.m. we will celebrate the Memorial Funeral Liturgy for one of our Founding/Charter Members, **Mary J. Cannata**, who was in her 100th year of life. Mary attended the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Eucharist regularly until her health would no longer allow her to do so. You are invited to join us for this liturgy that will commend her to God's loving embrace as well as for the reception in our parish hall that follows.

Neighborhood Clean Up

This coming Saturday, February 6th, is the next City of Antioch Neighborhood Clean Up, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. We will gather at 10th and L Streets for this month's clean up. Sponsored by our Antioch Police Department and the Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), this is a wonderful way to help clean up various neighborhoods in our City as well as to meet new friends and neighbors. I hope you will join me. Please see the flyer in today's bulletin for all the details.

Our Lady of Fatima Crab Feed

This coming Saturday, February 6th, is the Annual Crab Feed of the Our Lady of Fatima Society, held at Dominican Hall, Holy Rosary Church. Cocktails are at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. The dinner includes appetizers, salad, pasta, all the crab you

can eat, and dessert. The evening will also include a raffle and auction. Tickets are \$45 per person and available from our parishioner, **MaryJo Keister**.

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 Frys will take place each Friday beginning at 4:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and 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 today, 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.

Deanery Diocesan Pilgrimage

At our Deanery Meeting two weeks ago, 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.

Thank You Our Lady of Fatima Society

Last weekend I was presented with a check in the amount of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) from the members of the Our Lady of Fatima Society. On behalf of all of us, I wish to thank them for their support of our parish as well as all the wonderful charitable work they do each year for the church in East Contra Costa County. *Muito obrigado!*

Thank You From St. Peter Martyr Parochial School

Dear Fr. Robert,
Thank you for the very generous financial gift of \$600 for the Children of St. Peter Martyr School from your parish. Special thanks to all who coordinated and supported the parish BINGO fundraiser to raise funds to help our students. This support for student activities at St. Peter Martyr School from your parish is truly a blessing. The joy and love that is experienced through your outreach gives witness to the generous spirit at St. Ignatius of Antioch. We are deeply grateful for your financial and spiritual support. On behalf of the students, families, faculty, and staff of the school, I extend our sincere thanks and wish you continued blessings. You

and all the parishioners are being remembered in our daily prayers of gratitude.

Respectfully yours in Christ,
Mr. Joe Siino, Principal

A Thank You From Bev Iacona

Dear Fr. Robert, Staff, Knights of Columbus, and my parish family:

I wish to thank all of you for being a part of my life these past 36 years. Every one of you has touched my life in some special way and has helped me along my spiritual journey. It was a pleasure to work for our parish family. I will treasure those years. Working for the Lord is very rewarding.

I thank all of you who helped in any way with my retirement celebration, the Distinguished Discipleship Award, the beautiful flowers, my special parking space, the Knights of Columbus plaque of recognition, the cards, gifts, gift cards, money and best wishes, and of course, all the tasty food.

Many blessings to all of you.
Bev Iacona

All of the money gifts which Bev received were donated to the Building Fund for the building of the proposed Parish Hall. On behalf of all of us, thank you, Bev, for such great generosity and continued support of the parish.

Congratulations

On Friday evening, the children of our Faith Formation Program who are candidates for First Eucharist, celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Our congratulations to: **Nina Cabinilla, Mary Clarke, Noah Crisologo, Luke Dijanic, Joseph**

Espinosa, Ryan Franciso, Sophia Galicia, Jasmine Gonzalez, Moriama Gonzalez, Aiden Hamilton, Andrew Hilton, Michael Krywokulsky, Sofia Lucido, Henry Nguyen, Kim Nguyen, Justin Nguyen, Edgar Ortega, Alexis Rayrao, Aquilles Rios, Jacey Travers and Sandy Sison. We are also grateful to their Catechists and parents for their on-going support. The children will receive First Eucharist in the Easter Season.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas

From Jane Russo, Regent, Court #1450:

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) will continue to have their regular monthly Bingo – the first Tuesday of the month – at the Church of the Good Shepherd, 3200 Harbor Street, in Pittsburg. They have a special game that pays \$1,199. A light lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. and one Bingo card is \$10.00. Additional cards can be purchased for \$1.00 each. Free coffee and tea are available, and soda and bottled water can be purchased. Their guests are primarily seniors, but anyone over 18 is also invited to play. For further information, call Rose Carpenello, Chairman, at (925) 432-3100. See you Feb.2, 2016!

Thank You

...to **Jun Bajet** who came last Friday morning to dry mop and wet mop the church and parish hall, empty all the garbage cans, and vacuum the entryway carpets as well as to **Bob Goncalves and Steve Rojek** who cleaned the bathrooms on Saturday morning and to **Angela Bueno, Carole Miller, Mercy Osborne, Alfred Madoshi, and Rose**

Salamanca who dusted, polished the pews, and cleaned the glass in the narthex doors.

