

**For The Bulletin Of
January 22, 2017**

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

From Father Robert

In many northern states the dead of winter brings gray, dreary day upon gray, dreary day. When finally the clouds break and the sun shines forth in all its warmth and glory, people's moods change. "Cabin Fever" is dispelled by going out and enjoying the bright light and glistening freshness. Although the trees, grass, flower beds still seem dead, we ourselves feel we are at a turning point, even if for just one day. Sunlight encourages hope, anticipation, the end of seeming deadness.

The gospel we hear today tells of a turning point in Jesus' life, a turning point that lasts far longer than one day. "From that time on...the kingdom of heaven is at hand" "From that time on" the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that "light has arisen" to dispel darkness is coming to completion. "From that time on" Jesus' public ministry is set in motion. "From that time on" disciples are called. "From that time on" encounters with Jesus lead to changed lives. Then and now. From *this* time on...invitations to turning points that lead from darkness to light, from mundane tasks to announcing the Good News of salvation, from being dead – earth bound to "the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

As Jesus begins His public ministry, Jesus calls followers by issuing the command to "Come after Me." The gospel suggests that following Jesus is our way to walk in the light which

reveals the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The kingdom of heaven is neither earthly realm nor distant place. The kingdom of heaven is present in our response to Jesus. It is our willing obedience to hear Him call us, to leave everything, to follow Him without counting the cost. The "kingdom of heaven is at hand" when we turn from darkness and not only walk in the Light, but become that light ourselves. The "kingdom of heaven is at hand" when we are hearers of Jesus' call, proclaimers of His Good News, healers of ills, guardians of God's truth, builders of virtue, fishers of people, teachers of mercy and forgiveness, prophets of new life. In all these ways we are light that dispels the grayness and dreariness of lives dead to Jesus' Presence, lives shadowed by the darkness of uncertainty, lives limited by the closedness of a world devoid of light.

We must be able to see and embrace the Light Who is our Savior before we can be light for others. To see and embrace the Light is already following Jesus. So, one consequence of hearing Jesus' call to leave all and follow Him is the requirement to turn from darkness so we can see the Light. By changing the behaviors that bring darkness, we are able to focus on the Light that then shines brightly enough for us to follow – becoming the light ourselves.

Living The Paschal Mystery

We shrink from darkness and dreariness; we don't like it. We prefer light. Yet seeing the Light Who is Jesus is actually much easier than following the Light! John's faithfulness in preaching Jesus as the Messiah led him to prison and death. Jesus' preaching about God's kingdom at hand led Him to the cross and death.

If we follow the Light, we know what awaits us: dying to self. Yet dying is the only way we ourselves can become the light that shines for others.

Following the Light takes us where we would rather not go. But it is this Light that brings us everlasting Life. This is why we choose to follow. This is why we choose to be light. Jesus' call to us and our response to accept being the light is now, *this* time, our time.

- Jesus' announcement that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" calls me to...
- The light that has arisen in my life is... The darkness I have yet to dispel is...
- My encounters with Jesus have changed me in these ways...

About Liturgy: Ordinary Time, The Second Reading, and Repentance

During Ordinary Time of Year A the second readings from the apostolic writings are taken from I Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, and 1 Thessalonians. Since these readings are assigned in a semi-continuous way (but with verses omitted because there is more Scripture than could fit into the number of Sundays in Ordinary Time), we ought not to expect that these second readings will exactly correspond to the gospel as they do during festal seasons.

However, since the thrust of Ordinary Time is to walk with Jesus through a Synoptic Gospel to Jerusalem and during this journey find out the meaning of discipleship and the cost of Christian self-sacrifice, the second readings in a generic way can help us to know what living the gospel means. Often they spell out concrete Christian behaviors (or warn against what should be

avoided) that enable a practical interpretation of the gospel.

These second readings, then, help us to instruct ourselves so that we can repent and follow Jesus the Light as light ourselves who bring others joy and well-being. Although the second readings aren't the focus of our attention and preaching on any Sunday in Ordinary Time, they are not unimportant. They are still God's word addressed to us in the here and now.

The Memorial Funeral Liturgy for John Gava

This coming Saturday morning, January 28th, at 10:30 a.m., we will celebrate the Memorial Funeral Liturgy for Charter Member, John Gava. John and his wife, Peggy, were very faithful founding members of the parish. He is survived by his daughter, Tricia, and his son, David. Following the liturgy, there will be a reception in our parish hall. Please remember John in your prayers as we commend him to God's loving, eternal embrace.

The Annual Pastoral and Financial Report

Each year in the month of January, the pastor is required by Diocesan Statute to give The Annual Pastoral and Financial Report for the previous calendar year. Next weekend at each liturgy, the report for 2016 will be given. It will also be available in hard copy for you to take home with you. Much more than figures and statistics, it reviews how God has been at work in our lives through the various activities of our parish over the previous year as well as setting forth goals for this new year of 2017. It also reviews the complete financial picture of the parish for the entire year as well as

presenting the Budget for 2017. It also prepares us for a series of Town Hall Meetings that have been scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, February 8th, 9:00 a.m.
immediately following the Daily Eucharist.

Wednesday, February 8th, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 12th, 11:30 a.m.,
immediately following the 10:00 a.m. Liturgy.

Please select one of the above times and plan to be present with us for this very important meeting which will present the findings of the Going Concerns Committee regarding changes in the Pastoral Staff, changes in administration, an assessment of our financial picture, and the Building Program.

Liturgical Morning of Enrichment

Once again this year, our parish, along with St. Anne's, Byron, and St. Bonaventure, Concord, will be offering a Liturgical Morning of Enrichment for all those in liturgical ministry. It will be held here at our parish on Saturday, February 11th, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. The focus of the morning will be the New Rite of Christian Matrimony and the new Guidelines for Cremation. Presenters will be **Anthony Arteaga, Director of Liturgy** at St. Bonaventure and myself. Please see the flyer that is attached to my Insert for all the details.

This is for ALL in liturgical ministry. There is no charge to attend. I hope you will put the date on your calendar and plan to be with us.

Marriage, Divorce, and Re-marriage Workshop

Please plan to be with us on Wednesday, February 15th at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall for a workshop on Marriage, Divorce, and Re-Marriage in the Catholic Church. The "Red Box" has once again been placed in the narthex to receive any questions you have regarding this topic. A panel from the Staff will be present that evening to respond to the questions. Please see the flyer that is in today's bulletin for all the details.

Thank You

...to our faithful volunteer parishioners who cleaned the church and parish hall last Saturday: **Carole Miller, Steve Rojek, Rose Salamanca, Cathy Romeo, Jun Bajet, and Mency Osborne.**

...to those who cleaned and maintained the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Jeannine Ford, Sofie Zimmerman, Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Karen Oliver, Alicia Perez, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Bob Carvalho, Dave Costanza, Carole Miller, Judy Quicho, Vangie Parrilla, Belen Farin and Dilcia Aparicio.**



Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week is a long-standing tradition at our adopted parochial school of St. Peter Martyr in Pittsburg as well as at parochial schools throughout the United States. This year, Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationally January 29th through February 4th. The theme 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 our own right, but also members of the larger community of home, parish, city, and nation. At St. Peter Martyr School, children are openly taught about God and students and faculty put their faith into practice on a daily basis. In addition to learning the practical knowledge of reading, writing, and math, their 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. Their school will celebrate this special week with many activities and events that will include an Open House an special school Mass on Sunday, January 29th, spirit activities, a Spaghetti Dinner, an auction, and a raffle. To help them celebrate Catholic Schools Week they are also asking each school family to complete a family project. Each family received a project sheet and directions. All completed family projects will be returned to the school office on or before Wednesday, January 25th and will be displayed at the Open House on Sunday, January 29th. You are warmly invited to attend the special liturgy and Open House on Sunday, January 29th.