

**For The Bulletin Of
March 24, 2019**



**THE THIRD SUNDAY OF
LENT**

From Father Robert

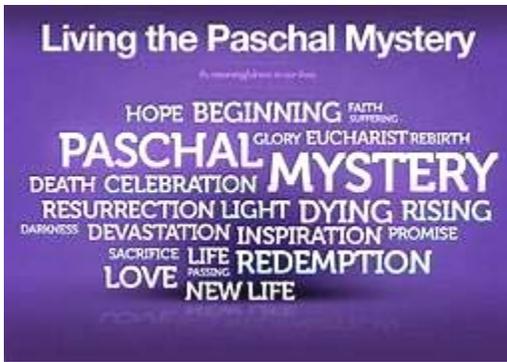
Human beings have an innate drive to find causation, a reason for things and events happening. This generally works well and helps us devise systems and ways of doing things that are safer and more productive. For example, automobile accident rates have been going down for years, measured by deaths per million miles driven. We design cars and trucks to be safer, based on research and testing. Though there might be an accident, it is far more likely that a human being will survive due to better engineering, design, etc. And yet, when an accident happens we still look for reasons, for example, excessive speed of the vehicle, or perhaps the driver was impaired by alcohol, lack of sleep, or something else (texting?). We seek to explain reasons for events, especially accidents.

In the ancient world, and perhaps even our own, many accidents or tragic events were explained by appeal to the gods, or God. It was understood that bad things happened to bad people; in other words, if something bad happened to someone, it was because that someone did

something bad. Good people lived lives that were blessed and filled with good things. A tragedy or accident nearly guaranteed that the victim was somehow at fault, had reaped the tragic remuneration for what he had sown. Much of the Old Testament, especially the Torah, provides the underpinnings for this view. But there are other books, for example, Job, that question it.

At the time of Jesus, when a tragic event happened at Siloam or when Pilate desecrated Jewish blood, the popular idea was that these people somehow had it coming. They must have done something bad for which they were punished. Jesus, however, interprets these events differently. He does not see this as a just punishment for some hidden sin. Instead, He tells those who are self-righteous in their smugness that the same will happen to them unless they repent. The period of time they have between witnessing the tragedy that befell others and the unknown time of their own death is a time for repentance. And the parable Jesus gives them underlines this point. The parable also subtly informs the audience that they have not been producing the fruit of good works. They have been given a limited amount of time to repent, but if that doesn't happen, they, too, will be cut down like the barren fig tree, like those who suffered the tragedy at Siloam or desecration at the hands of Pilate. The message of today's gospel can be summarized in one simple word: Repent!





A tragic and untimely death has a way of focusing our attention. Unfortunately, when we lose someone dear suddenly we become painfully aware of how short our life is, how precious are the days that we have been given. Too often our lives are occupied with simple tasks rather than profound meaning. There are daily chores to do, people who rely on us to do our part. But today's gospel reminds us that the time we are given is short and may come to a conclusion quickly and without warning. The time we have on this earth is for repentance and subsequently for doing the will of God. When we see tragedy strike others it can be easy for some to explain away the circumstances to poor decision making on their part, or plain bad luck. We might even become a bit proud at our own more fortunate and prudent decision making, not recognizing the many close calls we have certainly faced. But the time we are given is not for smugness or pride. Tragedy can befall any of us without warning. The gospel is a call for us to appreciate the limited time we have on earth, to respond generously to the needs of others, and to walk humbly.

- God calls Moses by name and Moses answers, "Here I am." How have you experienced God's call in your own life? What has been your response?

- God identifies Himself to Moses as "the God of your ancestors." We know God throughout history and also within our own lives of faith. How does your family and/or our parish pass on faith to younger generations?
- St. Paul admonishes us, "Do not grumble." What situations in your life are met with grumbling? How might you greet them a different way?
- Jesus gives us the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree. Where in your life, family, or our parish is there a lack of fruit being borne? How might you cultivate the ground to encourage fruitfulness?



Tomorrow morning, Monday, March 25th, we will celebrate a Memorial Funeral Liturgy at 11:00 a.m. for Charles Piazza, beloved father of Valerie Rodriguez. The Liturgy will be followed by a Luncheon Reception in our parish hall prepared by our St. Martha's Guild. The Committal will take place on Tuesday morning at the Sacramento Valley National Veterans Cemetery in Dixon. Please keep the members of the Piazza and Rodriguez Families in your prayers.



COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICES

The Delta Deanery will be offering the Sacrament of Penance in each of the eight parishes in communal celebrations on the following dates:

Monday, March 25th: Holy Rosary, Antioch; 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 27th: St. Peter Martyr, Pittsburg; 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 3rd: St. Anthony, Oakley; 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 4th: St. Ignatius of Antioch, Antioch; 7:30 p.m.

St. Anne Parish, Byron; 7:00 p.m.

Monday, April 8th: Church of the Good Shepherd, Pittsburg; 7:00 p.m.



If you have not registered in our parish and have been attending regularly, I invite you to join us officially by registering. It is a simple process of either coming to the parish office in person or even registering over the phone. To register means you are making the commitment to be a member of our parish community, to become

involved in ministry as a disciple of Jesus, and to support the parish financially through your tithes and offerings. Over the past weeks we have encountered a number of people who thought that just because they worship with us on the weekend that this made them automatically members – that is not the case. To register is to make a commitment, to take responsibility for your share in supporting the ministry of the parish, to have ownership, to belong. If you have questions about what it means to be a registered member, please do not hesitate to reach out to either me or our secretary, Maryann Peddicord, and we will be happy to speak with you.



The Easter Environment

You are invited to become a part of one of the great traditions of our parish by contributing to the Easter Environment. Our Art & Environment Committee has once again planned a beautiful and appropriate environment that says “EASTER!” for the entire 7 weeks of the Easter Season. Your contributions provide the candles, fabric, art work, vestments, floral arrangements, plants, and trees that adorn the sanctuary from the evening of The Great Vigil to Pentecost. Your donation may be made either “In memory of” or “In honor of” a loved one. Please place your contribution in the envelopes provided and indicate the nature of your donation, either “in honor of” or “in loving memory of.” Many thanks for your support.



Saturday Morning, April 13th, 9:00 a.m. Join us to help cut, wash, dry, and bundle the more than 2,000 palm fronds that will be prepared for our Palm Sunday Liturgies.

Saturday, April 13th, 4:00 p.m.
The Vigil Eucharist of Palm Sunday
The Blessing of the Palms, Procession, Reading of the Passion, Holy Eucharist

Sunday, April 14th, 8 and 11:00 a.m.
PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE OF THE LITURGIES!
The Blessing of the Palms, Procession, Reading of the Passion, Holy Eucharist

Monday, April 15th, 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist For Monday of Holy Week

Tuesday, April 16th, 8:00 a.m.
Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion for Tuesday of Holy Week

Wednesday, April 17th, 8:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist for Wednesday of Holy Week

Triduum



Holy Thursday, April 18th, 8:00 a.m. Sung Morning Prayer

7:30 p.m. **The Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper** – *Reception of the Newly Blessed Holy Oils, Liturgy of the Word, Washing of Feet, Holy Eucharist, Candle-light Procession to the Altar of Repose; Incense*

Good Friday, April 19th 8:00 a.m. Sung Morning Prayer

12:00 Noon
Ecumenical Good Friday Service
“The Seven Last Words”

3:00 p.m. **Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Passion and Death** – Liturgy of the Word, Veneration of the Cross, Holy Communion

7:30 p.m. **Sung Evening Prayer and Veneration of the Cross** (*Incense*)

Holy Saturday, April 20th 8:00 a.m. Sung Morning Prayer

8:00 p.m. **The Great Vigil** – *Lighting of the New Fire, Liturgy of the Word, The Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist), Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Holy Eucharist*



Sunday, April 21st, 8:00 a.m.
*Procession, Liturgy of the Word,
 Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Holy
 Eucharist*

**11:00 a.m. PLEASE NOTE
 CHANGE OF TIME!**
*Procession, Liturgy of the Word,
 Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Holy
 Eucharist; Incense*



Last Saturday evening we celebrated our Annual St. Joseph's/St. Patrick's Festival Dinner. It was a SOLD OUT event and one of the best social events we have had! A very special THANK YOU to the members of the Social Events Committee and the Knights of Columbus! Once again, we honored St. Joseph and St. Patrick with special prayers before dinner and a lovely evening to remember these very special saints.

The energy and happiness in the hall was contagious and we all enjoyed a terrific evening. Our thanks to all those who

helped in the kitchen, helped serve and donated the wonderful desserts for the St. Joseph's Altar as well as the delicious appetizers, and who generously donated raffle prizes and live auction items: **Dave Costanza, & His Kitchen Crew, Chad Curiel, MaryAnne Douville, Rachelle Martin, Steve & Frances Rojek, Lynn Shelton, Susan Batterton, Carole Miller, Marie Battaglia, Brian & Vicki McCoy, Al & Bev Cosce, Will and Catherine Avitabile, Diane Hack, Emily & Marc Douville, Mary Lucido, Joe & Carol Fanfa, Tomas Lucia, Jeannine Ford, Rich & Pam Confetti, Reggia Desmond, Clem Bushman, Mary Ewing, Chip & Jane Sharpe, Dotty Graham, Bobbie Woodland, Norma Villegas, Alicia Perez, Melodye Costanza, Sharon Cissell, Carmen Mayne, Jerry Britton, Fr. Robert, Pat Kramer, Bob & Marla Plurkowski, Michele & Jeanette Godina (who donated the 22 lb. Panetone), Rocco's Ristorante and Pizzeria, Our Confirmation Students who served: Leyzy Carrillo, Frederick Fulsaas and Stanley Travers, and Kirby McNesby who serenaded and entertained us in **both Italian and Gaelic!** Thank you to all those who attended, for your generosity and great spirit that you brought to make this event so enjoyable – great food, great fellowship, and lots of laughter.**



Contra Costa Interfaith Housing

Our parish has a long tradition of supporting the important work of Contra Costa Interfaith Housing (CCIH). CCIH has just placed a family of 5 in the Antioch area and is asking for some assistance. The following items are needed to help the family as they move into their new home:

- 1) Clothing:
 - a) Boys Spring/Summer clothes size 6/7,
 - b) Boys shoes Size 1 for a 6 year old
 - c) Men's jeans or shorts size 30x30 for older son
 - d) Size Large t-shirts for son;
 - e) Women's clothes size 2x tops and size 18 pants;
 - f) Women's jeans size 5 and size 7 women's shoes for daughter.
Tennis shoes for both
- 2) Schools supplies
- 3) Couch neutral color (gently used is just fine)
- 4) Small table with four chairs
- 5) Tall dresser
- 6) Queen sheets
- 7) Pots and pans
- 8) Bath towels

If you are able to donate any of these items, please drop them off at the parish office labelled "CCIH." If you would like your items picked up, please contact Brian at 778-4092 to arrange a convenient time.



We are so grateful for all those who do so many things to help with the mission and ministry of our parish! Thank you so much to the volunteers who came to help with the Bishop's Appeal mailer on Wednesday: **Dave Costanza, Clem Bushman, Bev Iacona, Judy Quicho, Rowena Cayaban, Bobbie Ocang, Vangie Parrilla, Nancy Newton, Carole Miller, Lorraine Lohmeier and Crispina Malonosan.**

...to those who arrive very early every Saturday morning to clean the church and prepare it and the parish hall for the weekend: **Reno & Thelma Benasfre, Angela Bueno, Mercy Osborne, Jean Rogers, Jun Bajet, and Al Cosce.**

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall throughout the week: **Rose Salamanca, Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, and Fr. Robert.**

...to **Dilcia Aparicio** 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, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, 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:

Mel Costanza, Rowena Cayaban, Alicia Perez, Yvette Young, Joe Fanfa, Bev Iacona and Paul Riofski.

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

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Dave Costanza (Lead), Carole Miller (set-up), Beth Enea, Richard Enea, Kathy Augusta, Vince Augusta and Sherry Webb.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keeps watch over our vehicles during the weekend Liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Tony Gumina.**

From Father Tom Bonacci
THEY ARE US!

The Interfaith Peace Project joins with the brokenhearted peoples of the World to express our sympathy and love to all our Muslim Sisters and Brothers. The horrific killings and violence against the Muslim community of New Zealand is a call to action on the part of the World community. We can no longer tolerate the self-righteous nationalism that compromises the value of another person's life and well-being. We can no longer endure the politics of hate that excludes and compromises the dignity and humanity of other peoples because they are "different". The blood of those slaughtered and injured in Christchurch, New Zealand, cries out for that justice that will eradicate hate from the face of the Earth.

The violence experienced in New Zealand reverberates throughout the World. This was an attack on all people who would live in peace with a respect for others. Now is the time for religious institutions and leaders to examine their

own teachings and hearts seeking an end to violence in all its forms. Long before weapons kill and injure people, the violence of our thoughts and words compromises the safety and security of others.

National and World leaders of every kind must provide the example and the policies by which we live on Earth as a Family of peoples in a neighborhood of Nations. The idea that each Nation must only be concerned with its own progress is not only foolish but dangerous. Policies that favor one Nation against another make no sense in a global World.

The violence that struck the people of Islam, the terror that broke the heart of New Zealand, remind us that we must live in this World as one human family. We are all responsible for one another.

Dedicate yourself today to reach out to our Muslim Neighbors to not only express your sympathy and outrage but to pledge to stand in solidarity with them each and every day. In the aftermath of the killings in Pittsburgh, the community coined a mantra to live by: "We are stronger than hate."

As our hearts continue to break, we call upon all of you to respond with a love that is stronger than hate, with a care for others that is stronger than hate, with a justice that is stronger than hate, with a conviction that is stronger than hate.

Let us call to mind the words of the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern, as she sought to comfort her grieving Nation:

“What has happened in Christchurch is an extraordinary act of unprecedented violence. It has no place in New Zealand. Many of those affected will be members of our migrant communities – New Zealand is their home – they are us.”

They are us!” Sometimes in the darkest moment the light does shine. The next time you meet someone you think does not belong recite the mantra, “They are us!”

Peacefully, Thomas P. Bonacci, C.P.
with The Board of Directors and all of us at The Interfaith Peace Project



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I invite you to join me for the next Nightwalk Against Violence on Friday, April 12th, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. We will meet at Antioch Church Family, 55 E. 18th Street, Antioch, in the parking lot. Orange “CeaseFire” t-shirts will be made available if you do not already have one. This is a call for an end to gun violence and an opportunity for our Antioch residents to have a voice in standing up for safety in our community. The witness is sponsored by participating churches who are members of Contra Costa CeaseFire, including our parish.



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**

From Our Grand Knight

I want to thank our Brothers **Bill Saunders, PGK Dave Simpson, Ron Yarolimek, Walter Schlueter, Mike Bacchus, Edgardo Mataba, and GK Tim Cox** who came out on Saturday, March 16th, to clean up Contra Loma Blvd. It was definitely a very beautiful day to take a walk and contribute to the community.

We had quite a bit to pick up. Thanks again for your service.

Yours in Christ,
Grand Knight Tim Cox

C5 Report by Carolyn Krantz, Pastoral Associate

Fr. Robert and I attended the second monthly meeting of the Contra Costa County Clergy Cohort on March 20. While the first meeting last month was on the state of housing in the county, this one explored gun violence. Last year there were 40 homicides in the county, one quarter of them in East County. The participants at the meeting shared their hopes and their fears about the escalating violence in our area. We reflected that the first question we need to think about given this information is not, “What do we need to do?”, but rather “Who do we need to become?”

A former gang member spoke to us and related that he had no parental guidance growing up and the models like Martin

Luther King, were before his time. He made us aware of the sense of loneliness and lack of stability that makes someone join a gang. The leaders shared that peace is not doing everything around violence, but entering into the world of those who perpetrate violence to explore that world and make a difference. The news reports of what this world is like are not viable.

Rev. Jeffery Brown from Boston gave us a history of violence reduction using Ceasefire tactics in that area. He walked the streets after midnight for many years meeting gang members where they were. He made hope cross the street. Then Rev. Ben McBride from PICO (People Improving Communities through Organizing) shared how they cut the homicide rate in half in five years in Oakland through these Ceasefire tactics. They developed something called “call-ins” where gang members, service providers police and faith leaders would sit around the table and discuss options. 70-80% chose to opt out of violence with this kind of support. Mother Teresa said that, “The problem is that we forgot that we belong to each other.” In order to stop the violence, we need to enter into that world as messengers of peace. This is bringing the church to the streets and seeing that we are all one family. It is not about “locking up the bad guys”, but like Jesus, “eating with publicans and sinners”. We have to be with the people closest to the pain, those at risk of being a victim or a perpetrator of gun violence.

Only one percent of the population solves problems through gun violence. The Center for Disease Control says that every homicide costs the taxpayer one million dollars. If we could provide

services to an individual for \$20,000 and a job for \$40,000, we could save a lot of money that could then be redirected to schools and other needs. In this light, using violence reduction tactics is a fiscally responsible thing to do.

The participants at the meeting were aware that homelessness, gang violence, education, and other critical needs in the county are all interrelated. We need to see the full picture in order to discern where we can most make a difference. The Ceasefire Night Walks are one way to make a difference. They bring us together as a community for peace. They build relationships in the whole community. Join our next walk on April 12th at 6:00 PM at Antioch Family Church (55 E. 18th St.). Please wear an orange shirt if you have one.