

**For The Bulletin Of
April 7, 2019**



**THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF
LENT**

From Father Robert

Although liturgically we are reading from the Gospel of Luke, Cycle C, today we read from the Gospel of John. But interestingly, this story is not in the earliest or best manuscripts of John's Gospel. In fact, many later manuscripts place this story in the Gospel of Luke, effectively between Luke 21: 38 and 22:1, or after the last chapter of the gospel. And other manuscripts have this story not in John 8 (where we find it in the canon of scripture) but following John 7:36. Of course, none of this detracts from the story being canonical and inspired Scripture. But it's good to keep in mind the varied history and manuscript difficulties with the story. The notes in the New American bible explain more.

Part of the reason we pay attention to the problematic background of the story is that it gives us an insight into the early church that produced the text. There was a time in church history, a few centuries after Jesus' death and resurrection, that some Christians did not believe in forgiveness of sin after one's baptism. As a result, many Christians

were delaying baptism until well after their "sinning years" were over, effectively delaying baptism until one's deathbed! But that can be a difficult time to predict. Other Christians were proclaiming what was perceived to be a more libertine attitude, namely, that one could be forgiven for sins even after one was baptized. Recall that part of the difficulty was that the Letter to the Hebrews states quite clearly, "If we sin deliberately after receiving knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains sacrifice for sins but a fearful prospect of judgment and a flaming fire that is going to consume the adversaries." Further Tertullian argued against any forgiveness of sins after baptism.

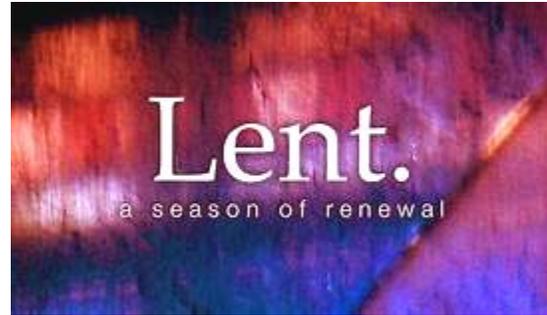
In the face of such internal church disputes comes this story about Jesus. That is to say, it was about the time that the church was engaging in the debate about forgiveness of sins that the story of Jesus forgiving the woman caught in adultery began to appear in early manuscripts. It's as though the church recalled an episode from Jesus' life, or told a story about how Jesus might approach the issue. And now, of course we have the sacrament of reconciliation. The history of the sacrament of reconciliation is beyond the purview of this column. But the story in today's gospel seems to have been a prominent post in the journey of how the church went from Jesus' personal ministry to the sacrament of reconciliation we have today.



Living The Paschal Mystery

Forgiveness is not an easy thing to express; it is not an easy thing to do. We see from Jesus' own ministry, from the experience of the early church, and probably our own past experiences how quickly we exclude others, setting apart and separating them. But Jesus' ministry, and by extension, the church's own ministry, is about inclusion through reconciliation. Jesus proclaims the forgiveness of sins, even undergoing a baptism of forgiveness. By His ministry those on the margins, those who have been condemned, are brought back and welcomed into the fold. The disciples of Jesus carry this ministry forward into the world. And like the time of Jesus, this ministry moves forward even when there are forces present who prefer exclusion. The question on the WWJD bracelet, "What would Jesus do?" is particularly appropriate here. Jesus did not condemn. Neither should we. Jesus forgave. So should we.

- In the reading from Isaiah, God proclaims "See, I am doing something new." Where do you see God's action in your life, family, or our parish bringing about something new?
- St. Paul writes to the Philippians, "I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ." How has your practice of fasting been this Lent? How has it enriched or affected your relationship with God and others?
- Jesus gives us a model of mercy in today's gospel. How have you experienced giving and receiving mercy in your own life of faith?



About Liturgy: Misery and Mercy Meet

In his lecture on the Gospel of John, St. Augustine beautifully describes the moment in today's gospel when the woman and Jesus were left alone. Augustine said "Two were left: misery and mercy." When we hear this gospel passage we often focus on the woman's sin, which is certainly serious. Yet she is not the only sinner in this story. The Scribes and Pharisees were guilty of pride and anger disguised as religious piety, directed not only toward the woman but also to Jesus, Whom they hoped to ensnare. Although one could say that Jesus did not condemn the Scribes and Pharisees for their sin, neither did Jesus offer them a word of forgiveness as He gave to the woman. Perhaps this is because the Scribes and Pharisees had not recognized their own misery in the face of mercy, whereas the woman, dragged half naked into the streets to endure public scrutiny, had no choice but to stand silently in her misery.

Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer, particularly when we say, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we are given the opportunity to bring our misery before the Father, Whose name is mercy. How often though do we say these words without careful attention and intention without hearing them as a call to offer mercy as much as a plea for it?

As we pray the Lord's Prayer this week, let us be even more attentive to the meaning of the words we pray so that we too might learn to act with mercy when we encounter another's misery, and thus sin no longer.

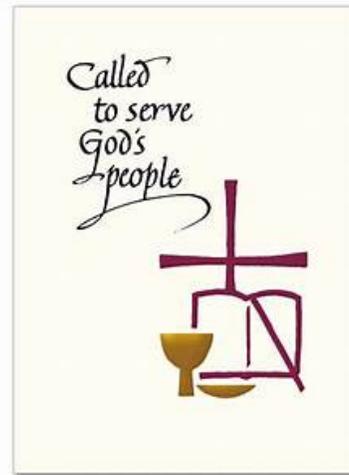


Today we join Robert and Alicia Solano and their Family and Friends in congratulating their daughter **Francesca** who will wed her beloved, **Benjamin Kahane**, in Holy Matrimony this afternoon. May God bless them with all that is necessary for strong faith, hope, and love all the days of their married life.



You are invited to the Cathedral this coming Thursday, April 11th for the Annual Chrism Mass at which the oils for the coming year will be blessed and consecrated. The liturgy begins at

7:00 p.m. and will last approximately an hour and a half.



The Members and Pastoral Council of Saint Andrew's Lutheran Church cordially invite you to attend the Service of Ordination for **The Reverend Herman A. Sealey** as a Pastor of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) on Sunday, April 14, 2019, at 4:00 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 195 Alvarado Avenue, Pittsburg, California 94565.

Our parish has had a wonderful relationship with St. Andrew's Lutheran Church for the past 15 years. Their Pastor, Rev. Roger Kuehn, has participated in our Ecumenical Good Friday Liturgies as well as participating in the World Hunger Walk which always leaves from their facility on San Jose Avenue. I am attending and I hope there will be other parishioners who will join me in this wonderful event on Palm Sunday for Deacon Sealey as he is ordained to the Presbyterate.

Annual Bishop's Appeal

Last weekend we participated in this year's annual Bishop's Appeal. Over the last three weeks, we have reflected on how we can make a difference in supporting both parishes and schools in need in our diocese. Our goal for this year is the same as for last: **\$34,900**. Last year, we exceeded the goal by 104.51%! I believe we can do the same this year and what is important is that everyone participates. I realize that some will contribute a one time gift of \$70, others will give more, others will contribute less, but again, what is crucial is that everyone participate. Appeal envelopes are once again in the pews as well as on the credenza. If you did not bring your contribution with you last week, please place your Appeal Envelope with your contribution in the first collection at each liturgy today. Many thanks for what you are doing to help us reach this year's goal.



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



We continue to be grateful to all those who volunteer in so many ways to help us in the ministries, programs, and outreaches of our parish: to those who arrive early each Saturday morning to clean and prepare the church and parish hall for the weekend: **Al Cosce, Reno Benasfre, Thelma Benasfre, Jean**

Rogers, Nina Bourain, Carole Miller, Mencey Osborne, and Emilia Freking;

...to those who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the parish hall and church throughout the week: **Rose**

Salamanca, Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, and Father 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:

Frances Rojek, Mel Costanza, Maryann Peddicord, Estrella Rusk, Alicia Perez, 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, 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 and Steve Rojek.**

