

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH

*6:30 a.m. David Mensing
8:00 a.m. Int. Evans Family

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH

8:00 a.m. Robert Rudolph Sr. Family

ASH WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1ST

6:30 a.m. Donald Evans
8:00 a.m. Margaret Braun **ALL MASS**
12:30 p.m. Ekang Magno
7:00 p.m. George Zych

THURSDAY, MARCH 2ND

*6:30 a.m. Herb Brandenburg
8:00 a.m. Kelly Jeanne Finton

FIRST FRIDAY, MARCH 3RD

8:00 a.m. Paul Till

SATURDAY, MARCH 4TH

8:00 a.m. Int. Rosary Society
5:00 p.m. John Phillips

SUNDAY, MARCH 5TH

7:15 a.m. Edward R. Van Gessel
9:00 a.m. Rev. Joseph E. Till
11:00 a.m. James Rooney
12:30 p.m. In Thanksgiving
6:00 p.m. For the Parish (Life Teen Mass)

*CHAPEL

SERVERS' SCHEDULE

(It is YOUR responsibility to find a replacement)

Saturday, March 4

8:00 a.m. Chloe Anderson, Tori Roser
5:00 p.m. Trevor Campbell, Aaron Ceckowski
Olivia Fawcett, Ali Ball

Sunday, March 5

7:15 a.m. Trina Manalo, Max Roesler
Michael Yoder, Katie Manalo
9:00 a.m. Wallace Hogle, Hannah Molinaro
Emily Tomlinson, Rett Dumas
11:00 a.m. Logan Noll, Ryan Noll
Sarah Nixon, Daniel Nixon
12:30 p.m. Steve McIlwain, Samuel Gray



Our Hearts
go out to...

MAY GOD GRANT

ETERNAL LIGHT AND PEACE

to Jeanette Craighead, mother of Don Craighead; Charlotte Giant, mother of Michelle Thomas; Ruth Rodman, mother of James Cox; Imogene Penisten Brake, mother of John Penisten; Dolores Wells, spouse of Noel Wells; Richard Meese, brother of Betty Heck-Dennison; Helen Plasterer, spouse of Robert Plasterer; Mary Reith, mother of William and Mark Reith; Oney Hoot, spouse of Marg Hoot and father of Rita Abel, Nan Brinker, Bill Hoot and Tom Hoot; Joan Bobay, mother of Peggy Nicola; Gladys Fleming, mother of Brian Fleming; Ruth Helmer, mother of Doug Helmer; Burton "George" Pyle, father of Bonnie Neumann; and Stephen Niezer, brother of Bernard Niezer.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS SCHEDULE

We will have four Masses on Ash Wednesday: 6:30 and 8:00 a.m., 12:30 and 7:00 p.m., all in the church. For the 8:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Masses, please enter the parking lot from Wallen Road. On Ash Wednesday, a collection will be taken up for the Church of Central and Eastern Europe which was decimated by Communism.

ASH WEDNESDAY USHER HELP

Usher volunteers are needed for the Ash Wednesday Mass schedule. There is a sign up sheet in the ministers' sacristy. Both ladies and men are welcome as ushers. Please help out if you can.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

This traditional Lenten devotion will be conducted on the Fridays of Lent at 7:00 p.m. The church is open throughout the week for persons who wish to make the Stations privately.

FROM THE PASTOR

May you have a fruitful Lent. Look on Lent as a 40-day retreat, a time to rediscover and renew your baptismal call. Perhaps your schedule will permit you to attend weekday Mass. Or consider participating in our Stations of the Cross, a traditional Lenten devotion. Stop in our Blessed Sacrament Chapel for prayer, particularly on Wednesday and Sunday, when we have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. The Chapel opens early in the morning and closes at 9:00 p.m. on weekdays. If you are participating in Disciples in Reflection, enjoy the company of your fellow parishioners. Check out our pamphlet rack and do some good spiritual reading. Close to our hearts are the catechumens and candidates as they prepare to receive the Easter sacraments. Fr. John



Pastor's
LENTE MESSAGE

FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

Catholics, 14 and older, are obliged to abstain from the eating of meat on Ash Wednesday and on all Fridays during the season of Lent. Self-imposed observance of fasting on all weekdays of Lent is strongly recommended. Catholics, 18 to 59 years old, are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday of Lent. Fasting means one full meal a day, but does not forbid taking some food at the other meal times. A person is excused from fasting for dietary or health reasons.

OPERATION RICE BOWL

On Ash Wednesday, our parish will begin Operation Rice Bowl. Sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, the six-week Lenten program combines Prayer, Fasting, Education and Almsgiving. Proceeds benefit the poor, both in our diocese and in the developing world. Please join this meaningful Lenten observance.



Adult Classes

RE-MEMBERING CHURCH

at our St. Vincent parish is for inactive Catholics who are interested in exploring a return to active participation in the church, but it can also help active Catholics remember the roots of their faith.

Join Father Joe and Marilyn Fech on Thursday evenings during this Lenten season for five catechesis and discussion sessions (March 9 – April 6) from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. in the convent house meeting room. Session topics will include, but not be limited to, Jesus; Sacraments of the Church; Morality; Church Tradition/History. Your questions will direct the sessions, too. Call Tim Werling at 484-0067 or the church office at 489-3537 if you have questions about these Re-Membering Church sessions.

Also consider attending Thursday evening sessions during the Easter Season which will focus on the Catholic Mass. We will have a 30-minute presentation focused on a particular aspect of the Mass followed by time for discussion and questions about the material presented. April 27 – An introduction to the Feast of Faith; May 4 – An exchange of love with Christ; May 11 – History of the Mass; May 18 – Participation in the Mass; May 25 – Finding Christ. We will even have time to explore other questions you may have about the church.

Note: Young adults in high school and other adults who want to be confirmed this Easter Season need to attend our Lenten Season Re-Membering Church catechesis sessions. Contact Fr. Joe at 489-3537 if you want to be confirmed this Easter Season.

MUSIC DURING MASS

As we approach Lent, I would like to take a minute and review some Latin text that we will be singing for Mass. After the Sign of Peace, we sing:

"Lamb of God You take away the Sins of the World, Have Mercy on Us"
"Lamb of God You take away the Sins of the World, Have Mercy on Us"
"Lamb of God You take away the Sins of the World, Grant us Peace"

The Latin text is:

"Agnus Dei Qui Tollis Pecata Mundi; Miserere nobis;"
"Agnus Dei Qui Tollis Pecata Mundi; Miserere nobis;"
"Agnus Dei Qui Tollis Pecata Mundi; Dona nobis Pacem"

As part of the Universal church we will be using the original text from the "Agnus Dei" and I will teach a new melody the weekend before Lent starts.
Tony

Meetings of the Week

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY – Monday, February 27, at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel
 WINGS 3 – Monday, February 27, at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room
 TWO BY TWO BIBLE STUDY – Tuesday, February 28, at 8:30 a.m. in the East Room
 SHEPHERDS OF CHRIST – Tuesday, February 28, at 6:30 p.m. in the Reservation Chapel
 ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT – Wednesday, March 1, at 8 a.m. in the Reservation Chapel
 RCIA – Wednesday, March 1, at 6:30 p.m. in the Church
 WINGS – Wednesday, March 1, at 9:00 a.m. in the Spiritual Center, East Room and Nursery
 WINGS II – Thursday, March 2, at 9:00 a.m. in the Community Room
 WOMEN'S CHRIST RENEWS HIS PARISH WEEKEND – Friday and Saturday, March 4 and 5
 ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT – Sunday, March 5, at 12:00 p.m. in the Reservation Chapel

LENTEN RESOURCES

Ash Wednesday is nearly here. This weekend, February 25 and 26, there will be a table set up in the Gathering Space with Lenten Materials. There are booklets for teens, families, individuals and children. Look for daily devotionals, Stations of the Cross, prayer resources, sticker books and key tags. Suggested donations will be posted.

HE CHOSE THE NAILS

You are invited on a spiritual journey to the Cross – a Lenten Day of Recollection entitled "He Chose the Nails". This day of recollection is given by Bob Deck, a secular Franciscan, in the Spiritual Center on March 11 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The day will focus on several talks, which take participants on a spiritual journey to the Cross. Lunch will be pot luck style. When you register, you may give your preference of what to bring for the meal. There will be a free-will offering to cover the cost of materials. Please bring your Bibles and a pen or pencil. To register, call Bob Deck at 490-9571. Deadline for registration is March 9.



CPR/AED TRAINING

A session on this life saving technique will be offered on Saturday, March 11, from 8:00 – 12 noon. To sign up, please call Deb Andrews at 489-3537. There will be a small nominal fee. Just a reminder that if you went through training at St. Vincent's, look at the expiration date on your card.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE AT ST. VINCENT'S

Every two seconds, someone in America needs blood. Please help by donating this life-giving gift of blood at the American Red Cross Blood Drive here at St. Vincent's on Saturday, March 11, 2006, in the Parish Hall (old gym). Donation hours are from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments will have priority. Also, childcare will be provided to make donating more convenient.

Call Bruce Cadwell at 484-0078 to schedule your donation (or if you have any questions).

NEWS FLASH

The Men's Prayer Breakfast will now be meeting at the Life Teen House. We meet every 3rd Friday of the month at 6 a.m. A wonderful breakfast will be provided. Donations appreciated but certainly not required. The next meeting is March 18. For more information call Corbin Berkshire at 483-4369 or contact the church office.

PARISH WIDE MISSION TRIP

We are seeking God's will for a mission trip to the Gulf Coast to serve those left in need from Hurricane Katrina. If you are interested in serving on a team to plan or if you would like to participate in the trip, contact Vicki Welch at 483-7257 THIS WEEK.

YOUTH MINISTRY

Feb. 26 Roller Dome Night, 7:45-9:30 p.m.
 March 1 Ministry Hour, 7:30 p.m.
 March 2 Pray at Abortion clinic, 7:00 a.m.
 Concert at Seekers, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
 March 5 Life Night

"COME HUNGRY" LIFE TEEN SPRING RETREAT

March 17-19 – Open to ALL high school age teens. Registration in progress.



ROLLIN' AT THE DOME

For a Mardi Gras Party, Sunday, February 26, from 7:45 – 9:30 p.m. Cost \$4 (\$2 if you bring skates). We'll have food here and then head over to the Roller Dome. Let Cindy know if you need transportation. If you don't have the \$, pay what you can.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND ASK OFF WORK!

Frankie and the Holy Rollers are back at Seekers on Thursday, March 2, at 7:00 p.m. Last time the place was packed, and we praised the Lord with incredible energy. BTW, our CD, made the radio! It was played on REDEEMER RADIO AM 1450.

LENT, DAILY MASS AND BREAKFAST

Teens, come to Mass during the week as part of your Lenten sacrifice. Watch the bulletin for days when we'll serve breakfast at the Life House.

LIFE TEEN SUMMER MISSION TRIP

Please read more on page 2 of the bulletin.

For information about St. Vincent Youth Ministry, contact Cindy Black at 637-7445 or Cblack@SaintV.org.

DISCIPLES IN REFLECTION

- Registration to join a group was closed as of Friday, February 24.
- Booklets waiting for pickup: Registered SCC and Lenten Groups have their packets on the "Disciples Table" near the East Meeting Room. The list is not in your envelope; you will be called if we have added members to your group.
- There are individual booklets available as extras should you need more for your group or for private use.
- Also, there are envelopes packaged for at home use should you wish to reflect with your family.
- Blessings on your "HOLY XTREME MAKEOVER"! (translation: Blessed Lent!)

JUST A FEW AFTERTHOUGHTS ON THE STEWARDSHIP SERVICE WEEKEND

YES, you can still pick up a Stewardship Opportunities Booklet...

- They are labeled with your name if you signed up for one
- They are labeled for your Pastoral Facilitator to pick up for your Small Christian Community
- There is a signup sheet if you missed the opportunity and would like one made up for you.

By the way, did you figure it out? That weekend was our newest version of a Ministry Fair! How did you like it? Please give your input to any of us on our Parish Stewardship Committee: Barbara Clayton, Liara Holly, Scott Koesters, S. Kay Jarema, SSND, Steve Maxwell, Francie McComb, Joe Palazzolo, Dan Rohloff, Fr. John Kuzmich, Fr. Joe Gaughan

CATHOLIC STUDY BIBLES OUT OF PRINT

The Serendipity Catholic Study Bible is no longer in print. Please contact Karen Magdich at Cathedral Bookstore for what is available in Catholic Study Bibles. If this is a purchase for a parish group, call S. Kay for price reduction procedure.

SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Please pick up your banner. Thanks for lending its elegance. Gratefully, S. Kay



CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

March 1	8:00 a.m.	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
March 1	9:00 a.m.	WINGS
March 1	6:30 p.m.	RCIA
March 2	9:00 a.m.	WINGS II
March 4 & 5		Women's Christ Renews His Parish Weekend
March 5	12:00 p.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 6	7:00 p.m.	WINGS 3
March 6	7:00 p.m.	Rosary Society
March 7	8:30 a.m.	Two by Two Bible Study
March 7	6:00 p.m.	HASA
March 7	6:30 p.m.	Shepherds of Christ
March 7	6:45 p.m.	RCIA
March 7	7:00 p.m.	Disability Meeting
March 8	8:00 a.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 8	9:00 a.m.	WINGS
March 8	6:30 p.m.	School Board
March 8	7:00 p.m.	Knights of Columbus
March 9	5:15 p.m.	Market Day pick up
March 9	7:00 p.m.	Divorced Catholic Support Group
March 9	7:00 p.m.	Liturgical Ministers' Reflection #2
March 9	7:00 p.m.	Baptismal Preparation I
March 9	7:00 p.m.	Re-Membering Church
March 10	5:00 p.m.	Fish Fry
March 11	8:00 a.m.	CPR/AED Training
March 11	7:30 a.m.	K of C Blood Drive
March 11	9:00 a.m.	Lenten Day of Recollection
March 12	12:00 p.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 12	7:00 p.m.	Rekindle the Fire
March 13	7:00 p.m.	WINGS 3
March 14	8:00 a.m.	Two by Two Bible Study
March 14	6:30 p.m.	Shepherds of Christ
March 14	6:45 p.m.	RCIA
March 14	7:00 p.m.	A.D.O.P.T.
March 15	8:00 a.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 15	9:00 a.m.	WINGS
March 15	7:00 p.m.	Christ Renews His Parish Continuation Com.
March 15	7:00 p.m.	Pastoral Council
March 15	7:00 p.m.	Knights of Columbus
March 16	9:00 a.m.	WINGS II
March 16	7:00 p.m.	Baptismal Preparation II
March 16	7:00 p.m.	Re-Membering Church
March 17	6:00 a.m.	Men's Prayer Breakfast (Life Teen House)
March 19	12:00 p.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 20	7:00 p.m.	Buildings & Grounds
March 20	7:00 p.m.	WINGS 3
March 20	7:00 p.m.	Development Advisory Board
March 21	8:30 a.m.	Two by Two Bible Study
March 21	6:30 p.m.	Shepherds of Christ
March 21	6:30 p.m.	Finance Council
March 21	6:45 p.m.	RCIA
March 22	8:00 a.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 22	9:00 a.m.	WINGS
March 22	7:00 p.m.	Parish Nurse
March 23	9:00 a.m.	WINGS II
March 23	7:00 p.m.	Baptismal Preparation I
March 23	7:00 p.m.	Divorced Catholic Support Group
March 23	7:00 p.m.	Re-Membering Church
March 24	5:00 p.m.	Fish Fry
March 25		Disabilities Retreat
March 25	8:45 a.m.	Liturgical Ministers' Reflection #3
March 26	12:00 p.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 27	7:00 p.m.	WINGS 3
March 27	7:00 p.m.	St. Vincent de Paul Society
March 28	8:30 a.m.	Two by Two Bible Study
March 28	6:30 p.m.	Shepherds of Christ
March 28	6:45 p.m.	RCIA
March 29	8:00 a.m.	Adoration of Blessed Sacrament
March 29	9:00 a.m.	WINGS
March 30	9:00 a.m.	WINGS II
March 30	7:00 p.m.	Knights of Columbus Admission Ceremony
March 30	7:00 p.m.	Re-Membering Church



CHILDREN'S STEWARDSHIP

"I washed my mom's car." Logan B.

"I babysat my brother and sister twice over the weekend." Luke G.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

CONFIRMATION DATE SET

Confirmation is scheduled for Thursday, April 27, at 7:00 p.m. in the Church.

RELIGIOUS ED AND PRESCHOOL SCHEDULE

Preschool classes do not meet on Sunday, February 26. Sunday Religious Ed classes meet at 4:00 p.m. on Feb. 26, March, 5, 12, 19 and 26. Wednesday classes will meet on March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29. An Ash Wednesday prayer service will be held in the Parish Hall on March 1 for grades 1-8.

SPRING TEAMS NEED COACHES

The St. Vincent's 7th/8th grade Girls Soccer team and track team are looking for coaches. If you would like to coach one of the teams, call Paul Cassabon at 750-3011 or call 489-3537, ext. 218.

PLEASE HELP!

I am in DESPERATE NEED of someone to carpool my 8th grader, just one way, from St. Vincent's to home. Will pay. We live on Hazelett Road, near the additions of Cherry Hill, Stillwater and Arlington. Please call Patti at 486-7045 (home) or 415-5171 (cell). Thank you!

DOUBLE ABC'S ON WEDNESDAY'S IN MARCH

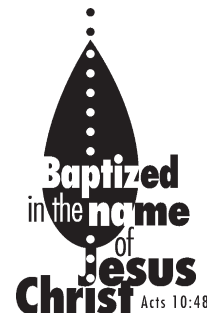
Shop at Scott's on Wednesday's during March when ABC's for Education points will be doubled!

BAPTIZED DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY

John Paul Geise, son of Paul L. and Jennifer S. (Bostwick) Geise
 Kyra Ray Lynn Thomas, daughter of Shannon R. and Amy L. (Fish) Thomas
 Maddox Thomas Arnold, son of Joshua and Amanda E. (Norris) Arnold
 Kearstin Marie McMahon, daughter of John P. and Tara M. (Croteau) McMahon
 Keegan John Robert McMahon, son of John P. and Tara M. (Croteau) McMahon
 Mia Roselin Villareal, daughter of Albert P. and Emily J. (Wiebke) Villareal
 Zachary Tyler Ciocca, son of Jeffrey L. and Laura A. (Krouse) Ciocca
 Reagan Hope Ormiston, daughter of Joel M. and Jaimie L. (Andrews) Ormiston
 Nicholas Stephen Schuhmacher, son of Stephen H. and Jennifer R. (Hegge) Schuhmacher

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS OF ST. VINCENT'S PARISH

Angela Gunkel, 13321 Drayton Parkway
 Scott Kraner, 658 Archer Avenue
 Sarah Hyde, 8627 Wave Circle, Apt. C
 Vincent Garcia, 444 Wallen Hills Drive
 Anne Carney, 6218 Graysford Pl.
 James Sierakowski, 1133 Easton Trail
 Michael McNeff, 15025 Water Oak Pl.
 Gail Campbell, 2611 River Park Drive
 Brett and Kristine Beachy, 2205 Autumn Lake Pl.
 David and Debra Wise, 16406 Marble Ridge
 Jason and Amy Thompson, 3007 Killarney Place
 Erin Lauer, 4117 Sheraton Drive
 Christina Oskey, 1120 Cinnamon Road
 Peter and Renae Schneider, 14810 Greystone
 Kent and Heather Castleman, 3835 State Line Road
 Bruce McNamara, 3430 Quiet Eddy Court
 Matthew and Maria Hoffman, 12528 Stoneboro Court
 Kyle and Natalie Burkholder, 12126 Cornerstone Blvd.
 Bruce and Barbara Cumberland, 11812 Linden Grove Dr.



RCIA

If you are interested in learning more about the Catholic Church, its teachings and traditions, you may want to consider the RCIA. For more information, please call the church office at 489-3537, and ask for Judy.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR CHILDREN (RCIC)

If your child is over the age of eight years old and not baptized or baptized in another faith and interested in the Catholic faith, please contact Cyndi Wolf at 489-3537. We welcome inquiries about the program year-round. If your child is over the age of eight and baptized Catholic but in need of the sacraments of First Communion and/or Confirmation, we are enrolling now for next year's program.

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION CLASS

Attendance at two Baptismal Preparation Sessions is required before your child is baptized. They are Session I and Session II. You may attend Session II before Session I, if necessary. Each session will begin at 7:00 p.m. It is recommended that you attend before the birth of your child so that there will be no delay in setting a date for the baptism once the baby is born. Godparents, too, are welcome. Please call the church office to register for your sessions.

Session I (East Meeting Room)

February 23; March 9 and 23

Session II (Church Conference Room)

March 16

CO-SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR DISCERNMENT

We will be discerning for a new women's co-spiritual director for Christ Renews His Parish. The individual should be Catholic and have had participated in a past Christ Renews His Parish weekend and team and be of good standing in the church. Duties include participation in retreat weekends, team formation and monthly CRHP Continuation Committee meetings. Please send letters of nomination to: Laurie Grashoff, 11625 Trade Wind Cove, Fort Wayne, 46845. No self-nominations, please!

YOUNG ADULT LIFE (21-40 MARRIED/SINGLE)

YACHT CLUB - LENT

On Tuesday, February 28, several small groups will be meeting throughout Lent for reflection and preparation for Easter. If other nights are needed, we can form groups as needed. For more information, contact Jeff and Michelle Henry at 490-9178, jamihenry@comcast.net. This is the perfect time to join the Young Adult Life group and meet new people.

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

This is open to all females between the ages of 18 and 40, single or married. We usually meet twice a month. Everyone reads the assigned part of the book before the meeting, so we can discuss the section of the book. We will be starting a new book in March - this is a great time to join. The book is listed so that you have time to find it. Contact Mindy Heidenreich at mindymay@hotmail.com if you have any questions.

New Women's Book – "The Theology of the Passion of the Christ" by Monica Migliorino Miller

March 9th - A great time to join!

ANNUAL BISHOP'S RETREAT FOR YOUNG ADULTS, AGES 18-40 "EUCHARIST: GIFT AND MYSTERY"

The retreat is Friday, March 31 through Sunday, April 2. All meals and lodging will be provided for only \$65 for the entire weekend. The choicest rooms will be assigned on a "first come-first served" basis. After the early registration deadline (March 24), all other reservations by phone, fax, email and at the door will be \$85. Register at www.diocesefwsb.org/CYAM/Retreat_information.htm. Scholarships are available through our office. Call Cynthia at 483-3661.

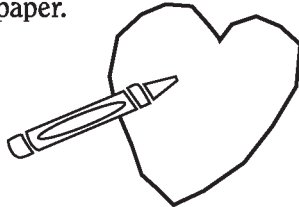
Send an Invisible Valentine to Someone You Love!

Here's what you'll need:

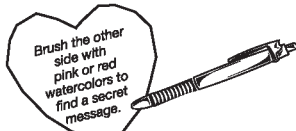
- Scissors
- White construction paper
- White crayon
- Pen
- Pink or red watercolor

Here's how to make an invisible Valentine:

1. Cut a heart shape out of the white construction paper.



2. Use the white crayon to decorate the heart with designs and a message. Press hard!
3. On the back, use the pen to write: "Brush the other side with pink or red watercolor to find a secret message."



4. Give the valentine to someone you love. When the person paints the "blank" side, your secret message will be revealed!



Love is the greatest commandment!

What did Jesus say when asked about the greatest commandment of God?

Write the first letter of each picture on the lines below.



Mark 12:30-31

Answer: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and ... Love your neighbor as yourself.

GOOD NEWS

Seventeenth Sunday

In Ordinary Time

GOOD NEWS

Gn 18:20-32/Col 2:12-14/Lk 11:1-13

Paige Byrne Shortal

sundaybulletin@liguori.org

Fifteenth Sunday In Ordinary Time

In today's readings we hear Abraham petitioning God to spare Sodom and Jesus teaching his disciples to pray. In our liturgy, the time for intercessory prayer is known as the Prayer of the Faithful. These prayers, which conclude the Liturgy of the Word have an interesting history.

Paige Byrne Shortal

sundaybulletin@liguori.org

Our Liturgy of the Word is rooted from the Jewish synagogue service that Jesus would have prayed, just as our Liturgy of the Word is an adaptation of the Sabbath meal. Within the synagogue service there were prayers called the *Tephillah* (The Prayers) or the *Amidah* (the Standing Prayers) or *Shemona-*Esreh** (The Eighteen). The form of these prayers is familiar: the leader would speak about the intention for peace, justice, those who are sick, widows, orphans, a good harvest and the congregation would pray in unison. Imagine two circles, one congregational, "Anger" circle is our Circle of Interest. It might include the national economy, war in another country, city politics, the universal church, and so on. The smaller circle is our Circle of Influence. This is where we can make a difference. I may not be effective in national politics, but perhaps I can influence the availability of services to the poor of my town, or the recycling program of my office, or an after-school program at my children's school, or the care of the elderly in my parish.

The Christians quickly adapted these prayers and there is reference to them in Paul's first letter to Timothy (1 Timothy 2:1-4). As the liturgy developed into the work of professional clerics, these prayers of the faithful were abbreviated, moved to the beginning of Mass - what we now know as the *oration* and almost lost.

For a thousand years, the Prayers of the faithful were missing from our liturgy; and only at the Council of Vatican II were they restored to their rightful place. Fr. Josef Jungmann, S.J., a liturgist and council *periti* (expert), wrote that the restoration of these prayers signaled a new ecclesiology, a new idea of who the Church is and who is responsible for the work of the Church.

The Prayer of the Faithful is the culmination of the Liturgy of the Word and the work of the whole Church. The readings, the gospel, and the homily all lead us to prayer for the Church, the world, peace among the nations, local concerns, the unemployed, those whose lives are threatened, the sick, and those who mourn. This is the moment in the timeless prayer of the Mass, when we articulate the concrete needs of this time and this place and these people.

I sat down to consider today's gospel and it took me awhile to figure out the name of the tune. It's the song Mr. Rogers always sang: "It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood...." In this story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus suggests that our neighbor is the person on our path and that our neighborhood extends beyond the boundaries of our usual circle.

In his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey writes about the difference between our Circle of Interest and our Circle of Influence. Imagine two circles, one inside the other. For most people, the congregational, "Anger" circle is our Circle of Interest. It might include the national economy, war in another country, city politics, the universal church, and so on. The smaller circle is our Circle of Influence. This is where we can make a difference. I may not be effective in national politics, but perhaps I can influence the availability of services to the poor of my town, or the recycling program of my office, or an after-school program at my children's school, or the care of the elderly in my parish.

Mr. Covey also describes the person whose Circle of Influence is larger than their Circle of Interest. They could be effective in areas they don't notice, or where they choose not to go, perhaps in situations where they are sorely needed. Mr. Covey suggests that this occurrence is potentially dangerous. How many leaders are the only ones who can make a difference and whose gaze is too local, too much on their own personal concerns or the problems of their clients and donors? How many people could be leaders who don't step out and take the risk?

Our neighborhood is wherever we can be effective as disciples, messengers of the Gospel, caretakers of those with Gospel privileges: the poor, the very young, those yet to be born, and all those whose lives are threatened. "It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood...."