

APRIL 5, 2020

Scripture Reflection

Human beings are united in their suffering. When we find ourselves in a painful moment, our first reaction is “why me?” as if we are the only person on earth who ever encountered this challenge. Going through life with a “why me” attitude only finds us wallowing in the mire of self-pity and never seizing opportunities or graces. We walk in solidarity with every human being in the experience of suffering. Believing that the goal of life is the elimination or avoidance of suffering is simply an illusion that keeps us entrenched in a collective myth. This myth distorts us and limits us.

There are living witnesses among us showing how courage and determination can overcome any degree of hardship, pain, loss, or tragedy. Folks finding the normalcy of their lives suddenly torn asunder are faced with options: opportunity or despair, stay or leave. Jesus stands before us as the prime example of endurance and perseverance. He is the One who showed humility through both the triumphs of life (by learning to be humble) and the tragedies and injustices (by learning how to be obedient). To secular ears, this may be perceived as nonsense. But to those with the eyes of faith, they are pearls of great price.

True humility tempers the temptation we have to become complacent and prevents an excessive relishing of life’s successes and affirmations. Learning obedience keeps us faithful to our relationship with God so that we can find the courage to endure any depth of hardship, disappointment, betrayal, or agony. While we may want our cup of suffering to be taken away, it simply cannot be. Somehow and somewhere in the seemingly opposing experiences life can deal us, God is present with His reassuring, compassionate, empowering, and persevering love. To be true to who we are and who God is, we must take up the cross of suffering, even when it’s the hardest and most apparently senseless thing to do.

Only our soul can understand these things, but our minds cannot, so they continue to run to secular ideas and solutions to pain and hardship. It goes without saying that we need to do all we can to eliminate as much senseless, unjust suffering as possible. Hunger, violence, abuse, exploitation, rejection, prejudice, homelessness, disrespect for life, and a whole host of other sins all result in suffering that is within our control. Then, when we face the uncontrollable kind of suffering or find ourselves the victim of injustice, what do we do?

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Ministry to the Elderly, Seriously Ill and Grieving

Thank you for to everyone who has donated stamps for this ministry.

Please continue to call the office with the names and addresses of a family member or friend who you know would appreciate a kind word and a prayer through the mail. We would like to be able to reach out to as many people as we can. If you would like to join this ministry call the office 814-944-4603 or Jeanne Thompson at 814-317-2672.

Charismatic Prayer Group

2020 Winter/Spring Schedule

Location: Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament

Monday, April 13th - 7PM

Monday, May 18th - 7PM

Prayer Ministry to follow all meetings

The Cathedral Charismatic Prayer Group and The Bishop Guilfoyle Alive in the Spirit Student Group

Location: Bishop Guilfoyle

Sunday, April 5th - 6PM



Stewardship Reflections

“Jesus mission is to restore to good order the created household of God which sin has disrupted. He not only perfectly accomplishes this task, but also, in calling disciples, empowers them to collaborate with him in the work of redemption for themselves and on behalf of others, “ [Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, USCCB, 1993]

God has entrusted us with many gifts and talents, the breath of life and the means by which we can sustain our existence. As disciples of Jesus we are called to use these things to build the Kingdom of God; to make the Body of Christ strong; to change the world.

THE CHURCH OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN

THE CATHEDRAL OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

ONE CATHEDRAL SQUARE, ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA 16601-3315

CHURCH OFFICE: 814-944-4603

CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS:

The process of formation for those seeking God through membership in the Catholic Christian community.

INFANT BAPTISM:

Arrange in advance for pre-baptismal instructions.

CONFIRMATION:

Ninth, tenth and eleventh grade students are invited to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Process.

RECONCILIATION:

Wednesday: 7:00 PM, Saturday: 12:30 PM.

Communal Penance Services: Advent and Lent.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK:

Upon Request and Communal celebration

MARRIAGE:

Arrange nine months in advance. Couples expected to participate in pre-marriage preparation program.

DEVOTIONS:

Charismatic Prayer - Normally 3rd Monday of the Month

Eucharistic Adoration - First Wednesday - 12:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Eucharistic Day - Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:

September through April: Pre-Kindergarten thru 12.

Sunday morning 8:30 AM - 9:45 AM

Pre-Kindergarten thru 8.

Sunday Evening 6:15 PM - 8:15 PM

Grades 9 thru 12.

WEB: WWW.ALTOONACATHEDRAL.ORG

FAX: 814-942-4337

E-MAIL: ALTCATHEDRAL@DIOCESEAJ.ORG

EUCHARIST: DUE TO COVID-19, THERE ARE NO PUBLIC MASSES UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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|---------|-----------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Sunday: | 5:00 PM (Vigil) | Holyday: | 5:30 PM (Vigil) | Weekday: | 6:45 AM |
| | 8:00 AM | | 8:00 AM | | 12:00 Noon |
| | 10:00 AM | | 12:00 Noon | Saturday: | 8:00 AM |
| | 12:00 Noon | | 5:30 PM | | 12:00 Noon |
| | 5:00 PM | | | | |

Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, J.C.D., Bishop

Reverend Monsignor Stanley Carson, Administrator

Reverend Father Dennis M. Kurdziel, Parochial Vicar

CHRISTIAN INITIATION TEAM - 944-4603

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME - 944-4603

MAIL MINISTRY TO ELDERLY, HOMEBOUND, SERIOUSLY SICK, AND GRIEVING - 944-4603

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Web: www.holytrinitycatholic.school

Altoona Campus (Pre-K thru Grade 4) - 381-7011

Hollidaysburg Campus (Pre-K thru Grade 4) - 695-6112

Middle School Campus (Grades 5 thru 8) - 942-7835

BISHOP GUILFOYLE CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Web: www.bishopguilfoyle.org - 944-4014

DIRECTORS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Chris Laraia - Pre-K thru 8 - 312-7317

Jean Koury - 9 thru 12 - 949-2777

Religious Education Office: Sundays - 943-7424

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY

Leslie C. Thayer, MM, CAGO

Music Ministry Office - 944-2044

E-mail: lthayer@dioceseaj.org

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE CITY OF ALTOONA SINCE 1851

PALM SUNDAY

April 5, 2020

Readings: Mt 21:1-11; Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66

MASS INTENTIONS

April 6, Monday: Monday of Holy Week

Readings: Is 42: 1-7; Jn 12:1-11

+ Helen Zurilla Birthday (Family)

+ M/M Andrew Lasko (Fran & Chrissy Dambeck)

April 7, Tuesday: Tuesday of Holy Week

Readings: Is 49:1-6; Jn 13:21-33,36-38

+ James Gardner (Cathy Kent, "Sister Kate")

+ Terry Smith "60th" Birthday (Family)

April 8, Wednesday: Wednesday of Holy Week

Readings: Is 50:4-9; Mt 26:14-25

+ June Axlon (Family)

+ Deacon John Rys Anniversary (Family)

April 9, Thursday: HOLY THURSDAY

Readings: Rv 1:5-8; Lk 4:16-21;

+ All Priests (Anonymous)

+ Mary Ann Behe Eger (The Carosielli Family)

Evening Mass of the Lord's Last Supper

Readings: Ex 12: 1-8,11-14/1 Cor 11: 23-26/Jn 13:1-15

April 10, Friday: Passion of the Lord (GOOD FRIDAY)

Readings: Is 52:13-53; Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9; Jn 18:1-19

April 11, Saturday: Holy Saturday

Readings: Gn 1:1-2:2 or 1:1,26-31; Gn 22: 1-18;

or 22:1-2,9,10-13,15-18; Ex 14:15-15:1; Is 54:5-14;

Is 55:1-11; Bar 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ez 36:16-17,18-28;

Rom 6:3-11; Mt 28:1-10

Vigil: Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

Readings: Acts 10:34,37-43; Col 3:1-4; Jn 20:1-9

+ Joe Tomlinson (Jim & Steph Kilcoyne)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.



Office Hours

This week our office hours will be Monday-Wednesday 9:00 AM to Noon.

Postponements

The Rite of Reception into Full communion with the Catholic Church, the reception of First Holy Communion, and the Celebration of Confirmation are being postponed until the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Pastoral Visits/Communion Calls

Clergy are to obey the protocols of health care facilities. Pastoral Visits and Communion Calls should be made only when there is a danger of death.

Financial Considerations

In order to deal with the projected shortfall in contributions, pastors, and administrators, with the assistance of their finance council may need to consider the most essential tasks required in their parishes at present and which employees are necessary for these tasks. There may be a need for temporary or permanent layoffs. The diocesan director of human resources would be involved in those types of decisions.

Contributions

Even during a pandemic, the financial support of parishioners is very important to a parish. However, due to their own financial challenges during a time like this, families might not be able to sustain their current level of giving. As a parish we will need to curtail spending and make adjustments.

Church Closures and Suspension of Services

Until further notice, due to Covid-19 and the Governor's order to stay-at-home, our churches will be closed and there is a suspension of all liturgical, sacramental, and devotional activities on church property.

Basket Bingo Postponed

The Longaberger Basket and Vera Bradley Bingo scheduled for Sunday, April 26, is being postponed until **Sunday September 20th**.

Prayer Shawl Makers Needed

Anyone wanting to and able to knit, we are in need of people to knit Prayer Shawls. Please get in touch with Lorraine Beck at 814-946-7774.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION
Sunday March 15, 2020 - \$1,835.00
Sunday March 22, 2020 - \$2,362.00

Holy Week and the Triduum

Since public liturgies will not be celebrated during Holy Week and the Triduum, you are encouraged to visit our diocese website www.dioceseaj.org for the media and printed resources that are available this week. Blessed dried palm and individual bottles of Holy Water will be available at the Cathedral once we are able to return to public worship. At this time, the WFBG radio Mass on Sunday carries Bishop Mark's weekly Sunday Mass.

Prayer for the Intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe:

Holy Virgin of Guadalupe,

Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas.

We fly with you today as your beloved children.

We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding of Cana.

Pray for us, loving Mother,
and gain for our nation and world,
and for all our families and loved ones,
the protection of your holy angels,
that we may be spared the worst of this illness.

For those already afflicted,
we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance.

Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust.

In this time of trial and testing,
teach all of us in the church to love one another and to be patient and kind.

Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts.

We come with confidence,
knowing that you are our compassionate mother,
health of the sick and cause of the joy.

Shelter us under the mantle of your protection,
keep us in the embrace of your arms,
help us to always know the love of your Son, Jesus.
Amen

Abstinence and Fasting

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are the days of abstinence and fasting. **All Fridays** of Lent are days of abstinence. **Abstinence** means that people 14 years of age and older are not to eat meat at all on the designated days. **Fasting** means eating only one full meal, with two small meals and no eating between meals. People who have reached their 18th birthday and up to their 59th birthday are obligated to fast. Additional forms of abstinence and fasting may also be undertaken voluntarily on a personal basis.

A Note from Msgr. Stanley Carson, Administrator

"Once-in-a-lifetime" experiences are usually planned and exciting. The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly been for most of us a rather unusual and unpleasant "once-in-a-lifetime" event. Never before have we had a Holy Week without the opportunity to participate in the liturgies. Never before could we not make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament or spend some quiet prayer time in our beloved churches. In a certain sense, we've been asked to abstain and fast from the liturgies and spiritual food that have sustained and enriched our lives for years and decades. Hopefully, our spiritual abstinence and fasting will lead to a renewed appreciation of God's Word and the gift of the Sacraments that have been given to us because of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Our encounters with Jesus Christ within church will one day return. Until then, we pray at home and while walking or being outside. You're welcome to send in your prayer requests to scarson@dioceseaj.org and I will take them into prayer with me before the Blessed Sacrament.

Loving service, courageous love, and glorious victory are a few of the themes presented during the liturgies of the Holy Triduum. This can still be a very holy week for each one of us. The service we offer, the sacrifices we make, and the hopeful attitude that we maintain are all a sharing in our Lord's life, passion and resurrection. Serve. Love. Hope.

Contributing

Contributions may be dropped off at the mail slot at the rectory or mailed to the parish. Parishioners may give to the Cathedral parish by using a new diocesan portal at www.dioceseaj.org/giving