

MAY 17, 2020

Scripture Reflection

We hope for many things: passing an exam, finding our true love, securing sustainable work, or surviving an illness. We often seek to have God be a part of what we hope for and desire, almost trying to convince Him that our agenda is what is ultimately important. While our particular hopes may appear to be what needs to be achieved in order for us to be happy, they really are not. Our lesser, more personal hopes can distract us from true hope.

When God became a human being, a powerful message was sent: all that is authentically human is found in the divine. As the human Jesus lived and died in order to show us that he truly is the universal Christ, we have to keep our sight focused on our eternal truth and destiny and who we truly are. We have to be careful when we allow our earthly concerns to distract us. True hope is found when we place our trust in Christ's promises and don't rely on our own strength. True hope focuses on striving toward the fulfillment of God's promises and not simply on achieving what we think we need in this life. Hope always travels with two friends — faith and love. In this trio of virtues, we find the very presence of God born in every human being. These are God's greatest gifts, and they lead us to the fullness of His presence.

As with faith and love, we cannot see hope with just our human eyes. We don't carry this virtue within us to use solely for our own personal agenda. Hope is not something that simply comes with the human package. As with faith and love, hope is a gift that is given to us to draw us closer to our eternal truth. Faith, hope, and love are signs that there is something far greater going on in us and something greater to persevere in obtaining. The true divine gift of hope is what will endure any hardship we encounter, especially those that will come from authentically living the Gospel. With all that is happening in our lives, in our church, and in our world, what is the reason for our hope? Ask God for the fortitude to see His eternal gift as the reason we get up in the morning and do the things we do.

A PRAYER OF CONSECRATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Most Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, you are the fairest fruit of God's redeeming love; you sing of the Father's mercy and accompany us with a mother's love. In this time of pandemic we come to you, our sign of sure hope and comfort. Today we renew the act of consecration and entrustment carried out by those who have gone before us.

With the love of a Mother and Handmaid, embrace our nation, our diocese, our parish, our families and ourselves which we entrust and consecrate to you, together with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

In a special way we commend to you those particularly in need of your maternal care.

Mary, Health of the Sick, sign of health, of healing, and of divine hope for the sick, we entrust to you all who are infected with the coronavirus.

Mary, Mother of Consolation, who consoles with a mother's love all who turn to you, we entrust to you all those who have lost loved ones in the pandemic.

Mary, Help of Christians, who comes to our rescue in every trial, we entrust to your loving protection all caregivers.

Mary, Queen and Mother of Mercy, who embraces all those who call upon your help in their distress, we entrust to you all who are suffering in any way from the pandemic.

Mary, Seat of Wisdom, who were so wonderfully filled with the light of truth, we entrust to you all who are working to find a cure to this pandemic.

Mary, Mother of Good Counsel, who gave yourself wholeheartedly to God's plan for the renewing of all things in Christ, we entrust to you all leaders and policymakers. Accept with the benevolence of a Mother the act of consecration that we make today with confidence, and help us to be your Son's instruments for the healing and salvation of our country and the world. Jesus is our Lord and Christ, for ever and ever. Amen.

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.

Sunday:	5:00 PM (Vigil) 8:00 AM 10:00 AM 12:00 Noon 5:00 PM	Holyday:	5:30 PM (Vigil) 8:00 AM 12:00 Noon 5:30 PM	Weekday:	6:45 AM 12:00 Noon	Saturday:	8:00 AM 12:00 Noon
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SERVING THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN THE CITY OF ALTOONA SINCE 1851

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

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 17, 2020

Readings: Acts 8: 5-8,14-17; 1 Pt 3:15-18; Jn 14:15-21

MASS INTENTIONS

May 18, Monday: Saint John 1, Pope and Martyr

Readings: Acts 16:11-15; Jn:15:26-16:4
+ Lavelle Family (Phyllis Lavelle Sheets)
+ Joseph Anthony Moffa (Estate)

May 19, Tuesday: Easter Weekday

Readings: Acts 16:23-34; Jn 16:5-11
+ Hilda Conrad (Jack & Nancy Kirkpatrick)
+ Kristina Giblock (Father Joe Dzurenko)

May 20, Wednesday: Saint Bernadine of Siena,

Readings: Acts 17:15,22-18:1; Jn 16:12-15
+ Our Mothers (McNellis All Stars)
+ Trudy Eicher (Family & Friends)

May 21, Thursday: The Ascension of the Lord

Readings: Acts 1:1-11/Eph 1:17-23/Mt 28: 16-20
+ John Hallinan (Family)
+ Kevin Sheetz (Mom & Dad)

May 22, Friday: Saint Rita of Cascia, Religious

Readings: Acts 18:9-18; Jn 16:20-23
+ Michael Zurilla, Anniversay (Family)
+ Madeline Vogel (Pat Rhoa)

May 23, Saturday: Easter Weekday

Readings: Acts 18:23-28; Jn 16:23-28
+ Frances Kasun (Steve & Robin Kasun)
+ John Bauer (Wife)

Vigil: SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Readings: Acts 1:12-14; 1 Pt 4:13-16; Jn 17:1-11
+ Frances Pagliaro, Birthday (Family)

Please remember our sick in your prayers.

Facebook

Our parish has created an official Facebook page and the address is <https://www.facebook.com/cathedralofaltoona> The link is found at the top of our parish's webpage. The link at the bottom of the page was evidently created by Wikipedia and is an unofficial page. Our official page will gradually become a convenient way to keep people informed and post notices.

Office Hours

The office hours are Monday through Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

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.

Basket Bingo Postponed

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

CATHEDRAL WILL BE OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

We are pleased to announce that beginning Saturday, May 16, the cathedral will be open for private prayer, for 25 people or less, from 7:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Visitors may enter through the only doors at 13th avenue and the alley. Designated seating will be available at the Blessed Sacrament Chapel and at the Chapel of our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. Facial masks are to be worn, social distancing is to be observed, and persons are asked to self-sanitize their seating area before and after their visit.

A schedule for the availability of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will probably be announced early next week.

Radio Mass

Our parish's live radio Mass will be on Sunday, at 10:00 A.M. on WFBG 1290 AM. We are pleased to be able to provide this service once again and we are grateful to our sponsors,

Thank You

We would like to thank Bill & Grace Smith for helping to take care of the planters in the front of the Cathedral.

Foundation Seeks College Junior & Seniors Scholarship Applicants

2020 Welge (WELL-ghee) Scholarship Applications are now available for registered parishioners who are entering their junior or senior year at an accredited college or university. Blair County Please visit the "Grants" page of the Independent Catholic Foundation website, www.icfdaj.org to download, complete and sign the application, which should be emailed to grants@icfdaj.org no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday June 12. The Welge Scholarship Endowment has grown sufficiently for the Foundation to issue three \$500 awards this July.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION Sunday, May 10, 2020 \$8,562.00 Special Collections, and Easter, \$180.00

Calculating Love

Have you ever Googled the word "love"? If you did, you may have come across something called the Love Calculator. It is a website where you can supply two names, and the percentage chance of a successful relationship is calculated. Curious, I entered my name and my wife's. Twenty percent! I hope my wife doesn't read this!

I then decided to add my name and God. A whopping thirteen percent! Then for the last attempt, I put in my name and Jesus. A very disappointing zero percent! Am I that unlovable? Of course, then I read the small print at the bottom of the page: "Please note that this site has no serious intention whatsoever." Shocking!

The truth is, the modern world increasingly seems to have no real idea what love is or how to determine when love is real. That makes the seemingly simple words of Jesus about loving God and your neighbor very complex indeed. How can you love God with your all your heart, soul, and mind when you have no idea what the act of loving means? And then, what constitutes loving a neighbor? To make it more complicated, Jesus commands you to love them like you love yourself. I bet you can agree with me that there are a lot of people out there who do not even come close to loving themselves. Knowing what love is in modern times is just not that easy. How is a well-meaning person able to find out the true meaning of love?

You don't know what true love is? I think you do. Turn your eyes to that crucifix hanging in your church, home, or office. The answer was given over 2,000 years ago, and the image remains for the entire world to see.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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Mass for Widows and Widowers

Remember your loved ones on **Sunday, May 31, 2020 with a televised Mass celebrated by Bishop Mark Bartchak at 11:00 am on WATM ABC 23 and will be rebroadcast that night at 9:00 p.m. on Atlantic Broadband channel 9.** All persons who have lost a spouse through death throughout the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese are invited to register by contacting Family Life Office by calling 814-317-2647 or 814-317-2643 or email familylife@dioceseaj.org to have your spouse acknowledged and remembered at Mass. When registering, please give your name, address, phone number and name of your spouse who had passed away. Deadline to register is May 20, 2020. Sponsored by the Diocese Family Life Office.

A NOTE FROM MSGR. STAN CARSON: LOVING JESUS AND KEEPING HIS COMMANDMENTS

Father Matthew the Poor is the name of a Coptic (Egyptian) Orthodox Monk and theologian who wrote 181 books and many spiritual and theological articles. One of his books is entitled *If You Love Me: Serving Christ and the Church In Spirit and in Truth*. Father Matthew emphasizes the need for service as an expression of love...love for Jesus and love for the Church.

In this weekend's Gospel passage (John 14:15-21), Jesus tells us that "if" we love Him we will keep His commandments. The most essential of His commandments is to love God, our neighbors, and ourselves. To love someone means that we care about them and express that concern through service. In order for us to "keep" the commandments of Jesus we need to know what they are: we are to love, serve, forgive, trust, pray, do what he did, and help make more disciples. Familiarity with the Gospels will teach us even more of what Jesus commands, so that our love for Him and the Church is obviously evident.

During the COVID-19 pandemic people have been creatively loving Jesus by keeping His commandments and serving others. As we transition into a more public participation in the life of the Church there will be a need for a love that is also expressed through patience and good judgement. We will be able to do that because Jesus hasn't abandoned us. His presence continues to be a source of encouragement and hope.

Ministry to the Elderly, Seriously Ill and Grieving

We will be approaching the fifth year which began as a simple Thanksgiving Card to our parishioners who were on the First Friday visitation list and those residing in elder care homes. Our twenty person committee has been sending cards, making phone calls and visiting with some men and women who invited us into their homes. We are thankful for your support but want to tell you that committee members feel as they are receiving more than what they are giving. Paula Miller who began by praying a simple Hail Mary with a resident over four years ago shared, "I cannot begin to tell you how enriched my life has become since joining this ministry. After each visit, I would leave more blessed than when I arrived. Our homebound so appreciate that we, as a member of their parish family, remember them either with a card or a visit. Their smiles are priceless!"

If you can please call the office 814-944-4603, with the name and address of a family member or friend who you know would welcome a kind word and a prayer through the mail we would be able to reach out to many more. If you would like to join this ministry please call the office at 814-944-4603, or Jeanne Thompson at 814-317-2672. And we can always use stamps!