

# Welcome to St. George Church

## *A Parish with Spirit and Heart!*

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Fr. Pascal (Pat) Ipolito, Pastor

Kathy Kita, Pastoral Associate, Director of Faith Formation

### **Week of February 14, 2016**

## **The First Sunday of Lent**

### *From the Pastor's Desk*

In our responsorial psalm we sing: "Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble" (Psalm 91:15b). We cry out to God in our need. Moses reminds the people that when their ancestors cried out to the Lord, God heard their cry and freed them. Be grateful, Moses tells them. Paul proclaims how near the word is to the Romans, inviting them to cry out in their need to experience God's freeing, saving presence. The Spirit leads Jesus into the desert for forty days, like the forty years recalled in the first reading, to be tempted by the devil. Jesus cries out in his need, quoting God's word to guide him and counter the devil's temptations.

Lent is our forty-day experience to recall the story of God's saving love affair with us and to grow in gratitude for mercy so near. God's Word is near to us. We name the sin and darkness that tempt us to trust what is not God, when what we really need to do is to invite God to be with us in our trouble and heal us. Feeding on the word of God and the liturgy can guide us to live the death and resurrection of Jesus more clearly this year.

Name the ways that you have known God's love throughout your life. Face whatever gets in the way of believing that God's Spirit dwells within you. Cry out to the Lord our God in honesty, faith, gratitude, and need. The Word is near you. May it help you grow more grateful for God's unconditional and merciful love and experience God's nearness this Lent.

God, our mercy, feed me with your word and sacrament this Lent. Help my worship of you deepen my trust that you are with me, so that I see you in all creation and make your nearness known to all.

- How can you express your gratitude for God's mercy and love in your life this Lent?
- Name the ways that you know that the Word is as near as your mouth and your heart.

*Shalom! Fr. Pat*

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, February 13	5 pm	Anthony E. Kita Sr., by Bill & Kathy Kita
Sunday, February 14	8:30 am	Stephanie McCormick O'Connor, by the Family
Sunday, February 14	11 am	Winifred, Ethel & Otto Martzloff, by the Estate
Monday, February 15	8 am	Souls to be remembered from All Souls' Day
Tuesday, February 16	8 am	Souls to be remembered from All Souls' Day
Wednesday, February 17	8 am	<b>Communion Service and Novena</b>
Thursday, February 18	8 am	<b>Communion Service</b>
Friday, February 19	8 am	In Memory of Angie Antonelli's birthday, by Shirley Baker
Saturday, February 20	5 pm	In Thanksgiving for and Honoring all Mothers
Sunday, February 21	8:30 am	In Thanksgiving for healing and prayers for Shirley Miller and "Little Sam", by Shirley Miller
Sunday, February 22	11 am	In Thanksgiving for and Honoring all Fathers

**The next First Friday Mass is March 4th at 9:00 am in the Chapel.**

**Confession: Saturday from 4:00 - 4:30 pm**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SICK & SHUT-INS**, especially: Doris Ellis, Peter Brady, Maryanne Mueller, Michael Schafer, John Branicky, Marsha Shuler, Dorothy Knaier, Louise Zelonis, Gina Reger, Richard & Antoinette Pucillo, Joe Arcara, Lou Williams, Jeanette Dipiano, Judy Zielinski, Sr. Mary Dee, Jill Janik, David Dobson, Colette Longboat, Kathy Grover-Castro, Jim Moeller, Linda Bettinger, Mario Nunez, Sarah Friedhaber, Jason Estabrook, Crystal Oats, Margo McClelland, David Kroll, Dave Isbrandt, Mike Slawinski, Bill Henning, Dolores Lewandowski, Don Murray, Faith Smith, Grace Finch, Heather Nichter, Joan Kazmierczak, Pat Whittington, John Nichter, Loretta Ellis, Nora Vogel, Amy Gottstine, Kevin Cluett, Dottie Gottstine, Diane Washburn, Kara Stoughton and Charlotte Byrne.



**SPREAD A LITTLE CHEER!** One of our parishioners, **Don Murray**, could use a little cheering up in light of some recent medical problems he's had to deal with. If you can spare a few moments to send him a **note of encouragement** or a **card**, it will really lift his spirits! His address is: 8834 State Rd., Colden, NY 14033. *Thank you!*

We've included in our bulletin today the first of six inserts that are part of our parish **Living the Eucharist** experience. The title of this week's insert is **God's Word, Our Delight**. It offers "food for thought". May you welcome the Word of God to enrich your daily life as you journey through Lent.



*Please support this ministry by praying the **Living the Eucharist** prayer every day.*



**A HUGE thank you to everyone who supported and/or volunteered at our Pancake Breakfast & Theme Basket Auction!** It was a tremendous success, resulting in **\$1,511.00** in profit for our parish.

**MEDICINES FOR HAITI** We're collecting over-the-counter medicines for our twin Haitian parish of **St. Michael the Archangel** this weekend and next, **February 13 - 14** and **20 - 21**. We need **tylenol, ibuprofen, antacids, vitamins, cold and cough medicines, eye and ear drops, antifungal creams, antibiotic creams, hydrocortisone cream** and any other **new and unopened medicines. Toothbrushes and toothpaste** are also needed. Please place your donations in the box in the back of the church by **February 21st**, and the collected items will be sent to Haiti on the sea container in April. *Thank you all for your donations; the people of our twin parish greatly appreciate your generosity.*



grateful hearts,  
giving to others  
PLEASE GIVE TO THE 2016 APPEAL



**CATHOLIC CHARITIES 2016 APPEAL** As you begin your Lenten journey this week, remember the selfless sacrifice of Jesus. Just \$3.12 will cover the cost of feeding a family of four one meal through one of our eight food pantries. What can you sacrifice to allow for just a

donation of that amount? Remember the love you have for your neighbors in need and give as generously as you can to the 2016 Appeal. **Find Good Within. Open hearts follow Jesus' lead.** Learn more at [ccwny.org](http://ccwny.org) or call **(716) 218-1400**.

**NEW EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS** Congratulations to **Sarah Boyle** and **Susan Boyle**, on completing the training to become **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion**. We're looking forward to their service at the Table of the Lord! *Thank you, Sarah and Sue.*



## Stations of the Cross Schedule for Lent

February 19	7:00 pm in Chapel	Hosted by the St. Vincent de Paul Society
February 26	7:00 pm in Church (6:00 pm Soup & Bread Dinner hosted by K-7 GIFT teachers, children & families)	Children's Stations of the Cross
March 4	7:00 pm in Church	Hosted by the St. George Social Group
March 11	7:00 pm in Church	Hosted by Parish Council/Liturgy Committee
March 18	7:00 pm in Church (6:00 pm Soup and Bread Dinner hosted by Youth GIFT and their families)	Shadow Stations of the Cross

**OUR MISSION OF MERCY** We ask our St. George family to be generous as possible so we can fulfill our mission of mercy as we journey in faith together. Last weekend's offerings totaled **\$3,172.00**. Offerings for **Maintenance and Capital Improvements** totaled **\$417.00**. *We sincerely appreciate your continuing generosity!*

On our **Mission of Mercy**, we are *the living Eucharist, the hands and feet of Christ*. Our Lenten reflections take us to the book of Deuteronomy, which is one of the books of the Old Testament. In the reading, Moses explains to the Hebrew people how the priest is to make an **offering of gifts—the first fruits of harvest, which are brought by the people and placed in a basket**. For many centuries, this ancient action was repeated in the Offertory part of the Mass, and Christians brought gifts of various kinds (produce, animals and other resources), to give to the priest for the support of the poor. Our stewardship collection must be and is a reflection of these ancient rites. **God bless us all. Christ is our Light.**

**COLLECTION FOR ST. GEORGE MISSION IN KENYA NEXT WEEKEND** We'll have a second collection at all Masses next weekend, **February 20 - 21**, to support St. George Church in **Laisamis, Kenya**. This mission was funded and built by our parishioners many years ago and your offerings continue to support its work. The mission includes a church, a school, a hospital, a home for sisters, a social hall, a home for priests, and a college for catechists.



***Please be as generous as you can.***



**SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL** In today's Gospel, Jesus overcomes the temptations of wealth, power and esteem. As we begin Lent, may we open our hearts to the grace of **prayer, fasting and almsgiving**. Your gift in the St. Vincent de Paul **Poor Box** will help the poor to celebrate the grace of God's love this Easter. **What a wonderful lifelong lesson to be taught by encouraging our young ones the joys of almsgiving.**

**MASS INTENTIONS** Praying for deceased relatives and friends is an act of faith, hope and charity. One way you can honor your deceased loved one is to have a Mass offered for them. Although it is common practice to make a free-will donation (Mass stipend) for the celebrant, **don't let your financial status prevent you from requesting a Mass intention**. To schedule a Mass, please call the Rectory at 652-3153.



**CAN YOU HELP?** Before you know it, we'll begin preparing for our **Annual Chicken BBQ & Theme Basket Auction!** If you can help with the planning and preliminary preparations, would you please call **Alice or Tom Dziulko** at **655-3420**? None of the tasks for this event is difficult; we'd

simply love to have more "hands and feet" and your enthusiastic spirit to help us make this our most successful fundraiser yet! We'll have a brief planning meeting soon.



**JOIN OUR MAILING LIST! Sign up to receive our weekly bulletin, parish news & updates via email.** Visit [www.stgeorgercchurch.org/mail](http://www.stgeorgercchurch.org/mail) to sign up.

*(Your email address will **never** be shared or used for any other purpose without your permission.)*

# God's Word, Our Delight

Scripture's first home is the liturgy. From the earliest days of Christian history, before it had even been decided which books would be included in the Bible as we know it, believers met in their homes to celebrate the Eucharist.



The first part of their gathering, the second-century writer Justin Martyr tells us, was spent reading the Hebrew Scriptures and the memoirs and writings of the Apostles. Then they would celebrate the Eucharist.

## THE WORD IS ALL AROUND US

In the Mass, the prayers, instructions, acclamations, and songs constantly draw on our treasure trove of scriptural images, vocabulary, theology, and stories. We sing psalms and scriptural canticles. The inspired words of prophets, evangelists, Apostles, and others ring out in our prayers, hymns, and chants. Images and words from Scripture adorn our sacred space. From floor to rafter, the Word is with us. Even the doors and windows echo the great story of divine revelation, sacred history, and God's promises, that the Word records. We praise, petition, glorify, and lament in the same key as our forebears in faith, who were speaking through these sacred texts.

Many actions, postures, and gestures of the liturgy are likewise rooted in the Bible. Whether we kneel or raise up our hands, break bread or lift a cup of wine, light lamps or lay on hands, anoint with oil or wash with water, you can be sure someone in the Bible did it first. The Scriptures themselves reflect the liturgy of early Christians, as well as liturgical prayers and rituals practiced by God's people throughout the ages. We, as Catholic believers, stand in a

great tradition of Word and worship, and make it our own in each generation, as we celebrate the liturgy today.

## DIALOGUE WITH THE WORD

The Word of God surrounds us in the liturgy, and the "materials" of Scripture make our house of worship noble and simple, beautiful and solid. But that's not all. The Word is also proclaimed within that house—welcomed as an honored guest—with integrity. The event of reading, hearing, and responding to the Word forms the first great portion of the Mass: the Liturgy of the Word.

The Liturgy of the Word is an encounter and a dialogue: an encounter with Christ and a dialogue with him. When the Scriptures are proclaimed, we respond to what we hear. Our outward response is generally in the form of song and acclamation. Yet our inward response is what such outward signs point to—our "yes" to God's revelation and the resolve to live the message we have heard.

Pope John Paul II put it well when he wrote:

"[T]he liturgical proclamation of the word of God, especially in the Eucharistic assembly, is not so much a time for meditation and catechesis as a dialogue between God and his People, a dialogue in which the wonders of salvation are proclaimed and the demands

of the Covenant are continually restated. On their part, the People of God are drawn to respond to this dialogue of love by giving thanks and praise, also by demonstrating their fidelity to the task of continual 'conversion'" (*On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy*, 41).

### JESUS CHRIST IS GOD'S WORD

Shining through the many words of Scripture is the one Word: Jesus Christ. He is the Incarnate Word of God. As St. John tells us so beautifully at the outset of his gospel account: "And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). In the Word, we encounter Jesus himself.

God's Word, Jesus, speaks to us through both the Old and the New Testaments, unifying their witness. Both attest to the one revelation of God, and both support and instruct us on our journey as disciples. Christ is truly present in the Word. "Christ is still proclaiming His gospel" today in our midst, as the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council affirmed (*The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 33).

### LISTENING: DELIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY

We would be poor hosts indeed if we invited someone to our house, seated them in a place of honor, but then did all the talking ourselves. Yet this is what happens if our minds are filled with distractions and our hearts not prepared to receive the Word of God. We must therefore practice a discipline of hospitality to the Word, giving Christ present in the Word our full attention. We must prepare the ground of our heart for the "good seed" of the Word, through prayer, so that, receiving that Word in faith, our lives will yield a fruitful harvest. When we prepare to hear the Word, the experience of listening becomes a delight. The Liturgy of the Word becomes like a table at which we are fed. Our inner dialogue grows richer.

The Liturgy of the Word presumes some general knowledge of the Bible, and basic orientation to the historical context and literary form of the readings we hear. This knowledge can be acquired through catechesis, Bible study, commentaries, teachers, and other resources. Good preaching whets our appetite for the Word, and makes us eager to spend time with the Scriptures on our own. If our own personal foundation in Scripture has not been strong, however, we need to take responsibility for building it up.

### REFLECT

How strong is my own foundation in Scripture?

Consider this question in three dimensions: intellectual strength (knowledge, understanding), spiritual strength (prayer, virtue, contemplation), moral strength (decision-making, guidance for living). Which of these areas would I like to strengthen during this time of Lenten renewal?

### ACT

Make a commitment to read the Sunday readings, either before or after you go to Mass. Take time just to "be" with the Word. Allow your own inner dialogue with God to continue beyond the celebration.

### PRAY

Holy Spirit, breath of God, through Sacred Scripture you reveal who you are, and who we are called to be. Breathe on us. You enter the house of our worship, and speak lovingly to each of us. Help me to listen with my whole heart.

**AUTHOR** ■ Rita Ferrone is an award-winning writer and speaker in the areas of liturgy, catechesis, and renewal in the Roman Catholic Church.

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