

# Welcome to St. George Church

## *A Parish with Spirit and Heart!*

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### **Week of February 21, 2016**

## **The Second Sunday of Lent**

### *From the Pastor's Desk*

How often have we heard the promise that God is with us and transforms us? I relate to Abram's response: "How am I to know?" In other words, I want to believe you, Lord, but ...I feel so unworthy, I am a sinner, I can't get it together...I bet that you could add to this list. Every Lent I seem to face the same sins, character defects or failings. Awareness is a good beginning. St. Francis de Sales notes that there is no better way of growing toward perfection in the spiritual life than to always be starting over again.

Today's Gospel gives us a glimpse of the Resurrection we celebrate at the end of Lent. Jesus is transformed while at prayer. God visits him through Moses and Elijah, in a cloud, and with a voice, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." He leaves the mountain transfigured and journeys to Jerusalem, to his passion and death. Our journey, like his, is not easy, but we are not alone. Follow Jesus' example. Turn to God in prayer; voice your needs frustrations, fears, dreams and desires. Listen for God's voice: "You are my daughter, my son. I am with you." Follow Paul's advice to the Philippians to imitate Jesus.

I need today's reminder that God is with me. I need to remember the promise of resurrection. I need Lenten prayer to turn to Jesus and start over again. The Lord is here to light our way. Pray. Listen. Trust and imitate Jesus. It is good that we are here to stand firm in the Lord.

Dear Jesus, it is good that we are here and that you are here, too. Make me dazzling with the light of your love so that others can come to see you in my words, deeds, and attitudes this Lent, and find hope.

- When have I known without a doubt that I am God's beloved son or daughter?
- What and who can help me trust that God's promises will be fulfilled?

*Shalom! Fr. Pat*

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

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 21	11 am	In Thanksgiving for and Honoring all Fathers
Monday, February 22	8 am	Souls to be remembered from All Souls' Day
Tuesday, February 23	8 am	Souls to be remembered from All Souls' Day
Wednesday, February 24	8 am	<b>Communion Service and Novena</b>
Thursday, February 25	8 am	<b>Communion Service</b>
Friday, February 26	8 am	Souls to be remembered from All Souls' Day
Saturday, February 27	5 pm	Winifred, Ethel & Otto Martzloff, by the Estate
Sunday, February 28	8:30 am	In Thanksgiving for and Honoring all Mothers
Sunday, February 28	11 am	Michael Dougherty, by Tom Braun

**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 second of six inserts that are part of our parish **Living the Eucharist** experience. This week's insert is **Called to Conversion—Through the Word**. It offers "food for thought". May the Word of God change your heart and bring forth new life as you journey through Lent.



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



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 “Follow” us on **Twitter**, too at [www.twitter.com/stgeorgewf1](http://www.twitter.com/stgeorgewf1)

**MEDICINES FOR HAITI** This is the final weekend of our over-the-counter medicine collection for our twin Haitian parish of **St. Michael the Archangel**. 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 **Sunday, 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.*

**CATHOLIC CHARITIES 2016 APPEAL** 82-year-old Ida came to the U.S. in 1989 on a VISA status. She worked as a housekeeper for three decades. A lawyer told Ida that he could help her gain citizenship, for \$2500. Ida paid the fee, but she never heard from the lawyer again. Ida was terrified of being deported. Then Ida read in a church bulletin that Catholic Charities had an immigration services office. She made an appointment, the case manager explained everything and walked Ida through the whole citizenship application process. **Today she is a citizen.** **Find Good Within. Open hearts follow Jesus' lead.** Learn more at [ccwny.org](http://ccwny.org) or call (716) 218-1400.



**Growing  
in Faith  
Together**

**GIFT NEWS!** Next **Friday, February 26th**, the GIFT K-7 teachers and families will host a **Soup and Bread Supper** at **6:00 pm**, followed by the **Children's Stations of the Cross** at **7:00 pm**. Come share a free supper with your parish family and join our children as they prayerfully journey to the cross with Jesus.

Also, a reminder: the **First Eucharist Parent meeting** has been **rescheduled** for **Sunday, February 28th** at **9:45 am** in the parish hall. After the meeting, parents will join their children in the classroom for the first family session.

**PLEASE BE CAREFUL** Be especially watchful for slippery spots on the church walkways and in the parking lot. Despite our best efforts to plow and salt them, icy spots still do persist.



**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.



**REMINDER: THE TUESDAY MORNING PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY** will not be meeting during Lent. Meetings resume **Tuesday, March 29th** at **9 am**.

*Do you know of a homebound person who would appreciate receiving a copy of the weekly bulletin in the mail? If so, let the office know at **652-3153** or email [stgeorge.wf@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorge.wf@gmail.com).*

**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 **\$2,321.45**. *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 THIS WEEKEND** There is a second collection at all Masses this 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** Lent is a call not just to “give up something” but, more importantly, to “give something for the poor.” Wherever you live in the parish, there are poor families within walking distance of your home. When in need, they ring the rectory bell. They are, in effect, ringing **your** doorbell. ***Do you know an individual or family who needs assistance? Please call the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, 652-3153, so that together we can help the suffering and poor.*** God bless all.



**YEAR OF MERCY:** We shift our focus this week to **The Spiritual Works of Mercy**. Works of mercy can be directed not only toward the needs of the **body**, but the needs of the **soul** as well. Let's reflect on the first of the Spiritual Works of Mercy.



**Admonish the Sinners:** This work of mercy—“tough love,” you could call it—is one of the hardest to practice in our world today. Why? Because we live in the “I'm-OK-you're-OK” culture. If you really want to be unpopular, try admonishing someone today for, say, swearing, or gossiping unkindly about someone, or talking loudly in church. It is certainly not easy to do. It takes the virtue of prudence: finding just the right moment and just the right words, and saying them in a way that clearly affirms the human dignity of the person you are admonishing, even as your words kindly challenge him or her to fulfill his or her highest potential. Yet, we are

called to “**speak the truth in love**,” as St. Paul put it (see Eph 4:15), with both courage and compassion.

(Excerpted from [www.thedivinemercy.org](http://www.thedivinemercy.org).) Learn more at [www.yearofmercy.org](http://www.yearofmercy.org).  
*Let's all make a concerted effort to perform these beautiful Works of Mercy.*

# Called to Conversion— Through the Word



“Then they said to each other, ‘Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?’” (Luke 24:32).

With these words, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus share their joy and excitement. The Risen Jesus was in their midst! They had walked with him and shared their perplexities and sadness with him. But they did not perceive the truth of who he was, until he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. Then, their hearts burning with what this mysterious stranger had revealed to them, they did see. They recognized him in the breaking of the bread. They announced to others that Jesus is risen. They became witnesses, set on fire by what they had seen and heard.

In this powerful story from the Gospel according to Luke, we see the pattern that has been lived out in the Eucharist, from the earliest times. Hearing the Word is important. And it is no passive, ho-hum business. It sets our hearts on fire. The Word holds the answers to our most passionate and pressing questions. It provides direction for us when we are lost. It feeds us when we are close to starving. It brings news of such surpassing importance that our hearts burn within us as we listen, and our lives are forever changed.

## A LIFE-CHANGING WORD

There are numerous stories of holy men and women whose lives were changed by encountering God’s Word. The Word changed the life of Lydia, the first European convert to

Christianity, who listened to Paul and Barnabas preaching by the banks of the river in Philippi (Acts 16:11–15). She was baptized with her whole household, and thereafter supported the spread of the Gospel. It changed the life of Augustine of Hippo (354–430) in North Africa, who at a crucial moment in his conversion heard a child’s voice saying *Tolle, lege* (“Take, read”). He took up the Bible and read a passage from the Letter to the Romans that *spoke directly to him*, and showed him the way out of his despair. It changed the life of Kateri Tekakwitha (1656–1680) in North America, who heard the Jesuit missionaries preaching in her Mohawk village and desired to become a Christian, going against the grain of her family but opening the way to a devout and joyful life. It changed the life of Maximilian Kolbe (1894–1941) in Poland, who volunteered to die in place of a fellow prisoner who had been condemned in a concentration camp. He helped his fellow prisoners prepare for death by meditating on Christ’s Passion and reading the psalms.

The Word of God is powerful. By his Word, the heavens and earth were made. The sea was split in two in the Exodus, by the power of God’s Word. The prophets, announcing God’s Word, kept the faith of the people alive during national disaster and exile. God’s Word has the power to do God’s will. It is no wonder, then, that the Word today continues to open hearts and bring forth new life.

## ONGOING CONVERSION

It would be a mistake to look for the power of God's Word only in dramatic changes and extraordinary circumstances, however. Its power to change us is not discovered only in the movement from unbelief to belief or in acts of heroic virtue, but also in the day-to-day movements of the heart that we call "ongoing conversion." Most people experience the transforming power of God's Word as a gradual process. Our conversion to Christ and his gospel way of life takes place little by little, over time.

Each Sunday, if we listen to the Word with a receptive heart, it subtly affects us. It stretches our imagination, challenges us, and calls us to be true to our best selves. The Word invites us, bit by bit, to enter into the world of God, and to see things as God sees them. The reign of God, like a seed that grows in secret, takes hold in the good soil of our life and is watered by the Scriptures we hear at Mass.

Our ongoing conversion may include a gradual awakening to the world's goodness, our own giftedness, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our midst. It may mean loosening the bonds of sin and gaining freedom to act in new ways by God's grace. It may be experienced in a growing love for the Church, a passion for justice, and a sense of deep inner peace. Are these movements "conversions"? They do not change us abruptly. But they do signal the turning of our heart to God ever more completely.

The Shaker song "Simple Gifts" sums it up well: "When true simplicity is gained, to bow and bend we shan't be ashamed; to turn, turn, will be our delight, 'til by turning, turning, we come round right."

## WE RECOGNIZE HIM

Just as the disciples on the road to Emmaus knew the Risen Lord in the breaking of the bread, so does our celebration of the Eucharist crown the experience of hearing the Word

at Mass. As we are touched and changed by the Word of God, the Eucharist itself becomes the confirmation of all that has taken place. Full participation in the Eucharist is our goal in this life as we are nourished on our pilgrimage to eternal life. We hasten on to the sharing of that meal with joy, as we realize—Jesus is with us at the table. He is alive. He is here.

## REFLECT

What sort of conversion do I hope for this Lent?

A conversion of mind, heart, action? Where in my own life do I sense a need for "more light" to break forth from God's Word?

## ACT

Conversion in action means following through on our good intentions and inspirations, without hesitation or undue delay. Don't put off doing something good that you've thought of doing. Act now!

## PRAY

Lord Jesus, you opened the minds of your disciples to understand their experience in light of the Scriptures. Help me to read "the signs of the times" in my own life. Holy Spirit, turn my life over to God more fully. Set my heart on fire with your holy Word!

**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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