

The Work of the People

The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

I hope by now that all of you who have the capability of using the St. Anthony of Padua Parish App have already downloaded it and established an account so that we will be better able to stay in contact with you. With people staying away from crowds and Sunday Masses, it is important to get information out to you as quickly as possible. If you do download the MyParish App, please use the zip code of the parish (16403) in your search for us.

We move now to celebrate the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time. In the first reading we hear Moses speak about God raising up a prophet from the Israelites' kin. The people want this, and God will fulfill their request. This gives the passage a messianic character. For Christians, the prophet God will raise up is Jesus. His words are the words everyone should heed. In a more general sense, we can interpret Moses' words at the conclusion of the passage as instructions on how to discern true and false prophets. We are to listen to a prophet who speaks God's words in God's name, but not one who speaks words other than those God has commanded.

In the reading from Paul's First Letter to the Church in Corinth we continue to hear about how the present age is passing away. Paul's words might lead us to wonder if Paul is preaching a preference for the unmarried life. The anxieties of the unmarried man and woman, he says, relate to the things of the Lord, while the anxieties of the married man and woman relate to the world. Paul, however, begins his instruction with the same wish for both those unmarried and married: to be free from anxieties.

Today's Gospel continues the reading from Mark that we began last Sunday. It marks the first appearance of Jesus teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath. Mark does not tell us what Jesus taught; the Gospel writer only expresses the people's amazement at the authority with which Jesus teaches. The event in the synagogue concludes with Jesus curing a man possessed by a demon even after the demon cries out in words that ask why Jesus involves himself in the people's concerns. The demon refers to Jesus as The Holy One of God.

The reflection for this Sunday is from Rachelle Linner who is a freelance writer and reviewer.

Do you ever harden your heart when you approach Jesus in prayer? I do.

Once, wanting to let go of a long-standing resentment, I confessed the sin at the Sacrament of Reconciliation and prayed for the person whenever I found myself remembering the litany of wrongs he had done. (And why was I reciting the litany, anyway, which only nestled the unclean spirit deeper into my heart?) The more I asked Jesus to remove the stubborn sin and its handmaidens (pride, self-pity, righteousness, envy), the more barriers I put in Jesus' way. If I sensed Jesus preparing to speak his word of healing I redoubled my grievance. As if he didn't know how I felt.

I know my unclean spirits, and they know me. Certain sins trail and tempt me, and if I am not vigilant they cling to my heart. They are the familiar contours that shape the false self I present to the world. I harden my heart because if Jesus expels the unclean spirits, I will be empty.

We are caught in a dance, Jesus and I, desire and defiance. He woos me, and I long to say yes, but then I cling to what I know. Jesus is more patient than I am. Maybe I will spend years in purgatory before I am cleansed. But I want my unclean spirits expelled long before I die, so that I can be free to do Jesus' work in the world, to fulfill my baptismal call, to sing joyfully to him, to offer true thanksgiving. If only I don't harden my heart.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Heb. 11:32-40/Mk. 5:1-20
 Tuesday: Mal. 3:1-4 or Heb. 2:10-11, 13b-18/Lk. 2:22-40
 Wednesday: Heb. 12:4-7, 11-15/Mk. 6:1-6
 Thursday: Heb. 12:18-19, 21-24/Mk. 6:7-13
 Friday: Heb. 13:1-8/Mk. 6:14-29
 Saturday: Heb. 13:15-17, 20-21/Mk. 6:30-34
 Sunday: Job 7:1-4, 6-7/1 Cor. 9:16-19, 22-23/Mk. 1:29-39

22:32 MEN

The 2021 conference will be held on Saturday, February 27 from 9:00 am - 12:00 Noon. The conference has been decentralized for this year to mitigate the potential for covid exposure. Please check the website www.2232Men.com for a list of parishes where small groups can gather for the conference. For more details and to register info@2232Men.com

WORSHIP

Monday, February 1
 8:00 am + John E. Auer
 Tuesday, February 2
 8:00 am +Wanda Pilarczyk (Josie Osiecki)
 Wednesday, February 3
 8:00 am + NO MASS
 Thursday, February 4
 8:00am + Dorothy Dzajka
 Friday, February 5 - FIRST FRIDAY
 8:00 am + Vincent Novotny (PNA Lodge 1540)
 Saturday, February 6
 4:30 pm + Barbara Wiseman (Kahleen Lipkovich)
 Sunday February 7
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Stanley Giewont (Wife, Frances)
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Living & Deceased Parishioners

NOTICE

The covid-19 coronavirus pandemic continues to be a very fluid and rapidly changing situation. The Office of Worship of the Diocese of Erie has issued special directions for upcoming celebrations:

Blessing of Throats - Bishop Persico directs the blessings be given once over the entire assembly. *At St. Anthony of Padua and St. Bernadette Mission the Blessing of the Throats will be part of the Final Blessing at all Masses on the weekend of February 6 and 7.*

Distribution of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, (February 17, 2021) - Because it is impossible to sanitize the thumb of the person distributing ashes between each person receiving them, Bishop Persico directs that those who wish to receive the sacramental of blessed ashes receive them using the practice common in many parts of the world of sprinkling ashes on the crown of the head.

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 2
 After Mass - St. Anthony Novena
 Saturday, February 6
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession
 Sunday, February 7
 Before Mass - Confession - ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 After Mass - Confession - ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

*“Lord,
 thank you for setting
 your amazing love on me.”*

NOTICE - There will be no Lenten Luncheons among the Saegertown churches this year. It's just not a good idea to plan group/community gatherings yet.

CATHOLIC SERVICES APPEAL (CSA)

The Catholic Services Appeal is the annual fund-raising campaign for the Diocese of Erie to support the work of the church. This weekend, January 30-31 is the first announcement weekend for the 2021 CSA. Commitment Sunday is February 13/14. We ask you to prayerfully consider how you are able to share in the support for this year's CSA.

CATHOLIC COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

Thank you for your generosity toward last week's collection for the Catholic Communication Campaign. Your support helps the CCC spread the Gospel message and connect millions of people with Christ, here in the United States and around the world. If you missed the collection, it's not too late to give!

**ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 STEWARADSHIP**

Offertory	\$358.00
CCC	60.00
Candles	9.00
TOTAL	\$427.00

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$5,805 Paid: \$5,805

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 STEWARDSHIP**

Offertory	\$518.00
Maintenance	161.00
Candles	14.00
Initial	10.00
CCC	55.00
Religious Retirement	25.00
Solemnity of Mary	10.00
CSA	250.00
TOTAL	\$1,043.00

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$26,844 Paid: \$26,824

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
