

The Work of the People
The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

We were lulled into a false sense of an easy winter by the weather these past few weeks, but now it is back to the realities of winter even though this one has been relatively mild. We are back to the realities of discipleship as well as we hear Jesus calling us to work for the good of the Kingdom.

On this Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, we move away from the prophet Isaiah to the prophet Zephaniah. The reading has two sections coming from separate chapters of Zephaniah. The first verses are strong exhortations to the people to do three things: seek the Lord, seek justice, and seek humility. The presumption is that the people have been unfaithful, sinful, and arrogant. In the second section, it is the voice of God that addresses the people. The tone is quite different than the first part. God promises that a remnant of Israel will know salvation. This remnant will be a transformed people; they will be faithful, honest, and live with integrity as we are called to live today.

In the second reading today. Paul once again addresses the Church in Corinth. Paul reminds these early believers that on their own they have very little status or power or influence. Yet they are precisely the ones that God has chosen to spread the Gospel. Paul states that God's choice is deliberate; the circumstances of their lives will be instruments of the Gospel. Their lowliness will bring down the haughty; their foolishness will confound the wise. Such is the intention of God; for God's ways are not the ways of humans.

In today's Gospel, we begin the section of Matthew's Gospel that is titled The Sermon on the Mount. The eight Beatitudes are perhaps one of the best-known teachings of Jesus. The beatitude is a genre of teaching from wisdom literature. A blessing is bestowed on a person or persons because of their status, that is, the poor, the meek, and that blessing is followed by a subsequent action that benefits them. The virtues and actions that are espoused are at odds with the current ideology; they embody the vision of the Kingdom of God that Jesus has come to establish.

Today's reflection is from Brian Doyle who is the editor of *Portland Magazine* at the University of Portland and the author of *A Shimmer of Something*.

More and more as I shuffle through this vale of wonders, I begin to see that humility is the final

frontier. We spend so much of our early lives building persona and confidence and career and status that it takes a loooooong while before we sense the wild genius of the Beatitudes—blessed are those who do not think they are cool, blessed are those who abjure power, blessed are those who deflate their own arrogance and puncture their own pomposity, blessed are those who quietly try to shrive their sins without calling attention to their overweening piety, blessed are those who know they are dunderheads but forge on cheerfully anyway. The thin Jewish Mystic, as usual, was pointing in the complete other direction than the arc of human history. Sprint away from being important, famous, powerful. The weak are strong, mercy is greater than justice, power is powerless. Believe in the unbelievable, isn't that what He is saying? Isn't it? Don't try to make sense of it. Be attentive and humble and naked in spirit. Try for lean and clean though the world roars for glitter and gold. Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, succor the sick and frightened and lonely, as the Christos says later in this very gospel: that is the inarguable assignment, the blunt mission statement, the clear map coordinates. That is what we are here for: to bring love like a searing weapon against the dark, and to do so without fanfare and applause, without a care for sneers. Do what you know to be right, though the world calls you a fool?

Yes! Thank you! Yes!

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Heb. 11:32-40/Mk. 5:1-20
 Tuesday: Heb. 12:1-4/Mk. 5:21-43
 Wednesday: Heb. 12:4-7, 11-15/Mk. 6:1-6
 Thursday: Mal. 3:1-4/Heb. 2:14-18/Lk. 2:22-40
 Friday: Heb. 13:1-8/Mk. 6:14-29
 Saturday: Heb. 13:15-17, 20-21/Mk. 6:30-34
 Sunday: Is. 58:7-10/1 Cor. 2:1-5/Mt. 5:13-16

CATHOLICS RETURNING HOME SCHEDULE

Winter 2023

February 2

Explanation of the Mass

February 9

Explanation of Reconciliation

February 16

The Creed: What Catholics Believe

Sessions are on Thursdays, 7:00 pm, at The Epiphany of the Lord Parish, St. Brigid Church, Meadville.

WORSHIP

Monday, January 30
 8:00 am + Gertrude Christie
 Tuesday, January 31
 8:00 am + Barbara Wiseman (Kathleen Lipkovich)
 Wednesday, February 1
 8:00 am + NO MASS
 Thursday, February 2
 8:00 am + Luke Dye (Walker Family)
 Friday, February 3 - FIRST FRIDAY
 8:00 am + Frank & Pat Mukina (Joan Rembielak)
 Saturday, February 4
 4:30 pm + Emil Semrad (Adams Family)
 Sunday, February 5
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Loeta Deby (Catherine Madras)
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 Michael J. Marks (Richard & Fran Marks)

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, January 30
 5:00 pm - Doors open for BINGO
 Tuesday, January 31
 After Mass - St. Anthony Novena
 Saturday, February 4
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession
 Sunday, February 5
 AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 Before Mass - Confession
 AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 After Mass - Confession
 10:30 am - Faith Formation Classes
 Monday, February 6
 5:00 pm - Doors open for BINGO

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 ALTAR SERVERS**

Saturday, February 4 - 4:30 pm
 No Server
 Sunday, February 5 - 9:30 am
 Michael & Sophia Mott

**ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
 STEWARDSHIP**

Offertory	\$500.00
Communications	75.00
Candles	8.00
TOTAL	\$583.00

CATHOLIC COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

Thank you for your generosity toward last week's collection for the Catholic Communications Campaign (CCC). Your support helps the CCC engage and build community for millions, here in the United States and around the World. If you missed the collection, it is not too late to give!

SUNDAY BREAKFAST

The Edinboro/Cambridge Springs Knights of Columbus will serve their next Sunday Breakfast Feb. 5 from 9 - 10 am, or until sold out at Our Lady of the Lake Social Hall. Please join us for a delicious breakfast of sausage, ham, eggs, home fries, French toast sticks, pancakes, cinnamon rolls, orange juice, coffee, tea or milk immediately following 8 am mass. Take-outs are available. Price is \$7 for adults and \$3 for children.

**10th ANNUAL
 22:32 CONFERENCE**

Saturday, March 4
 St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Erie
 Father Larry Richards will be featured speaker.
 Please call Dave Wayman with questions
 22:32 Men Chairperson
 814 397-2809

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

It is in our family where we learn to be merciful and peaceful and comforting to others. The Beatitudes of the Kingdom of God begin at home and depend on you. Parents lead the way.

MARRIAGE MOMENT

"On your wedding day you laid your life into the hands of your spouse without knowing what the future held" (Leif Kehrwaid, Marriage & the Spirituality of Intimacy) How have you been called to love your spouse in unexpected ways?

**ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
 STEWARDSHIP**

Offertory	\$912.40
Maintenance	415.00
Initial	20.00
Donation	50.00
Communications	268.00
Candles	56.00
Solemnity of Mary	10.00
TOTAL	\$1,731.40

Catholic Services Appeal
 Pledged: \$36,279 Paid: \$35,814

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
