

The Work of the People

The Fourth Sunday of Lent

In one of their most well-known songs, the folk artists Peter, Paul, and Mary sang “The times, they are a changing.” With the presence of COVID-19 in our midst and the measures being taken to prevent any further spread, those words are certainly true. Much is changing. Instead of the usual column this week, I offer some information about our response as a parish and a diocese.

On Monday, March 16 Bishop Persico sent a letter to the priests of the diocese with instructions as to how to move forward in this time of concern. The next day, March 17, the Feast of St. Patrick, patron of the Diocese of Erie, our Bishop sent a letter to the people of the diocese. The full text of that letter is available on our parish website www.stanthonycambridgesprings.org. Just click on the news story about the suspension of masses and then on the link to the letter.

The Bishop begins his letter by writing: “It saddens me to share this with you, but I have decided to suspend all public Masses in the Diocese of Erie effective Wednesday, March 18 until further notice. This is not a decision I wanted to make; nor did I make it lightly. But given the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is an important decision made for the good of the community, especially the most vulnerable among us.”

The priests of the diocese have been asked to offer a private Mass each day to remember the intentions of their parishioners. The Bishop also asks that every family “keep holy the Sabbath” by finding some way to pray as a family in their homes each Sunday. You can access the readings for Sunday from the Diocesan website (www.eriecd.org) or through myParish App. that posts the readings for each day. In addition to this there will be a livestream of the Sunday Mass from St. Peter Cathedral, the mother church of the diocese. You will need to go to the diocesan website for final details about this Sunday livestream. When we find out all of the details, we will provide a link on myParish App. Presently there is a link on myParish to daily Mass.

The Bishop has also asked each pastor to keep the parish church open for visitation and private prayer. Beginning on Monday, March 23 we will have the church open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Please use the entrance off the parking lot. This decree suspending all Masses also means that any and all services and activities of St. Anthony of Padua Parish and St. Bernadette Mission are cancelled until further notice. Since we will not have a Lenten Penance Service, I will post the times for individual confessions on the parish website (see above) and on myParish. If you have not downloaded myParish and would like to do so, you will need

to have a smart phone or a tablet. Go to the appropriate app store and download myParish for free. When you search for this parish, please use our zip code 16403 and not the name of the parish.

The times are indeed changing but I ask you to continue to support your parish family through prayer and by remembering to send in your weekly contribution. Even with empty buildings, we still need to pay the bills.

As the Bishop promised, as your pastor, I will continue to pray for all of you each day. Please remember to follow the guidelines issued by health and government organizations and most especially avoid crowds. Help out your neighbor if she/he is in need and please call the rectory if you have a need. Now, more than ever, we need to place our trust in God who promises to care for us always. If you have a copy of the Novena To St. Anthony of Padua (the wonder-worker) please pray to God through our parish patron. We will leave copies of this at the church entrance so that you might pray it if you come for a visit. Stay well. Remember to check the website and myParish regularly.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 2

Monday: Is. 65:17-21/Jn. 4:43-54
 Tuesday: Ez. 47:1-9, 12/Jn. 5:1-16
 Wednesday: Is. 7:10-14; 8:10/Heb. 10:4-10/Lk. 1:26-38
 Thursday: Ex. 32:7-14/Jn. 5:31-47
 Friday: Wis. 2:1a, 12-22/Jn. 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
 Saturday: Jer. 11:18-20/Jn. 7:40-53
 Sunday: Ez. 37:12-14/Rom. 8:8-11/Jn. 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

THE FOLLOWING ARE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

- All confirmations through May 17, 2020 will be rescheduled, once the situation stabilizes.
- Funeral Masses may continue to be celebrated, but with only the immediate family members and funeral home workers present.
- Baptisms may continue to be celebrated, but only with the sponsor(s) and immediate family members present. New water must be blessed for every individual baptism.
- Marriages may continue to be celebrated, but only with the bride, groom, two witnesses, and immediate family members present.

*“Jesus, open my eyes!
Help me to see as you see.”*

WORSHIP

NO
MASS
UNTIL
FURTHER
NOTICE

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

NO
PARISH
EVENTS
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25
The Annunciation of the Lord
Luke 1:26-38

Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.

Why do you think the angel Gabriel greeted Mary with these words? Perhaps because he wanted Mary to know that God had already filled her with all the grace she would need to say yes to bearing God's Son into the world. Maybe he also wanted to reassure her: she could count on God always being with her, not just in that blessed moment.

Mary might not have had much time to reflect on the angel's greeting until later, after she had said yes to God's plan. But as the baby grew in her womb, she probably thought about it often. She knew that what God was asking of her wasn't going to be easy. No doubt this was a special child. How was she going to raise Jesus to be a king and sit on the throne of David, as the angel had said? (Luke 1:32-33). When such questions swirled in her mind, she could always go back and recall the angel's words: God was with her, and so was his grace.

When has the Lord asked you to do something difficult? Maybe you were given a special needs child to raise or you are caring for an ailing spouse or parent or you're trying to work through tensions in your marriage. We all are faced with situations in which God is asking us to do what seems beyond us. We may have to say yes to the lord not once but many times as we struggle to be obedient to his plan for our lives.

But what the angel said to Mary is also true of us. Mary was born without original sin, but because of our baptism, we are also filled with God's grace. He dwells in us. That means he is always with us and that his grace is always available to us.

When Mary said yes to the angel, Jesus came into the world to save us and share his divine life with us. Now we can move forward, day by day and one step at a time, to do what God is asking of us - because we too are "full of grace" (Luke 1:28)!

— *The WORD Among Us*
Daily meditations: February 26 - April 12

PRAYER FOR LENT

*O most gentle Jesus
by your precious blood,
deliver us from all evils.
By your most bitter death
give us a lively faith,
firm hope and perfect charity,
so that with our whole hearts
we may love you
with all our soul and strength.
Make us persevere
in your service,
firm and steadfast in good works
so that we may be always
able to please you.*

— St. Clare of Assisi

STEWARDSHIP St. Bernadette

Offertory	\$392.00
Votives	3.00
Easter Flowers	<u>10.00</u>
TOTAL	\$405.00

Catholic Services Appeal
Pledged: \$4,975 Paid: \$3,725

STEWARDSHIP St. Anthony of Padua

Offertory	\$745.00
Maintenance	372.00
Candles	<u>35.00</u>
TOTAL	\$1,152.00

Catholic Services Appeal
Pledged: \$21,405 Paid: \$9,510

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
