



The Parish of Saints Philip and James

1 Carow Place, St. James, NY 11780

631-584-5454

February 14th, 2021
Sixth Sunday In Ordinary Time



Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched
him, and said to him,

“I do will it. Be made clean.”

“With Philip & James we pray to live lives worthy of the call to be
Apostles of Hope”

Daily Mass: 7:30am and 9:15 am
Saturday 5pm Sunday: 8am 10 am 12noon

STS. PHILIP & JAMES PASTORAL STAFF

Parish Center Phone: 631-584-5454 Parish Fax: 631-862-9675

Website—www.sspj.org

PARISH CENTER OFFICE HOURS

Open Monday, Tuesday Wednesday 9am-6pm

Open Thursday 9am-6pm

Closed Friday, Saturday and Sunday

CLERGY

Father Tom Haggerty, Pastor

Father Joe Lobo-Associate Pastor

Deacon Ronald Blasius

Deacon John Keenan

(With Sympathy) Deacon Ken Maher

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Sister Theresita Donach, CSFN

BUSINESS MANAGER

Virginia Portanova

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 1-3

Charlotte Czujko

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 4-6

Barbara Luna

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR Grades 7-8

Dominick Avento

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Margaret Adams

COORDINATOR OF PARISH SOCIAL MINISTRY

Lynn Sisti

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY

Dominick Avento

DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

John Cordes

SSPJ SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Diane M. Anderson

School Phone-631-584-7896 School Fax: 631-584-3258

TRUSTEES

Jerry Linder ~ Tina Cafaro

PASTORAL COUNCIL

Michael Sharkey, Lou Guerra, Cynthia Lombardi, Paul Damato
Martin Marut, Maureen Burke, Erin Nicastro



**FAITH DIRECT:
GO TO SSPJ.ORG
CLICK ON THE FAITH DIRECT ICON**

Parish of Saints Philip and James
account code NY232 when signing up

Sacraments

Baptism— Celebrated twice per month. Parents are asked to register at the Pastoral Center for Pre-Baptism Program.

Marriage—Couples are asked to contact the Pastoral Center before visiting the reception hall. The Marriage Preparation process is nine months before your proposed wedding date.

Confirmation—Seventh and Eighth grade students are prepared to celebrate through Religious Ed or SSPJ School. Adults prepare through RCIA.

Reconciliation— Available Saturdays from 4:00pm-5:00pm in the Church or by contacting the Parish Center for an appointment.

Anointing of the Sick— In case of serious, unexpected illness, please contact the Parish Center office to arrange for a Priest to pray with the person who is ill. Anointing of the Sick is held on the first Sunday of the month following the 8:00am mass please see the Sacristan before mass.

R.C.I.A.— Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (non-Catholic adults desiring to become Catholic) are asked to contact the Parish Center Office.

Eucharistic Adoration In The Church— Monday 1:30pm -7pm

PLEASE REMEMBER THOSE WHO SERVE FOR US IN YOUR PRAYERS



LCDR. MEGAN M. SHUTKA-VIK, USN

CAPT. WILSON MARKS- USN

CAPTAIN MICHAEL DOLAN- JR.

LT. COL. JOHN KAIRES

SPC. NICOLE A. CANNON

SGM. MICHAEL P. BORRELLI-US ARMY

CAPT. JOHN TULLY- USN

LT. COL. JAMES TULLY-US ARMY

JOSEPH SAGGIO- USNC

CAPTAIN PAUL WILLMS

STAFF SGT. MICHAEL LONGHENRY

LT. COL. PAUL T. JACKSON-

STAFF SGT ALEXANDER PARRELLA-USAF

RICHARD SOTOMAYER- USAF

SGT. CONNOR F. SCOTT- USMC

SGT. CORY O'HARA -USMC

CDR. ROBERT J. MARSH-USN

PFC. CHARLES CHRISTOPHER HOWELL

STEVEN CAVA-USN

ERIC SEELIN- USMC

CW2 CHRIS MUNZ

CW2 NATASHA WORTMAN

CORPORAL JAMES T. CASEY-USMC

SGT. JOSHUA MAHONEY- US ARMY

KEVIN JONES-USCG

PRIVATE JOSHUA OLSEN-USARNG

GLEN CRIMA-US ARMY

STAFF SGT. ANTHONY SCIAMETTA— US ARMY

MARIO CATANIA-USMC

RYAN ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-USMC

KYLE ANTHONY NASCIMENTO-US ARMY

ENS. RYAN M. SHOWS -USN

STAFF SGT. RYAN REXRODE-USMC

DR. KARA VANDEKIEFT, COL.-USAF

SGT. STEPHEN D. OUTCAULT-USMC

PAUL MUMOLO-USN

VICTORIA ZEMAN, USCG

KYLE J. GRUNER -US ARMY

MARK GIORDANO—US COASTGUARD

KELLI MCLAUGHLIN— LT. US ARMY NATL.GUARD

STAFF SGT MICHAEL J BANG SPECIAL FORCES US ARMY

MATTHEW PATRICK GALLAGHER US ARMY

Financial Support Needed weekly to meet Parish budget:

\$17,890.

Weekly Collection: Sunday February 7th, 2021

\$ 10,750.

Faith Direct : (126Participants)

3,253.

Total Collections:

\$14,003.

Parish Social Ministry Donation:

\$600.

Thank you for your generosity

Father Tom's Letter

Dear Friends,

In today's readings we hear of the treatment of those suffering from leprosy. They were seen as outcasts, as untouchable. Yet in the gospel, a man with leprosy approaches Jesus and speaks with him, revealing his faith that if Jesus wishes, the man can be healed. And how does Jesus respond? He not only answers that he does desire to heal the man, he reaches out and touches him. Fr. John Foley, SJ, reflects,

Direct, honest, so revealing of God. The whole life of Jesus consists of a desire to give to people who are in trouble and who believe, even if they have only a small faith by which to receive, as well as large wounds.

In an extraordinary move, Jesus stretches out his hand and touches the man. As noted, the ancients thought that Leprosy was communicable, and at the very least disgusting. But Jesus touched him with care and said, "Be made clean." Our spiritual life consists of being "made clean," no matter how disgusting our failings may be. We must receive Jesus' touch, especially his touch upon our souls.

Do we have faith that Jesus desires to heal us - whatever our pain, our suffering? Anne Osdieck offers a prayer we can join in:

*O Healer, wounded by our sins, we kneel before you.
Reach out to us.
Lay your hand upon us, and please heal us.
And from your abundant pity, send us, broken and ragged,
to fix our damaged earth,
eliminate the virus, end social bias, and feed the hungry.
Caress your world. Use us to do it. Amen.*

In the midst of so much snowy weather, this Wednesday comes a sign of spring! This coming Wednesday is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent. And the word "lent" means spring! Last spring brought with it difficult times as the coronavirus forced so many changes in our lives. The effects of the pandemic are still with us, though we have learned there are actions we can take to be safer. So what shall we focus on this spring? This Lent? Let's focus on Jesus.

The schedule for our Ash Wednesday services is in today's bulletin. As I mentioned last week, **ashes will be distributed differently**. The Vatican has issued guidelines for the distribution of ashes during the pandemic. Churches will return to the ancient practice of receiving ashes by sprinkling on the forehead in silence. Every year the Holy Father receives ashes in this way. This Lent we will also be offering a bracelet with the inscription **Jesus is the key**. We spoke of Jesus being the key at Christmastime. As we begin Lent, let us let Jesus be the key to opening our minds and hearts and lives. Let Jesus be the key to entering a new springtime.

Traditionally spring is a time for spring cleaning, for clearing out the "stuff" which has piled up – in our closets, in our gardens, in ourselves. It's also a time of tending – tending to areas in our homes and in ourselves which may need a little sprucing up; to ready the ground for a new season of growth; to tend to our relationships - with family and friends, with God, with ourselves. In today's bulletin you will find many opportunities for growth during Lent – all available online. On our website you will find a link to "Stations of the Cross" presented by our own young people last year. And remember all our Masses are live-streamed and available on our website. How will you journey through this Lent, this spring? Pause, speak to Jesus. Let him be the key to not only unlock your heart but also to be your companion and guide.

We're always pleased to welcome our FFF – Favorite Franciscan Friar – Fr. Kevin Cronin to spend some time at SSPJ. He always brings a smile to our faces. Perhaps these one liners will do that too:

The World Health Organization has announced that dogs cannot contract Covid-19. Dogs previously held in quarantine can now be released. To be clear, WHO let the dogs out!

I saw an ad for burial plots and thought to myself that's the last thing I need!

What word becomes shorter when you add two letters to it? Short.

Whatever you do, always give 100% unless you're donating blood.

Peace,

Father Tom

Apostles: We Who Are Sent...Hope: God's constant gift of new possibilities

Mass Intention

Eucharistic Adoration

Monday's
From 1:30-7:00pm

In the Church

The closing hour of
Eucharistic Adoration,
(6pm-7pm), will be live
streamed on the SSPJ
facebook page
Www.sspj.org

The Pro-Life Rose
For the Week of
February 14th, 2021

Is Offered For

Thomas A. McGrath



Love You
And
Miss You Forever,
Christine

Remembering in Our Prayers~

Angie Mingione	J.C.
Angela Amoroso	Joseph S.
Anna Ormsby	Luis Anthony
Arthur Gureck	Antonette Sabatino
Baby Ben	James Macchiano
Barbara Bombace	Judy Rampola
Barbara Ruland	Kathleen N.
Mattia Rose Lubrano	Kitty Cronin
Belinda Groneman	Leon Donach
Belinda Vega	Mark Hildreth
Brianna Florio	Mary Fresi
Bob Keenan	Maryann Kevlin
Carol	Maria Clark
Claudia Chandler	Marie del Ciello
Daniel Radice	Matthew Parrella
Deirdre W.	Michael Fisher
Dolores North	Mike Lofaro
Donna Patrissi	Monsignor Iocavacci
Donnie Spence	Pasquale Savarese
Dorothy Mitchell	Peter Bertrand
Dylan Beach	Peter Donach
Ella	P.I.
Ellie Walsh	Ricardo Buffit
Ginny & John Rief	Riordan Cavoaris
Gladys Blake	Sara Jean Andersen
Gregory Parker	Sheila Ginty
Helen	Stephen Dolce
Ida Wehman	Steven Iglio
Joanna	Theresa Kassay
Jack Donohue	Tara Cesarski
John Cronin	Vivien Cordes
John DeStefano	Victoria Zubrycky
	Vicki Archdeacon
	Veronica Broderick

Saturday	February 13th, 2021 Presider: Father Kevin Lector: B. Thompson EM: D. Anderson	9:15am 5:00pm	Deacon Ken Maher Catherine Ginty
	Sunday	February 14th, 2021 Presider: Father Kevin Lector: M. Sehne EM:E. Sica	8am For the People of SSPJ
		Presider: Father Tom Lector: P. Wos EM: K. Consenz	10:00am Rosemarie Sherow
	Collective Mass Presider: Father Joe Lector: C. Rubano EM: B. Luna	12:00pm	Living-Pasquale Savarese Joseph Winter Vincent Buchanan Deacon Ken Maher Leonard G. Dabalsky
Monday	February 15th, 2021	7:30am 9:15am	Sylvia (Susa) DiRocco Donalea Donach Vanos
Tuesday	February 16th, 2021	7:30am 9:15am	Thomas McGrath Palmina & Roberto Mignone
Wednesday	February 17th, 2021 Ash Wednesday	7:30am 9:15am 12:00pm 3:00pm 5:00pm 7:00pm	Robert Koke
Thursday	February 18th, 2021	7:30am 9:15am	<u>Collective Mass:</u>
Friday	February 19th, 2021	7:30am 9:15am	Steven J. Wallner
Saturday	February 20th, 2021 Presider: Father Joe Lector: L. Halluska EM: L. Sisti	9:15am 5:00pm	Sean McDermott Karen Jerzenbeck
Sunday	February 21st, 2021 Presider: Father Joe Lector: B. Luna EM: M. Kenney	8:00am	For the People of SSPJ
	Presider: Father Tom Lector: E. Nicastro EM: M. Latino	10:00am	Donalea Donach
	<u>Collective Mass</u> Presider: Father Kevin Lector: A. Latino EM: B. Luna	12:00pm	Patricia Doyle John O'Brian Joseph Winters Bruce Ogilvie Richard Cembrale

Lent at SSPJ 2021

Lent is a time to open the doors of our hearts a little wider and understand our Lord a little deeper, so that when Good Friday and eventually Easter comes, it is not just another day at church but an opportunity to receive the overflowing of graces God has to offer.

We welcome all to submit to us your thoughts about wearing the SSPJ Lenten bracelet inscribed with the words,

“Jesus is the key”

Sharing your heartfelt thoughts about how “Jesus Is The Key” that has opened possibilities, doors, interests, knowledge or our eyes to the community around us and in our lives.....

You can drop off your reflection in an enveloped marked “Jesus is the Key” to the Parish center, or email us at info@sspj.org

We would love to share your thoughts (anonymously) in the parish bulletin each week during Lent.

**Jesus
Is
The
Key**



Ash Wednesday, February 17th, 2021
Ashes will be distributed during the following times:

7:30am Mass
9:15am Mass
12:00 Word Service
3:00 Word Service
5:00 Word Service
7:00pm Mass

Lenten Offerings



Embrace a deeper, more spiritually rewarding life, and lose yourself in God this Lent.

Visit **BestLentEver.com** to take the first step toward unlocking your God-given potential.



This Lent, join Matthew Kelly and the Dynamic Catholic team for BEST LENT EVER - a free series of emails and video reflections that will help you to discover or rediscover God through prayer.



The Search is a beautifully produced journey through the big questions we all share. This Lent, we are inviting YOU to *The Search* with your own small group. And if you don't have a small group yet...we encourage you to start one! It's easy, and *The Search* is a great resource to start with. In fact, each week Chris Stefanick from Real Life Catholic will be guiding us throughout Lent on how to use *The Search* in your own small group during his weekly show *The Life You Were Made For*.

To sign up for this seven-week series, visit reallifecatholic.com/thesearch and get ready to experience your most meaningful Lent, ever.

Lenten Offerings

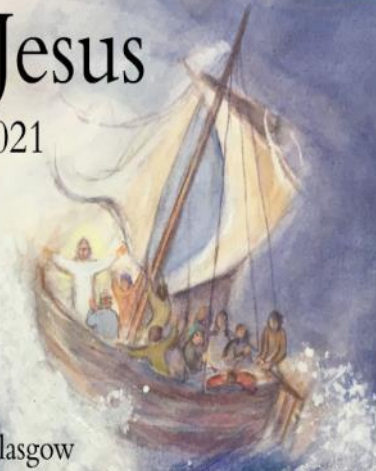
Knowing Jesus

Lent Online Retreat 2021

An amazing Daily Lenten Journey – please review and consider.
VISIT:
www.onlineprayer.net



Ignatian Spirituality Centre, Glasgow



Stations of the Cross: In the Church

Friday February 19th 7pm

Friday February 26th 1pm

Friday March 5th 7pm

Friday March 12th 1pm

Friday March 19th 7pm

Friday March 26th 1pm

We will also be live streaming stations to be viewed at sspj.org



Loyola on the Potomac

A Jesuit Retreat House
Faulkner, Maryland

presents:

A Virtual Lenten
Evening of Prayer Series:
Hope in the Cross

Join us each Tuesday evenings in Lent for this hour long prayer series on ZOOM. Each evening will begin at 7:00 pm and end by 8:00 pm. There will be an opening prayer, an Invitation to Prayer, a period of personal prayer time, a time for sharing of graces and discussion and then a closing prayer.

To register, send an email to: Reservations@loyolaretreat.org You will receive an email link to the ZOOM prayer series on Monday of each week.

Tuesday, February 23

“The Spirit Drove Jesus Into the Desert’...Why?”

Father Paul McCarren, SJ

Tuesday, March 2

“A Deepening Friendship”

Kathleen Maguire-Zeiss

Tuesday, March 9

“The Magis of God”

Father Thomas Gavin, SJ

Tuesday, March 16

“The Cross as Waiting”

Sister Pat Mensing, SSJ

Tuesday, March 23

“The Glory of God present in the Passion of Christ”

Father Bill Rakowicz, SJ

Tuesday, March 30

“ Letting Jesus Wash Your Feet”

Elaine Ireland



BBC AND JESUITS IN BRITAIN BRING YOU A SPECIAL LENT RETREAT

[Lent 2021 | Jesuits in Britain](http://www.jesuit.org.uk/tags/lent-2021) : VISIT: www.jesuit.org.uk/tags/lent-2021

Do you need some therapy for the soul? St Ignatius of Loyola, who founded the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), has inspired millions to dig deeper, connect more closely with the world, and find God in all things. It is a spirituality which appeals to people of all religions and none. In these uncertain times, Ignatius reaches across the centuries and asks: What moves you? What brings you life? What do you want to give yourself to? What do you desire most deeply? What holds you when you...

Lenten Letter From Bishop Barres



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Lent 2021

Dear Friends:

"The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan...After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God."(Mark 1:12 – 14) Each year on the First Sunday of Lent, the Church presents for our reflection and prayer the experience of Jesus in the desert. Jesus's experience in the desert follows immediately upon His baptism by Saint John the Baptist and immediately precedes His public ministry and proclamation of the Kingdom of God, in word and in deed. Saint Mark points out to us that the Spirit, who had just descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, drove Jesus into the desert.

The desert was a barren place, a place of lifelessness, the home of the devil and evil. The Spirit sends Jesus into the desert to prepare himself for the years of His public ministry, ultimately leading to His Death and Resurrection. Jesus spends time away from the world to prepare himself. But He also goes forth into the desert to begin His battle against evil, sin and death. Jesus goes into the very dwelling of evil to begin the confrontation. This battle will continue throughout the rest of Jesus's life. The ultimate victory will come on Good Friday through His ultimate act of love on the Cross.

Our yearly experience of Lent, our forty day "desert experience," can be viewed in the same way. We are inspired and sent by the Spirit to spend some time apart from the world of noise and recover the beauty of silence. But, we are also sent to do battle. Our experience of true silence should allow us the opportunity to both listen to the voice and promptings of God as well as to better know ourselves. This personal battle against sin and evil can be painful, because we come to realize that we are all in need of constant conversion. There are real changes each and every one of us need to make in our lives and our hearts this Lent. But like Jesus, we are not alone. The Lord was ministered to by angels during His forty days in the desert. We are constantly aided by our guardian angels, by the angels and saints in heaven, by the community of the baptized, and by the grace of the sacraments of the Church. Like Jesus, we need to emerge from the desert ready to take on the evils of the world and work to spread the Gospel.

It was only a few short weeks into Lent 2020 that the experience of Covid-19 made radical changes to our society, our Church, and our families. The experience of desert isolation was no longer a metaphor but a lived reality. The experience of having our parishes locked down for months was painful for all of us. Many of us still experience this isolation in many ways. But as Christians we always remain men and women of hope. We know that the Cross of Good Friday leads to the empty tomb of Easter Sunday.

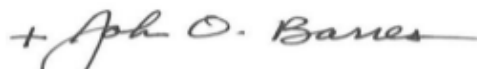
Lenten Letter From Bishop Barres Continued

Pope Francis has declared this year as a special Year of Saint Joseph. In Saint Joseph we find a man of profound hope and strength as well as prayerful silence. Scripture does not record one word spoken by Saint Joseph. But Scripture does tell us of his unwavering faith and trust, which go beyond words. Following Jesus, and like Saint Joseph, men and women in the first centuries of the Church began to leave the towns and villages and settle in the isolation of the desert. Like the Lord, they sought to rid themselves of the distractions of everyday life so they too could do battle with evil, and through their quiet example proclaim the Kingdom of God.

This continued throughout the history of the Church, even to our present moment. Saint Antony, Saint Benedict, Saint Bruno, and so many others show us the lived experience of the desert is not an escape from the reality of life but a privileged encounter with the Lord and a revelation of our true selves. While most of us are not called to the monastic or solitary life, the last twelve months have given each of us an experience of solitude. We are encouraged to remain "socially distant." In the midst of the real suffering and hardships this has caused, perhaps the hidden grace is that it has led us to be "temporary monastics."

Our typical Lenten "desert experience" of forty days has lasted a bit longer. But we will come out of it! And like the Lord, when we emerge our goal is to proclaim the Gospel of God according to our vocation and the graces given to us. In addition to our personal sins and the evils present in our own hearts, we live in a world that is right now suffering from real physical illness as well as real division and hurt of every kind. Jesus emerged from the desert bringing the healing presence of God to all he encountered. As the baptized, the Church, the continuing presence of Jesus in the world, we need to do the same. The same Holy Spirit that drove Jesus into the desert is driving us on.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre

Music Ministry

Happy Valentine's Day

In the Gospel today we hear again of Jesus' healing this time the lepers. Jesus is a man of action With His touch he heals. I feel God's touch through music, how God touches me in song and how I express that to you. How does God touch you in your life?

I came across this quote from one of my books which says, "Your touch has transformed our lives. Open our hearts to experience your presence more deeply, your Holy caress, your living flame of love. Through your grace, we leave behind words and turn toward your blessed silence. Send your touch, your Spirit and your love." I pray that God sends us all His touch, Spirit and love on this Valentine's day and always.

This week is Ash Wednesday and marks the beginning of the Lent. You will notice some changes as we enter this season. The color changes to purple, the Gloria is not sung or spoken, there are no alleluia's sung or spoken and the Mass parts will change to the Mass of Resurrection.

We will not sing the Gathering Hymn all of Lent but rather the priest will enter in silence and lastly the ever popular "I say Yes" is back. This will be the Presentation hymn all of Lent.

What will you say yes to this Lent?

Parish Social Ministry



We Remember In Our Hearts the families holding precious memories in their hearts from the loss of,

Robert Bates

Safely home in the loving arms of Jesus.

FOOD PANTRY HELP

Hormel Canned Chili



Many thanks for your kindness and generosity

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is urging that any legislative action on climate change include provisions that (a) ease the burden on low-income communities and those who live in poverty; (b) offer relief for workers who may be displaced because of climate change policies; and (c) promote the development and use of alternate renewable and clean-energy resources, including the transfer of such technologies and also technical assistance that may be appropriate and helpful to developing countries in meeting the challenges of climate change.

Please consider writing to your senators and representatives in Congress. Let them know that you care about climate change and support action on a national level that includes the three key priorities above. For background information on the issue, go to www.usccb.org/environment and the Catholic Climate Covenant website at <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org>.

Religious Education News



**Correction to January 31st Bulletin:
WAY TO GO DYLAN O'LEARY!!!!**

Pictured is 8th grade Confirmation II student, Dylan O'Leary who put his heart into action performing "acts of service" in the months of December and January!

Dylan volunteers at the Stony Brook Fire House and lived the mission to perform small acts of service with great love, during a recent snow fall.

He graciously shoveled an elderly neighbors driveway.

Way to Go Dylan! We are so grateful for your outstanding example!

**Small Acts of Kindness Go A Very Long Way...
See how some of our children are serving others....**

**February Prayer for the Month-February
Grace before Meals**

**"while taking a walk in the evening and during the week of Christmas, I prayed for all those who are listed on the prayers for the sick"
Grace Nolan Grade 8**

Thank you Grace we are so grateful for the kindness of your heart!!!

**"I raised money doing household chores to pay for a hat and muffler set for someone in need."
Holly Burke Grade 7
Way to GO Holly! Your contribution was given to a beautiful person seeking food at a soup kitchen last week!!!**

**"I helped to undecorate the church by taking Christmas decorations down and storing them away. I helped put plants in pots upon the Altar."
Rose & Nina Hughes -Grade 7 & Grade 8
Thank you Rose & Nina for offering your time and kindness to SSPJ Parish your help was greatly appreciated!**



A Reflection from Sister T~

Dear Friends,

I always love sharing with you some of the quotes that I receive by email or conversations or reading. Here is one of the latest:

"Remember you are half water. If you can't go through an obstacle, go around it. Water does." – Margaret Atwood

I found it very inspiring. As our Covid situation continues to be with us, I wondered how I would put this into practice. I started having conversations with others regarding the quote and how they saw it. Someone told me this story; I think it is worth repeating. As a young child, this person was learning how to ride a bike. Her dad told her that if she saw a rock, don't keep focusing on it. If she did, she would then certainly hit it and fall off the bike. So, don't focus on the obstacle. Pretty sound advice!

We *do* need to be like the water, flexible enough to go around any obstacle. During tough times, we need to learn how to adapt. That can be challenging as we continue to deal with all the changes that we are experiencing. Patience is wearing thin, tempers are short, and we are searching for some semblance of familiarity. So, what do we do?

What tools do I have in my 'keep sane' box that will help me? I started to think. For me, I need to stop and breathe when an obstacle comes my way. Breathing usually leads to a prayer which might be a cry for help, or a complaint, or my famous 'God, *nowhere* did I sign up to rewrite the Book of Job'. God hears us even when we are shouting. Funny as it sounds, it is the beginning of becoming flexible. Just the fact that we acknowledge that we need God's help is a start, for the plans God has for us are plans for the good.

Sometimes we forget how creative we are when we are focusing on an obstacle. Creativity goes hand in hand with flexibility. There are many solutions to impending obstacles! As an extrovert, I also find it helpful to talk to some reliable friends who know me well. They know how to challenge me in compassionate ways, or head-on if I become too stubborn.

What do you do when you are confronted by an obstacle? Breathe, pray, reach out to others? Each of us needs to find our way along our path of life despite the obstacles, and believe it or not, we can do it with a smile on our lips and a song in our heart if we learn how to be flexible.

Till next week, get your 'flexible' tool box filled with all the items you need,

Sister Theresita



Relax and enjoy God



Dear SSPJ Community,

Words can not express the gratitude I have for the generosity and blessings that have been bestowed upon Sts. Philip & James School.

Our *Day of Giving 2021* exceeded my expectations. Thank you so much for your donation. Because of your gift, we will be able to provide technology to our students. As evident, especially this past year, technology plays an important role in providing our students with the ability to learn in new ways, tools to enhance their skills and the capability to connect remotely when necessary. Your kindness has made this possible.

May you realize the difference you make. You are thoughtfully in my prayers.

Blessings,

Ms. Anderson
Principal



Congratulations to the 8th Grade Students at SSPJ School— We are so proud of you!!



A beautiful Mass was celebrated for the 8th grade students at SSPJ School.

Students received a school pin to signify their upcoming transition into high school, marking a milestone in their education and also to serve as a reminder of their past experiences and achievements at Sts. Philip and James School.



SSPJ School Alumni Honors Recognition Chaminade High School

Chaminade High School:

Freshman

Ryan A. Bennett

Sophomore:

Jack P. Auleta
Aidan B. Willman



Junior

Liam A. Auleta
Christopher R. Caputo, Jr.
Connor D. Collett
Aidan M. Duffy
Andrew E. Ebinger
Cristian F. Rodriguez
Mark L. Stephen

Senior:

Machado E. Rodriguez
Emmett W. Zeman

Adoration visited by SSPJ School Students

During Catholic Schools Week, SSPJ Students celebrated Vocations.
Our 7th & 8th grade students participated in Adoration led by our
Associate Pastor, Fr. Joe.

Our students are **BLESSED** to learn and grow in their **FAITH**.



Reflecting and Preparing for Next Weeks Gospel~February 21st, 2021

The First Sunday of Lent

Good News

INSPIRATION FOR DAILY LIFE

1st Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9:8-15
Ps 25:4-9
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15

Monday February 22
Chair of St. Peter
1 Peter 5:1-4
Ps 23:1-6
Matthew 16:13-19

Tuesday February 23
Isaiah 55:10-11
Ps 34:4-7,16-19
Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday February 24
Jonah 3:1-10
Ps 51:3-4,12-13,18-19
Luke 11:29-32

Thursday February 25
Ester C:12,14-16,23-25
Ps 138:1-3,7c-8
Matthew 7:7-12

Friday February 26
Ezekiel 18:21-28
Ps 130:1-8
Matthew 5:20-26

Saturday February 27
Deuteronomy 26:16-19
Ps 119:1-2,4-5,7-8
Matthew 5:43-48

Today's Gospel reading shows us the first thing that Jesus did after his baptismal anointing in the Jordan River: He wrestled with temptation.

His baptism had marked the moment of his complete surrender to the Father's will. As he arose from the water, he began a new life of ministry.

The Father responded by telling him that he was very pleased, and the Holy Spirit filled his humanness. Jesus as God already had the Holy Spirit (he and the Spirit were the same God), but Jesus the fully human Son now came fully alive in the Spirit. We can imagine how this experience in the Jordan River gave him the feeling of an elated spiritual high. And the next thing that happens is an attack of the devil.

The same pattern repeats itself in our lives. As soon as we experience new growth in our faith, or a new calling to do the Father's will, we run smack into a situation that tests the strength and sincerity of our faith. However, if this didn't happen, how would we find out that we've spiritually matured? How would we know that we are ready to make a significant difference for the kingdom of God?

Sometimes without consciously thinking it, we decide that if we're going to be tested and we might lose, wouldn't it be better not to start something new? Well, that's another temptation!



Lent is the perfect time to examine the temptations that we face every day and turn them into new growth that will strengthen our faith.

Every time we face a sin and seek God's forgiveness, we become stronger. And if we take it a step farther by walking into the confessional with it, we also receive powerful graces directly from Jesus, through the priest, that will render temptations much more powerless.

And this makes us more useful to God in the mission of conquering evil in the world and helping his kingdom spread into the lives of the people around us.

Think of temptations as blessings in disguise: Use them as opportunities to become more like Jesus and grow powerful in the faith.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. How well do you recognize temptation?
2. How quickly do you rely on the faith that God has given you to say no to the devil's tricks?
3. Describe a time when you experienced a spiritual high and then faced a strong temptation.
4. How did you handle it?
5. What role did (or will) Jesus play in overcoming this temptation?

OUR UNCONSCIOUS SEARCH FOR GOD

How do we search for God?

It is easy to misunderstand what that means. We are forever searching for God, though mostly without knowing it. Usually, we think of our search for God as a conscious religious search, as something we do out of a spiritual side of ourselves. We tend to think of things this way: I have my normal life and its pursuits and, if I am so inclined, on the side, I might have a spiritual or religious pursuit wherein I try through prayer, reflection, and religious practices to get to know God. This is an unfortunate misunderstanding. Our normal search for meaning, fulfillment, and even for pleasure, is in fact our search for God.

What do we naturally search for in life? By nature, we search for meaning, love, a soulmate, friendship, emotional connection, sexual fulfillment, significance, recognition, knowledge, creativity, play, humor, and pleasure. However, we tend not to see these pursuits as searching for God. In pursuing these things, we rarely, if ever, see them in any conscious way as our way of searching for God. In our minds, we are simply looking for happiness, meaning, fulfillment, and pleasure, and our search for God is something we need to do in another way, more consciously through some explicit religious practices.

Well, we are not the first persons to think like that. It has always been this way. For instance, St. Augustine struggled with exactly this, until one day he realized something. A searcher by temperament, Augustine spent the first thirty-four years of his life pursuing the things of this world: learning, meaning, love, sex, and a prestigious career. However, even before his conversion, there was a desire in him for God and the spiritual. However, like us, he saw that as a separate desire from what he was yearning for in the world. Only after his conversion did he realize something. Here is how he famously expressed it:

“Late have I loved you, O Beauty ever ancient, ever new, late have I loved you! You were within me, but I was outside, and it was there that I searched for you. In my unloveliness I plunged into the lovely things which you created. You were with me, but I was not with you. ... You called, you shouted, and you broke through my deafness. You flashed, you shone, and you dispelled my blindness.”

This is an honest admission that he lived a good number of years not loving God; but it is also an admission that, during those years, he had massively misunderstood something and that misunderstanding lay at the root of his failure. What was that misunderstanding?

Reading his confession we tend to focus on the first part of it, namely, on his realization that God was inside of him all the while, but that he was not inside of himself. This is a perennial struggle for us too. Less obvious in this confession and something that is also a perennial struggle for us, is his recognition that for all those years while he was searching for life in the world, a search he generally understood as having nothing to do with God, he was actually searching for God. What he was looking for in all those worldly things and pleasures was in fact the person of God. Indeed, his confession might be recast this way:

Late, late, have I loved you because I was outside of myself while all the while you were inside me, but I wasn't home, and I had no idea it was you I was actually looking for in the world. I never connected that search to you. In my mind, I was not looking for you; I was looking for what would bring me meaning, love, significance, sexual fulfillment, knowledge, pleasure, and a prestigious career. Never did I connect my longing for these things with my longing for you. I had no idea that everything I was chasing, all those things I was lonely for, were already inside me, in you. Late, late, have I understood that. Late, late, have I learned that what I am so deeply hungry and lonely for is contained inside of you. All these years, I never connected my restlessness, my seemingly selfish and lustful pursuit of things, with you. Everything I am lonely for is inside of you and you are inside of me. Late, late, have I realized this.

We are fired into life with a madness that comes from the gods. So say the Greek Stoics. They are right. Our whole life is simply a search to respond to that divine madness inside us, a madness Christians identify with infinite yearnings of the soul. Given those yearnings, like Augustine, we plunge into the world searching for meaning, love, a soulmate, friendship, emotional connection, sexual fulfillment, significance, recognition, knowledge, creativity, and pleasure, and that earthy pursuit, perhaps more than our explicit religious pursuits, is in fact our search for God.

Best to realize this early, so we do not have to write: *“Late, late, have I loved you!”*