



St. Peter's Church

47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901

Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322

Religious Education Phone: 570-724-9789

Website: www.stpeterswellsboro.org ~ Email: stpch@ptd.net

Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:00–2:00pm

Parish Staff

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – Dbechtel00@yahoo.com

Secretary: Connie Spang – stpch@ptd.net

Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – stpadm@ptd.net

Director of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier – stpreled@ptd.net

Maintenance Staff: Connie Spang, Francis Kennedy

Schedule of Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm ~ Sunday: 8:30am & 11:00am

Reconciliation

Saturday 4:15 – 4:45pm

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11:45am–12:00noon

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time ***February 7, 2016***

Mission Statement

We, the parishioners of St. Peter's Church, are called to holiness by God as present day disciples of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are united in service to God to share our faith with one another and our community. May our participation in the Holy Sacraments, our ministries and our devotion to Mary bring glory to God and His Kingdom.

Baptisms

Parents anticipating the birth of their first child are asked to attend baptismal instructions classes before the birth of their child, if possible. Please contact the Rectory to register. Note: Baptisms cannot be scheduled until all the necessary paperwork is completed.

Confirmation

Confirmation is administered every three years to all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in our Parish CCD program. Children wishing to receive Confirmation must be enrolled and participating in the CCD program for two years before they are eligible to receive the sacrament.

Marriages

In order to complete the necessary paperwork, couples are asked to contact the Rectory at least one full year in advance of the proposed marriage date.

Anointing of the Sick

Please contact the Rectory whenever a member of your family has become sick or hospitalized. Please note, because of the new government regulations regarding privacy, hospitals cannot release information without a patient's consent.

Reconciliation

The sacrament is celebrated each **Saturday from 4:00 – 4:45pm and Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11:45am – 12:00noon** in the church and also by appointment.

Monthly Visitations

Any parishioner who is homebound and wishes to receive the Eucharist on a monthly basis is asked to contact the Rectory to schedule a visit.

Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults (RCIA)

The RCIA prepares interested adults for reception into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the each person's needs and prepares them for full initiation into the faith. Please contact the rectory to register for the classes.

Emergency Contact

In the event of an emergency, please call the rectory at 570-724-3371. If no answer, please call 570-329-5762. This is a pager. You will be instructed to enter your phone number and Fr. Bechtel will return your call.

Religious Education and Formation

Religious Education classes are held for Pre-K – 12th grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12th begins at 9:30am and concludes at 10:40am. Confirmation Prep Class meets one Sunday a month from 5:00–6:30pm as scheduled.

Pregnancy Support

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310

Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS

Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

Parish Contact Listing

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults – Patti Mitchell 570-724-3371

Guardians of the Redeemer – Rectory 570-724-3371

Women's Bible Study – Sue Singer 570-724-2360

St. John Neumann's Prayer Group – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085

Contemplative Spirituality Group – Kate Black 570-724-3047

Cards & Games – Patty Kramer 570-948-9023

Knights of Columbus – George Gamble 570-724-5216

Social Concerns – Karen Plumley 570-439-0175

Parish Rummage Sale – Mary Cleveland 570-724-5286

Funeral Luncheon Group – Rectory 570-724-3371

Church Linens & Decorations – Sue Singer 570-724-2360

Buildings & Grounds – Rick Joachim 570-439-2591

Cemetery Committee – Howard Rutledge 570-724-4529

Fundraising Dinners – Kathy Wilcox 570-724-3371

Music Ministry – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085,

Marilyn deGuzman 570-376-5427, Marian Miller 570-724-5245

Samaritan House – Daria Guelig 570-724-3030

Youth Group – Maureen Poirier 570-724-9789

Eucharistic Adoration – Mary Cleveland 570-724-5286

Finance Council – Priscilla Walrath 570-724-2056

Parish Council – Jon Banik 570-724-5968

Worship Committee – Rectory 570-724-3371

Sunday Communion at Nursing Homes – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470

Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047

Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371

Welcome to our Visitors

If you are visiting Tioga County this weekend, welcome and thank you for celebrating the Eucharist with us! If you are searching for a Spiritual home, we welcome you to join us in worship and invite you to become part of our church family by contacting the Rectory.

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 7, 2016

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
Monday 2/8 <i>1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13; Mk 6:53-56</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Margaret Tanner (Ostapowicz Family)
Tuesday 2/9 <i>1 Kgs 8:22-23,27-30; Mk 7:1-13</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Evelyn Krystoff (Patrick & Paula Davis)
Wednesday 2/10 <i>Jl 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6,16-18</i>	12:10pm 7:00pm	In Memory of Scott Waclawik (Mary Antoniow) In Honor of Mary Lou Koch (Mike & Connie McNamara)
Thursday 2/11 <i>Dt 30:15-20; Lk 9:22-25</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Rita Donovan (Grab Family)
Friday 2/12 <i>Is 58:1-9; Mt 9:14-15</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Stanley Myslinski (Tom & Linda Sampson)
Saturday 2/13 <i>Is 58:9-14; Lk 5:27-32</i>	4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions In Memory of Robert Brown (Daughter, Gina)
Sunday 2/14 <i>Dt 26:4-10; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13</i>	8:30am 11:00am	In Memory of Scott Waclawik (Black Family) All Living and Deceased Members of St. Peter's Parish



This Week's Sanctuary Candle

The sanctuary candle is a reminder to us of the presence of Christ reserved in the Tabernacle.
This week's candle is offered in memory of **Charles Griscavage** (Rick & Suzanne Niles)

Stewardship

Your Gift of Time, Talent & Treasure

Thanks for your continued support and generosity!

Sunday Collection for Jan.31st: **\$4,852.40**

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$5,990.00

Difference: (\$65.40)

Year-to-Date Budget Variance: \$4,556.60

Catholic Campaign for Human Development: \$971.33

Attendance for weekend of January 31st

5:00pm – 185; 8:30am – 195; 11:00am – 155

Total number attending Mass – 535

Number of registered families – 477

Number of registered parishioners – 1003

Reflect on your gifts...and your giving!

Envelope usage statistics for the weekend of January 31st

Amount Given	Number of Contributors	Percentage of Contributors	Total Amount
\$0.00	307	64.77%	\$ 0.00
\$0.01 – \$1.00	2	0.42%	\$ 2.00
\$1.01 – \$5.00	16	3.38%	\$ 65.00
\$5.01 – \$10.00	30	6.33%	\$ 284.00
\$10.01 – \$15.00	12	2.53%	\$ 172.00
\$15.01 – \$20.00	30	6.33%	\$ 592.00
\$20.01 – \$25.00	22	4.64%	\$ 537.00
\$25.01 – \$50.00	34	7.17%	\$ 1,330.00
\$50.01 – \$75.00	7	1.48%	\$ 441.00
\$75.01 – \$100.00	6	1.27%	\$ 570.00
\$100.01 – \$500.00	8	1.69%	\$ 2,005.00
Totals	474		\$ 5,998.00

Loose Collection: \$ 643.75

The Week Ahead

SUNDAY, February 7, 2016

Religious Ed. – Pre-School, 8:30am; K-12th, 9:30am

MS Youth Group Meeting – 11:00am, Parish Center

TUESDAY, February 9, 2016

Adoration – 7:30am – 7:00pm

Women's Bible Study – 9:00am, Parish Center

Guardians of the Redeemer – 7:00am, Parish Center

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

THURSDAY, February 11, 2016

Cards & Games – 12:00noon, Parish Center

R.C.I.A. – 6:00pm, Parish Center

St. John Neumann Prayer Group – 7:00pm, Parish Center

FRIDAY, February 12, 2016

Stations of the Cross – 3:30pm and 7:00pm

SATURDAY, February 13, 2016

Valentine Dinner Distribution– 9:00am-1:00pm, Parish Center

SUNDAY, February 14, 2016

Religious Ed. – Pre-School, 8:30am; K-12th, 9:30am

Secular Carmelites – 1:00pm, Parish Center

Ash Wednesday Mass Schedule

7:00am – Liturgy of the Word with
Distribution of Ashes



12:10pm – Mass

7:00pm – Mass



Liturgical Reflection

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

FIRST READING: Isaiah 6:1-2, 3-8

Last week we heard about the call of the prophet Jeremiah. Today we proclaim a similar text about the call of Isaiah to his prophetic ministry. The call of Isaiah follows a familiar pattern. Isaiah has an encounter with the Lord, seeing a vision of the Lords' magnificence in his dwelling in the Temple. Transformed and inspired by that encounter, Isaiah offers himself enthusiastically in service of the Lord. Though Isaiah understands his own limitations, he trusts God and is purified for his mission of preaching God's steadfast love and mercy to a people in great need.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Paul offers words of encouragement about what we've been taught, what we've embraced, and what has taken root in our hearts. Like Paul, all disciples are called to share the Gospel. The Gospel we are called to proclaim is quite simple: Jesus died for our sins and was raised from the dead so that we might share in eternal life. If we do not believe in this truth and live our lives formed by this belief, our preaching will be empty and useless. If the preacher is not formed by faith, the preaching will not be able to inspire, convert, and transform.

GOSPEL: Luke 5:1-11



In both the Isaiah text and this Gospel, we hear a call story in which the one called is painfully aware of sinfulness. In each, the one called is overwhelmed, almost speechless, certain he's

unworthy to be in the presence of the divine power that's calling and healing him at the same time. Today's Gospel recounts the calling of Jesus' first disciples. This call follows the familiar pattern. Having encountered Jesus and his preaching and having seen his glory (in the miraculous catch of fish), Simon Peter, James, and John are transformed. They abandon the life they have known and begin to follow Jesus, strengthened by the mission with which Jesus entrusts them.

ABOUT THIS SUNDAY

The Collect asks that the Lord will keep us safe as we rely "solely on the help of heavenly grace." The Prayer over the Offerings prays for the transformation of the bread and wine, so they may become "the Sacrament of eternal life." The Prayer after Communion highlights the unity of the faithful that is to be the result of their participation in the Eucharist, being united in one Body of Christ.

For Catholics, the month of February is especially dedicated to the Passion of the Lord, probably because Lent usually begins in this month. Through the centuries, many devotions have developed to help us focus on the Passion of Christ. Whether we pray the Stations of the Cross, pray before the crucified Christ, or reflect on the Passion narratives in the Gospel, our reflection on the Passion of Our Lord should lead us from sorrow to wonder: sorrow for our sins, wonder at the unbounded love of Christ for us.

Ministers of the Altar Schedule

Ash Wednesday, February 10th

12:10pm

Servers: K.Pacific, F.Kennedy

Lectors: R.Kramer, P.Kramer

E. Min.: C.Lannak, L.Whitney, G.Brown

7:00pm

Servers: A.Swendrowski, K.Swendrowski, A.Banik

Lectors: B.Dalton, M.Ostapowicz

E. Min.: M.Bialas, T.Gamble, N.Ostapowicz

Weekend of February 14th

5:00pm

Servers: J.Singer, L.Singer, Z.Singer

Lectors: C.Evert, A.Singer

E. Min.: A.Singer, K.Wilcox, G.Brown

8:30am

Servers: L.Cimino, E.Cimino, L.Gordon

Lectors: K.Tellgren, D.Gordon

E. Min.: C.Delong, N.Ostapowicz, M.Osborn

11:00am

Servers: A.Burge, L.Burge, A.Dunkel

Lectors: K.Pacific L.Nonnenmacher

E. Min.: M.Stirnaman, L.Stager, D.Stager

Parish Activities and Information

VALENTINE'S DINNER

The Social Concerns committee will again be delivering a Valentine's dinner to any parishioner (homebound, living alone, recovering from an illness, a "sweetheart" who contributes in a special way to the parish) who would like one. Delivery, weather permitting, will be Saturday, February 13th. If you would like to receive a meal or know a parishioner who would like to receive one OR CAN HELP WITH DELIVERY, please contact Jackie Murphy at 570-724-7334. Also, to assist with needed supplies, please look for our sign-up sheets near the main entrance of the church.

POLISH DINNER THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who made the Polish dinner fundraiser a great success. A special thank you to Kathy Wilcox for chairing the event and to the "kitchen crew" who work so tirelessly to make these dinners come off so seemingly effortlessly. A financial report will be available in next week's bulletin.

LENTEN MATERIAL AVAILABLE

Lenten materials, for your spiritual enrichment, have been placed on the handout table at the back of the church.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday during Lent at 7:00pm in the church. Children's Stations of the Cross will also be held at 3:30pm. Students are invited to the parish center after school for a light snack before stations begin. The students will be chaperoned following the conclusion of stations, until parents are able to arrive. All parishioners are encouraged to attend Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season.

SMOKE FREE CHURCH AND GROUNDS

Effective immediately, St. Peter's is implementing a Tobacco-Free Church Policy for the overall health and welfare of its members. Tobacco use will not be permitted within church buildings or anywhere on church grounds. This policy applies to all employees, members, and visitors attending events at the church.

SPRING SALE

This year's annual spring clothing, books and house wares sale will be held from April 3rd – April 7th in the Parish Center. The schedule is as follows:

April 3rd – Donations accepted 12:00 – 3:00pm
April 4th – Donations accepted 8:00am – 5:00pm
April 5th & 6th – Sale Hours 8:00am – 5:00pm
April 7th – Sale Hours 8:00am – 3:00pm

No T.V.'s
No Early Sales

Take what you want for a donation

Bake Sale – We will again be selling homemade baked goods during the sale. **Donations of baked goods would be greatly appreciated** and can be dropped off at the Parish Center on April 4th or April 5th from 8:00am – 5:00pm. The bake sale is very popular, so extra bake goods would be appreciated.

WEDNESDAY LENTEN SERVICES

The Wellsboro Ministerium will be offering Wednesday Lenten Services beginning February 17th. All services will be held at the First Presbyterian Church from 12:00-12:30pm, with a light lunch to follow. The theme for this year is *Lenten Traditions*.

SOCIAL CONCERNS FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION

The Social Concerns Committee is accepting donations each month for the local food pantry. **February's food items are chicken noodle or tomato soup.** Place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church anytime throughout the month.



Neighboring Parish News

CATHEDRAL YEAR OF MERCY PILGRIMAGE

St. Thomas the Apostle Church, Elkland is planning a pilgrimage to St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton on Sept. 24th, as part of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. Pope Francis is granting the faithful an indulgence for walking through the Holy Door. The tentative schedule is listed below and includes bus pick up stops in Mansfield, Wellsboro and Elkland and a dinner stop at Steamtown Mall on the return home. The cost would be \$40, which includes lunch.

Schedule:

9:00-9:30am – Arrival and registration

9:30am – Morning Prayer

9:45am – Presentation on the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy

10:30-11:45am – Free Time and Confessions

11:45am – Recitation of the Rosary

12:10pm – Mass at the Cathedral

1:00pm – Lunch

1:30pm – Tour of the Cathedral

2:00pm – Depart

If you are interested in joining us, please call Valerie Smith (814-258-5032) no later than April 1st, so a bus can be reserved. Payment needed with reservations.

Pro Life News

WORD OF LIFE BRIEFS

"In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, also called confession, we meet the Lord, who wants to grant forgiveness and the grace to live a renewed life in him." USCCB, *God's Gift of Forgiveness: A Pastoral Exhortation on the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation*

From Sinners to Apostles

Pope John Paul II wrote the following words to all women who have had abortions: "The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and his peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To the same Father and to his mercy you can with sure hope entrust your child. With the friendly and expert help and advice of other people, and as a result of your own painful experience, you can be among the most eloquent defenders of everyone's right to life. Through your commitment to life, whether by accepting the birth of other children or by welcoming and caring for those most in need of someone to be close to them, you will become promoters of a new way of looking at human life." (*The Gospel of Life*, n.99)

Jubilee Year of Mercy



This Holy Year will commence on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and will conclude on Sunday, November 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe and living face of the Father's mercy.

How can we show others the mercy of God? Our actions need to authentically reflect God's mercy.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy have long been a part of the Christian tradition, appearing in the works of theologians and spiritual writers throughout history. Just as Jesus attended to the spiritual well-being of those he ministered to, these Spiritual Works of Mercy guide us to "help our neighbor in their spiritual needs" (USCCA).

COMFORTING THE SORROWFUL

- Be open to listening and comforting those who are dealing with grief. Even if we aren't sure of the right words to say, our presence can make a big difference.
- Lend a listening ear to those going through a tough time
- Make a home cooked meal for a friend who is facing a difficult time
- Write a letter or send a card to someone who is suffering
- A few moments of your day may make a lifetime of difference to someone who is going through a difficult time

Visit www.usccb.org for ways you can participate in the Jubilee of Mercy.

"I am always struck when I reread the parable of the merciful Father. ... The Father, with patience, love, hope and mercy, had never for a second stopped thinking about [his wayward son], and as soon as he sees him still far off, he runs out to meet him and embraces him with tenderness, the tenderness of God, without a word of reproach. ... God is always waiting for us, He never grows tired. Jesus shows us this merciful patience of God so that we can regain confidence and hope — always!" Pope Francis

3 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ASH WEDNESDAY

What's the purpose of Ash Wednesday?

It marks first day of the 40 days of Lent, a roughly six-week period (not including Sundays) dedicated to reflection, prayer and fasting in preparation for Easter. It ends on Holy Thursday, the fifth day of Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter) that marks the Last Supper. In addition to certain rules about foods and fasting, many Christians (and even non-Christians) abstain from additional foods, luxury or material goods or certain activities and habits.

Where do the ashes some people put on their face come from?

They're obtained from the burning of the palms of the previous Palm Sunday, which occurs on the Sunday before Easter, and applied during services. Palm Sunday marks Jesus' return to Jerusalem, when people waved palm branches to celebrate his arrival. The ashes are typically mixed with Holy Water or oil.

What do the ashes mean?

The ashes, applied in the shape of a cross, are a symbol of penance, mourning and mortality. Centuries ago, participants used to sprinkle themselves with ashes and repent much more publicly, but the practice fell away sometime between the 8th -10th century before evolving into what it is today. There aren't any particular rules about how long the ashes should be worn, but most people wear them throughout the day as a public expression of their faith and penance.

That's The Way It Is!



By Fr. Dave Bechtel

"I'm Gay and I'm a priest period." Shocked? No, I am not talking about myself. This was the title of an article in the Washington Post written by Michelle Boorstein. The article talked about the struggles of priests who are gay and in the priesthood. Many of these priests are still "in the closet" about their sexual passions. The priests struggle with whether to inform their congregations and "come out" to their people.

I went to the seminary (Saint Mary's in Baltimore in the early 2000's) with a man who got ordained to the priesthood. He has since left the priesthood and married his gay lover. He now writes for the Huffington Post and is no longer a practicing Catholic. He wrote articles detailing his struggles with homosexuality in the seminary and how he felt that he was untrue to himself. By not "coming out" to the community, he felt he was denying who he was as a person. He felt he was being dishonest with himself and the community at large.

People of all walks of life face the same struggles. They may either have family who are gay, friends who are gay, or they themselves may be gay. I have friends who are gay. Church teaching on homosexuality is clear. What is not clear is how we as Catholics deal with the fact that family or friends may be gay, or how priests are supposed to deal with this issue pastorally. At this time I have no answer on how we can uphold Church teaching, yet at the same time not drive away those who do not follow it. We

just have to do the best we can and realize, in the end, their eternal destiny is in God's hands, not our own. Below, I offer some reflections on the issue.

One of the biggest lies we are being fed is that we should define ourselves by our sexual passions and appetites. We should not master our passions and seek to control them; rather our passions should master and control us. This is not only in reference to homosexuality, but everything. The focus of education today is to form the mind, but not the emotions and appetites. As a result schools are becoming more and more violent. I submit that society is becoming more and more violent and less and less restrained.

One would only need to "come out of the closet" about their sexual passions if one chooses to define themselves by their sexuality. One would only feel they are lying to themselves and others about their sexual passions if they choose to define themselves by those passions. This is why the Catholic Church claims that homosexuality is a choice, but also prefers not to use labels like "homosexual" or "heterosexual." One may not be able to control who they find attractive, but one can control their choices and behavior.

For the Catholic Church and for God, it is NOT, it is NOT, IT IS NOT—(say that until it sinks in) our emotions, passions, and sexual appetites that define us, it is our choices and our behavior that define us. God is not going to judge us by our emotions, passions and appetites. God is going to judge us by our choices and behaviors. Who we find sexually attractive is not a choice. We can choose whether or not we act on that. Who we find sexually appealing is not a choice, the behavior IS. We cannot choose which emotions to experience within us, we can, however, choose which emotions we will act on.

We will feel things from time to time. Many times those feelings will be quite powerful. Sometimes we will want to act on those feelings, and not acting will be a sacrifice for us. Thing is, self-denial and sacrifice have not gone out of fashion. In fact, as Pope Francis himself says, they are very much in fashion. Being a Christian and giving one's life to Christ sometimes means we have to put aside our own desires if those desires are not in accord with what God has revealed. This does not just apply to something like gay marriage, but all aspects of our lives. Just because we feel something does not entail we have to act on it, if the action is not in accord with reason or God's Word.

Remember: It is our choices and behaviors that define us, not our passions, emotions, and sexual appetites. Our character is revealed in our choices and behaviors, not our emotions, sexual appetites and passions. We need to master our passions, lest our passions master us.

That's the way it is!

Father Dave Bechtel

Diocese of Scranton News

2016 MEN'S CONFERENCE

The 2016 Men's Conference will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2016. Registrations are now open on our new web site www.BeAManConference.com for an early bird rate of \$30.00 per adult. We have an exciting day planned with a great lineup of speakers, breakfast, lunch, confessions, adoration and concluding with Mass celebrated by Bishop Bambera. At a time when Goodness seems to be under attack worldwide, The Church needs her Men to step up and join the battle. Why not make the commitment today by registering for this conference. We guarantee that you will be fired up about our Faith when you leave the conference April 23rd! To register, visit www.BeaManConference.com.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY MASS

His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph C. Bambera, Bishop of Scranton, and the Office for Parish Life wish to invite couples celebrating their 25th or 50th wedding anniversary in 2016 to an anniversary Mass on Sunday, June 5, 2016. The event includes a 2:30pm mass at St. Peter's Cathedral followed by a reception. Requests for an invitation, with a mailing address, should be made calling the rectory before March 7th.

News From the Vatican



POPE: LIVE YOUR FAITH DURING LENT, PERFORM WORKS OF MERCY

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Lent is a time of conversion and a time to deepen one's faith, demonstrating and sharing it through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, Pope

Francis said. "Faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit," the pope said in his message for Lent.

Feeding the hungry, visiting the sick, welcoming strangers, offering instruction, giving comfort -- "on such things will we be judged," the pope wrote in the message. Particularly during the Year of Mercy, he said, Catholics are called to recognize their own need for God's mercy, the greatness of God's love seen in the death and resurrection of Christ and the obligation to assist others by communicating God's love and mercy through words and deeds.

"The root of all sin" is thinking that one is god, something often expressed in a total preoccupation for accumulating money and power, the pope wrote. And just as individuals can be tempted to think they have no need of God, social and political systems can run the same risk, ignoring both God and the real needs of human beings.

"Love alone is the answer to that yearning for infinite happiness," Pope Francis wrote. It is the only response to the longings "that we think we can satisfy with the idols of knowledge, power and riches. The danger always remains that by a constant refusal to open the doors of their hearts to Christ who knocks on them in the poor," he said, "the proud, rich and powerful will end up condemning themselves and plunging into the eternal abyss of solitude

which is hell. But through acts of mercy and charity, "by touching the flesh of the crucified Jesus in the suffering," he wrote, "sinners can receive the gift of realizing that they too are poor and in need. In the corporal works of mercy we touch the flesh of Christ in our brothers and sisters who need to be fed, clothed, sheltered, visited," he wrote. "In the spiritual works of mercy -- counsel, instruction, forgiveness, admonishment and prayer -- we touch more directly our own sinfulness. In the Christian life, Pope Francis said, "the corporal and spiritual works of mercy must never be separated."

MERCY AND MISSION

Vatican City, January 2016 (VIS) -- "Day by day we enter into the life of this Holy Year of Mercy. With His grace, the Lord guides our steps as we cross the Holy Door and comes towards us so as to stay always with us, despite our shortcomings and our contradictions. Let us never tire of asking His forgiveness, as when we are weak His closeness makes us stronger and allows us to live our faith with greater joy."

Referring to the close link between mercy and mission, Francis underlined that as Christians we have the responsibility to be missionaries of the Gospel. "When we receive good news or have a good experience it is natural that we wish to communicate it to others. The joy we feel inspires us to do so. It should be the same when we encounter the Lord. Indeed, the concrete sign we have truly encountered Jesus is the joy we feel in communicating this to others too. This is not proselytism, but rather it is a gift: I give you what makes me joyful. Reading the Gospel we see that this was also the experience of the first disciples. Encountering Jesus is the same as encountering His love. This love transforms us and makes us able to transmit to others the strength that it gives us."

"We could say that the day of our Baptism each one of us is given another name alongside the one we receive from our mother and father, and this name is 'Christopher', which means 'Christ-bearer'. The Christian is a bearer of Christ. But the mercy we receive from the Father is not given to us as a private consolation, but rather makes us instruments to enable others to receive the same gift."

"Living mercy makes us missionaries of mercy, and being missionaries enable us increasingly to grow in God's mercy. So, let us take seriously the fact of being Christians, and let us commit ourselves to living as believers, because only in this way may the Gospel touch the people's hearts, opening them to receive the grace of love," concluded the Holy Father.

POPE FRANCIS' FEBRUARY PRAYER INTENTIONS

Universal: "That we may take good care of creation -- a gift freely given -- cultivating and protecting it for future generations."

Evangelization: "That opportunities may increase for dialogue and encounter between the Christian faith and the peoples of Asia."

Lenten Information

LENT – Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and culminates in the celebration of Christ's resurrection. The word lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word 'Lencten' which means spring or lengthening. The Latin word for Lent was 'quadragesima' which simply means 'forty' and referred to the fact that the prayer, fasting, and penance associated with Lent went on for forty days. In the Old Testament Jesus spent forty days fasting and resisting temptations in the wilderness in preparation for the beginning of his public ministry. For Christians today, Lent is the time of personal reflection as we struggle with the bad habits we have acquired and practiced during the past year. It gives us the chance to break such habits and find new opportunities to turn back to the ways of God. We are encouraged to make peace, look for God's forgiveness, and to have compassion on all who suffer or are in need. One of the major themes that mark the season's readings is Baptism. Lent offers a wonderful opportunity to spring clean our lives and start afresh.

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU



As we begin this season of Lenten preparation, each of us is invited to reflect on those choices which will bring about the new life we celebrate in Easter. For this reason, the Church invites us to experience

Lent as a time for deepened prayer, personal sacrifice, and self-giving – all so that we can be raised to new life in Christ! The Church encourages us to make confession a regular part of our spiritual life, especially during the holy season of Lent, as we reflect on our baptism and repentance. Bishop Joseph C. Bambera is helping to make this experience possible by arranging for a Lenten initiative called *The Light Is On for You*. **Every Monday evening during Lent**, each parish throughout the Diocese of Scranton will have their "lights on" from **5:30-7:00pm** for confession so that Catholics can come to or return to this incredible source of God's grace, mercy and healing.

Please make plans to come on a Lenten Monday, and spread the word of this special outreach of mercy to those you know. If you have been reluctant to come to the sacrament, have been away for some time, or just find it difficult to get to a Saturday afternoon confession time, this is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with Christ and his Church. **"The Light Is On for You!"**

Haven't been to confession in a while?

Here's how to make a good confession:

Preparation: Before going to confession, take some time to examine your conscience by reviewing your life in comparison to the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the example of Christ's life. Pray to God for forgiveness.



Going to Confession:

1. The priest will welcome you, and you both make the sign of the cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
2. You continue with these traditional words: *Bless me Father, for I have sinned. It has been (how long) since my last confession.*
3. The priest will encourage you to have trust in God, and invite you to confess your sins. Speak freely and honestly – nothing you say in confession will ever be repeated by the priest. The priest may talk with you about how to make up for the sins you confess. He will then assign an act of penance corresponding to the nature of the sins – this may take the form of prayer, self-denial, and especially service to one's neighbor.
4. Act of Contrition – you offer a prayer expressing sorrow for your sins and resolving not to sin again. You may say this in your own words, or use this traditional prayer:

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

5. Following this prayer, the priest extends his hands over your head and says the words of absolution:

God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

As the priest concludes this prayer, he will make the sign of the cross over your head – you bless yourself and respond, Amen.

6. The priest will invite you to go in peace.

After Confession: When you leave the confession room, take a few minutes of private prayer and thanksgiving. Plan how you will complete the assigned act of penance. Make a firm resolve to continue your conversion by a life renewed according to the Gospel and the love of God.

**God wants to live amidst his sons and daughters.
Let us make space for him in our hearts. Pope Francis**

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Thank you for connecting with us!

A Gift in Your Will

We hope you'll consider including a gift to St. Peter's Church in your will or living trust. Called a charitable bequest, just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed. Share this sample bequest language for St. Peter's Church with your estate planning attorney:

"I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise and bequeath to St. Peter's Church, Wellsboro [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."



Parish Prayer List

Nettie Mays, Nan Bowser, Rebecca Kreider, Bill Jacobson, Trish Knowlton, Sheldon Moon, Helene Carpenter, Angela Shirley, Joe Heminhaus, Jr., Jasmine Williams, Judy Nagel, Sue Evert, Logan Williams, Valerie Tobin, Michael Farrington, Debbie Adleman, Darlene Brennan, Shirley Mekos Broughton, Cynthia Gordon, Tim Christman, Michelle Lawrence, Ann Porter, Tucker Gromosiak, Meghan Henneman, Joyce Bowe, Donna Brennan, Peggy Zona, Natasha Rymarczuk, Bob Erway, Mary Mekos, Mary Cramner, Bob Black, Maci Lynn Perry, Martha Desch, Pam Robbins, Leon Herb, Deb Finestone, Nick Cavagnaro, Antoinette Davis, Kay Evans, Anna Marie Mimlitsch, Sean Rice, Jonathan Hardman, Sylvia Darrow, Lola Moore, Edwin Rosa, Carol Johns, Joan Kilmer, Stephen Hurd, Stephanie Hemighauf, Suzie Alexander, Larry Sasani, Kathy Barnes, Wendy Doan-Newcomb, Michele Bush, Ashley Johns, Syler Sullivan, Carter Goodwin, Adrienne Gilbert, Rita Grinnan, Bob Murphy, Richard Wheeler, Carolyn Antoniow, Sylvia Smith, Jean Thurman, Robbie Butler, Susan Cleveland, Lynn Bower, Brian Abbott, Dominic Bianco, Tom Mohr, Carol Weatherby, Carol Shine, Teresa Pavlock, Jerry Pierce, Joann Black, Gabriel, Melissa & Daniel Espinoza, Lori Lopaz, Patricia Quattrone, Larry Jackson, Katie Seip, Lisa Jones, Grace Bickham, Edward Collins, Floyd Williammee, Barbara Gaugler, Renee Kennedy, Gay Furlong, Elsa DiBernardo, Fran Rose, Christine Palmer, June Sherman, Kathy Smith, Beverly Heck, Tim Bogaczyk, Beth Valdez, Virginia Shaefer, Charles Barrett, Joe Engel, Tony Dooley, David Naugle, Connie Kenderdine, Darleen Kohler, Mary Lou Bonk, Jon Banik, Kaydence Burger, Callie Cavanaugh, Tina Janeski, Jonathan Boyce, Karen Roggow, and Dean Gilkey.



Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord and
Let the Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them.

Lord, this we know, no matter how difficult life may be at this time, we know you will not stop loving us and will always hold us in the palm of your hand. We are reaching to you, Lord, to hold us, comfort us, and heal us. Lord, this we know, you are faithful in your love for us today and forever. You are with us, and we are with you. Amen.