



Third Sunday of Lent ***February 28, 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.

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

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.

Third Sunday of Lent

February 28, 2016

| Date | Time | Confession Time and Mass Intention |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| Monday 2/29 <i>2 Kgs 5:1-15; Lk 4:24-30</i> | 7:30am | In Memory of Gene Ragus (Black Family) |
| Tuesday 3/1 <i>Dn 3:25,34-43; Mt 18:21-35</i> | 11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm | Confessions In Memory of Richard Amtmann, Jr (Ostapowicz Family) |
| Wednesday 3/2 <i>Dt 4:1,5-9; Mt 5:17-19</i> | 11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm | Confessions In Memory of Joseph Boroch (Banik, Straight, Britton Families) |
| Thursday 3/3 <i>Jer 7:23-28; Lk 11:14-23</i> | 11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm | Confessions In Memory of George Sowinski (Nick & Paulette Affuso) |
| Friday 3/4 <i>Hos 14:2-10; Mk 12:28-34</i> | 11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm | Confessions In Honor of Arnie & Jackie Werts Family (Elite Basketball Family) |
| Saturday 3/5 <i>Hos 6:1-6; Lk 18:9-14</i> | 4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm | Confessions In Memory of Beverly Grab (Grab Family) |
| Sunday 3/6 <i>1 Sm 16:1,6-7,10-13; Eph 5:8-14; Jn 9:1-41</i> | 8:30am 11:00am | All Living and Deceased Members of St. Peter's Parish In Honor of the Ostapowicz Family (Al & Anna Marie Dlugokinski) |



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 **Lorraine Schoppman Katzman** (Sister, Joan Usak)

Stewardship ~ Gift of Time, Talent & Treasure

Thanks for your continued support and generosity!

Sunday Collection for Feb.21st: **\$5,658.75**

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$5,990.00

Difference: (\$331.25)

Year-to-Date Budget Variance: \$4,563.85

Attendance for weekend of February 21st

5:00pm – 169; 8:30am – 200; 11:00am – 117

Total number attending Mass – 486

Number of registered families – 477

Number of registered parishioners – 1003

Reflect on your gifts...and your giving!

Envelope usage statistics for the weekend of February 21st

| Amount Given | Number of Contributors | Percentage of Contributors | Total Amount |
|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| \$0.00 | 318 | 67.09% | \$ 0.00 |
| \$0.01 – \$1.00 | 1 | 0.21% | \$ 1.00 |
| \$1.01 – \$5.00 | 13 | 2.74% | \$ 61.00 |
| \$5.01 – \$10.00 | 33 | 6.96% | \$ 312.00 |
| \$10.01 – \$15.00 | 8 | 1.69% | \$ 112.00 |
| \$15.01 – \$20.00 | 26 | 5.49% | \$ 516.00 |
| \$20.01 – \$25.00 | 25 | 5.27% | \$ 616.00 |
| \$25.01 – \$50.00 | 32 | 6.75% | \$ 1,178.00 |
| \$50.01 – \$75.00 | 6 | 1.27% | \$ 386.00 |
| \$75.01 – \$100.00 | 4 | 0.84% | \$ 400.00 |
| \$100.01 – \$500.00 | 8 | 1.69% | \$ 1,515.00 |
| Totals | 474 | | \$ 5,097.00 |

Loose Collection: \$ 561.75

The Week Ahead

SUNDAY, February 28, 2016

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

Confirmation Prep Class - 5:00pm, Parish Center

MONDAY, February 29, 2016

Confessions – 5:30-7:00pm, Church

TUESDAY, March 1, 2016

No Adoration

Finance Council – 8:00am, Rectory

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

Worship Committee – 7:00pm, Rectory

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

WEDNESDAY, March 2, 2016

ChristLife Series – 6:30pm, Parish Center

THURSDAY, March 3, 2016

Cards & Games – 12:00noon, Parish Center

R.C.I.A. – 6:00pm, Parish Center

FRIDAY, March 4, 2016

Stations of the Cross – 3:30pm **Only**

24 Hours for the Lord – Begins at 4:00pm

SATURDAY, March 5, 2016

24 Hours for the Lord – Ends at 4:00pm

SUNDAY, March 6, 2016

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



Liturgical Reflection

Third Sunday of Lent

FIRST READING: Exodus 17:3-7

Today's passage from Exodus continues the foundational Old Testament account of Israel's journey from slavery to freedom in the Promised Land. The Israelites are grumbling against Moses because they are without water. They fear dying in the desert. Moses becomes exasperated and calls out to God for help. The God of the covenant, the God of Abraham, answers Moses, telling him to strike a rock and water will flow from it. "I will be there in front of you," promises God. Of course, God is faithful to his promise and the Israelites are saved. They name the place in commemoration of the event and the First Reading ends with a question: "Is the Lord in our midst or not?" The answer to this question is given in the Gospel. God always goes before us in our lives, struggles, and journeys. God waits for us – ready meet us and show us his power, love, and care. Of course we know the answer to this. Jesus is already there waiting for the Samaritan woman. He longs to provide life-giving water just as YHWH waited for the Israelites, in order to give life-giving water. So does Christ wait for the elect and for all of us in order to give life-giving water.

SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-2,5-8

The Second Reading reinforces the conviction that Christ died for us sinners. Now he waits for us again, resurrected in glory, to provide us with new life. Paul explains this important teaching – we are saved by our faith, rather than by our obedience to the Law. Paul emphasizes the role of Christ in human salvation with a favored phrase, "through our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul came to believe that no human effort, including any and every attempt to observe the Law of Moses, could bring about a state of uprightness before God. Human justification could be accomplished only by means of an unearned gift of God. For Paul, faith is not a cause of, but a response to, the grace of justification. He stresses that "while we were still helpless," unable to do anything at all to secure our own justification, Christ gave his very life for us as a gift of love. One could, perhaps, imagine dying for a truly good person; but only divine imagination could conceive of dying for those still immersed in sin.

GOSPEL: John 4:5-42

Today's reading from John presents one of several dramatic encounters with Jesus. This most symbolic account abounds with Old Testament references, layers of meaning, and unfolding insight into Jesus' true identity of God's self-revealing Word made flesh. John further indicates an implied call in every encounter with Jesus: whoever engages with him and so comes to believe is thereby commissioned to bring others to Jesus, so he can reveal himself to them, also. A woman of Samaria would seem a most unlikely candidate for an encounter with Jesus because Samaritans and Jews avoided each other. John presents her as the first missionary, the only person to whom Jesus directly identifies himself as the Messiah and the one who first proclaims him to non-Jews. The woman begins her missionary task by returning to her town to tell of her encounter with Jesus and some of the townspeople "began to believe."

Ministers of the Altar Schedule

Weekend of March 6th

5:00pm

Servers: A.Osborn, A.Osborn, J.Grab

Lectors: D.Sherman, P.Walrath

E. Min.: K.Wilcox, E.Evert, M.Osborn

8:30am

Servers: F.Kennedy, C.Callahan, D.Callahan

Lectors: M.Ostapowicz, N.Kennedy

E. Min.: M.Bialas, L.Whitney, C.Delong

11:00am

Servers: N.Ingerick, M.Ingerick, K.Kramer

Lectors: S.Ingerick, K.Pacific

E. Min.: L.Stager, D.Stager, L.Makos

Parish Activities and Information

SCRUTINIES

The Scrutinies are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all, a spiritual purpose. They are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. The Scrutinies complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all. They are celebrated on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent. Today we pray for *JoAnn Osgood, Shelby Osgood, Caitlin Tameris, and Tim Trescott* as they receive the First Scrutiny in preparation for initiation into the Catholic faith. Also keep in your prayers our candidates who are continuing their preparation for the reception of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist: *Tim Christman, Paula Davis, Artie Holdren, and Ryan Osgood*

CHANGE TO MASS/ADORATION SCHEDULE

Mass will be held at 7:30am on Monday, February 29th and 12:10pm on Tuesday, March 1st. There will be no adoration on Tuesday, March 1st.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The following topics were discussed at the last Parish Council Meeting: Parishioner concerns; Year of Mercy events, including Divine Mercy Sunday and a bus trip to a Holy Door; Upgrading our sound system; Parish Survey. For more detailed information on any of these topics or to voice a suggestion or concern to be brought up at the next Parish Council meeting, please contact any of the parish council members: Sue Singer, Jon Banik, Celeste Waclawik, Val Anthony, Patti Mitchell, Marty Ostapowicz, Dave Bleggi, Steve Tokarz, Lisa Feil, Paul Urner, Coleen Evert, Matt Sampson, Lisa Pietropola.

BABY ROOM

St. Peter's has a small room that can be utilized during Mass for those parents who have a small child that needs to leave the general congregation for a period of time. Please note, that this room's acoustics only muffles the sound, but it is NOT soundproof.

LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE



St. Peter's will hold a Lenten Penance Service on Sunday, March 6th at 2:00pm. Three priests will be available to hear confessions.

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. All parishioners are encouraged to attend Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season. **Please note:** there will be no 7:00pm Stations of the Cross this Friday, March 4th as our parish participates in the *24 Hours for the Lord* initiative.



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.

SOCIAL CONCERNS FOOD PANTRY COLLECTION



The Social Concerns Committee is accepting donations each month for the local food pantry. **March's food items are Pork & Beans and Canned Fruit.** Place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church anytime throughout the month.

"Celebrating the Jubilee of Mercy means learning how to not remain prisoners of the past. It means believing things can be different." Pope Francis

"Tears can generate a fracture which is able to open ourselves for conversion." Pope Francis

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are Needed

"The Body of Christ, the Blood of Christ"

There is no more intimate moment in our lives that when we receive Our Lord in Holy Communion. It is there that He offers us everything: His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. In return, with love and gratitude, we offer Him everything that we are: our hearts, our minds, our bodies, our souls. This Communion is what propels us to greater union with Him and urges us to the heights of holiness. As an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, you are in the privileged role to be a part of that encounter between Christ and the individual. Would you miss not being able to receive the Blood of Christ at Mass every Sunday?

We are in desperate need of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at St. Peter's. We currently have 18 ministers. Nine ministers are scheduled for each weekend. If we were able to train 10 more ministers, the commitment would be once or twice per month, based on your availability and Mass preference. Please consider volunteering for this important ministry. Holy Communion ministers need to possess a love of the Eucharist and be living lives consistent with the teachings of the Church. Training will be provided.

**Have you felt called to serve the Church?
Please call the rectory and let us know you
want to be part of this ministry.**

24 HOURS FOR THE LORD 2016 MERCIFUL LIKE THE FATHER

For the third year the Holy Father has welcomed the 24 Hours For The Lord initiative to be celebrated during Lent. This year the special time for prayer and confessions will take place on Friday, March 4th and Saturday, March 5th. Churches around the world have been asked to make the Sacrament of Reconciliation available, and ensure the initiative coincides with 24 hours of Adoration.

The schedule for St. Peter's is as follows: Following the 3:30pm Stations of the Cross on Friday, March 5th, the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for Adoration for 24 hours – 4:00pm, Friday to 4:00pm, Saturday. From 7:00-8:00pm confessions will be heard. At 4:00pm on Saturday, March 5th, the Blessed Sacrament will be reposed. There will be no 7:00pm Stations of the Cross on March 4th. Parishioners are asked to sign up for an hour long period of adoration – two per hour is hoped for. A sign-up sheet can be found near the entrance to the church.

We, as Catholics, are truly blessed. We have with us, the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. He is with us in His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. What makes us even more blessed is we have the opportunity to visit Jesus during Eucharistic Adoration. In Eucharistic Adoration, we are not just thinking about God, we are with God!

Neighboring Parish News

WEDNESDAY LENTEN SERVICES

The Wednesday Lenten Services are 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*. The remaining schedule is as follows:

- March 2nd – Pastor Marvin Humbert – Seventh Day Adventist – *Repentance*
- March 9th – Pastor Rich Hanlon – United Methodist – *Prayer*
- March 16th – Pastors Ruth Vaughn & Kathy Moore – Living Word – *Worship*

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY DOOR

St Ann's Church, is organizing a pilgrimage to the Holy Door at St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton. The bus will depart Williamsport at 7:00am on June 4th. Parishes will cover the cost of their parishioners' seats on the bus (\$20 each) and each individual will be responsible for the \$10 fee for the lunch provided for by the Diocese, in the Pastoral Center. To reserve a spot on the bus, please contact St. Ann's Church, 570-322-5935 or email office@stannrcc.org.

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 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 for Steamtown Mall

8:00-9:00pm – Return Home

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.

GORZKIE ZALE

Gorzkie Zale, a traditional Polish Bitter Lamentations, will be held Sunday March 6th at 3:00pm at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church, 420 Main Road, Buttonwood, Hanover Township. The parish community invites everyone to this Lenten Service, which will be conducted by Father John Albosta, Father Richard Cirba, Father James McGahagan, and Father Richard Zavacki, priests from the Diocese of Scranton. A light reception will follow in the church hall. For further information or directions, please call 570-823-6242.

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.

MOMENTS OF MERCY - FEBRUARY 2016

As Catholics we take up the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving every year. These practices help us to remember the merciful love and compassion that God shows all people. Participating in these practices, we journey toward repentance with our community and God and toward the celebration of the Paschal Mystery of our Lord. We do not make this journey alone. The whole Church prepares for the celebration and together, along with those who are preparing to enter the Church at the Easter Vigil, we try to live more faithfully to God's call to be merciful, loving, and compassionate to those around us. Our acts of love through sacrifice and prayer are a tangible witness of God's love to those around us.

1. Spend some time in reflection about why you choose to participate in the prayer, fasting, and almsgiving of the Church during this Lenten season. Next time someone asks you why you aren't eating the chicken on Friday in the lunchroom, you'll be better prepared to share your belief in God who is merciful and compassionate.
2. Share with someone what your Lenten practices will be this year. This is not to brag about how good you are at following Christ, rather, it allows us to each have something of an "accountability partner" so that we can strive to be a more credible witness to our faith.

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

Diocese of Scranton News

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.

COME & SEE WEEKEND

Have you ever felt that you might be called to be a priest or a brother? If you are a high school junior, and would like to learn more about the Holy Cross undergraduate seminary, we would like to invite you to join us at Old College: March 17-19, 2016. Come stay with us for the weekend, and join the current Old Collegians for Mass, prayer, meals, and conversations about what life is like for Holy Cross Seminarians. Meet one on one with a Vocations Director, and take a tour of the campuses. Contact the Office of Vocations at 574-631-6385 or email vocation@holycrossusa.org for more information or to register.

That's The Way It Is!



Pope Francis made waves all last week with his comments concerning immigration. Here is what the pope said that many found offensive: "A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not building bridges, is not Christian." The pope continued "I say only that this man is not a Christian if he has said things like that."

Exactly what is offensive to people, is not clear. Different people were offended by different things. Some were offended that the pope opined about American politics. They felt he had no business commenting on American politics. Others were offended that he "judged" whether someone is or is not Christian. Still others were offended by the implications of his statement on immigration policy. They felt the pope was suggesting that a sovereign nation has no right to secure their borders. One state representative went so far as to call the pope the anti-Christ!

As an aside: if Pope Francis is not allowed to make a judgment about an individual and their Christianity, why does a state senator in New Hampshire get to make the judgment that the pope is the anti-Christ? In calling someone the anti-Christ, they are saying not only that the person is not Christian, but that they are really Satan masquerading as a Christian to trick people. This seems to me to be far, far worse than the simple suggestion that a person is not Christian. Don't you love the double standards when it comes to the Catholic Church? We don't get to judge anyone or anything, but everyone else not only gets to judge us, they get suggest that we work for Satan.

The fact that we get it from both sides of the isle is more proof in my mind that we are the Church of Christ. People who might identify as "progressive" or "liberal" do not like the moral teachings of the Church. Hence, when the pope speaks on those issues they ignore him and call him old-fashioned and dated. However they do tend like Catholic social teaching. When the pope speaks on Catholic social teaching, the same pope whose authority they wanted to dismiss on moral issues, they now want to claim as an authority when it comes to social justice. If we can't trust the pope's authority when it comes to Christian morality, why can we trust the pope's authority when it comes to social issues and social justice?

On the other hand, those who might identify as "traditional" or "Conservative" tend to like Catholic moral doctrine. When the pope speaks on these issues they cite him as an authority. When the pope speaks to Catholic social teaching the same people want to dismiss his authority as irrelevant and say that the pope mustn't to speak on political matters. If we can't trust the authority of the pope when it comes to social justice, why can we trust his authority on moral matters? Catholic social thought and moral doctrine are inter-related. Moral doctrine isn't just about what behaviors we should avoid, but what behaviors we should do.

All of this being said: many times a pope will say something we disagree with. I need to be clear however: just because we disagree with the pope does not entail he has no right to speak. He is, after all, the pope. You know — the

successor of Peter, the Vicar of Christ and all that? The pope has every right to weigh in on whatever issues he wants. Besides, it isn't like the officials of the U.S. government are shy about weighing in on church matters. They make their opinions known all the time and sometimes even try to force them on the Church through legislation.

In fairness to Pope Francis, I believe the media framed the question unfairly. I believe it was done deliberately in order to get the pope to give them the answer they wanted him to give. One wonders what he would have said had the question been framed thusly: "Your holiness, as you know many people are entering the U.S. illegally every year. This is an important issue that has no easy solution. Some are simply poor looking for a better life. Others are smuggling drugs into the country, and still others may be terrorists. How do we balance the rights of a sovereign nation to things like secure borders and the right to have limits and controls on immigration, over and against the right of people to immigrate and flee poverty, persecution, etc, and seek a better life for themselves?"

One also wonders how the Pope would have responded to the following: "What do you think of Catholic politicians who support abortion? Are they Catholic?" I suspect they wouldn't ask that question, because they wouldn't like the answer.

That's the way it is!

The Reverend David Bechtel

Pro Life News

Lent, A Eucharistic Time

"The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation ... we enter into the very dynamic of His self-giving'. Let us live Lent then, as a 'Eucharistic' time in which, welcoming the love of Jesus, we learn to spread it around us with every word and deed. Contemplating "Him whom they have pierced" moves us in this way to open our hearts to others, recognizing the wounds inflicted upon the dignity of the human person; it moves us, in particular, to fight every form of contempt for life and human exploitation and to alleviate the tragedies of loneliness and abandonment of so many people. May Lent be for every Christian a renewed experience of God's love given to us in Christ, a love that each day we, in turn, must 'regive' to our neighbor, especially to the one who suffers most and is in need. Only in this way will we be able to participate fully in the joy of Easter" *Pope Benedict XVI, Lenten Message, 2007.*

PRO-LIFE PRAYER BREAKFAST

A Pro-Life prayer breakfast will be held on Saturday, April 9th at 9:30am in the Grand Ball Room of the Holiday Inn Express, Williamsport. The principal speakers are Karen Bodle, a pro-life missionary, and Becky Biter, Associate Director of Rachel's Vineyard Ministries in Central PA. The cost is: Adults, \$15 and Children (12 & under), \$10. A full flyer will be included in an upcoming bulletin. Deadline to register is April 1st.

News From the Vatican



(Vatican Radio) Pope Francis has met with several of the children who wrote him letters for his new book, *“Dear Pope Francis.”* During the encounter the Holy Father said the questions asked for the book were some of the “most difficult” he had ever been asked. Pope Francis then proceeded to answer more questions the children had.

He said his favorite thing about being Pope was “being around people,” adding he “learned something every time” he met someone new.

He told another child that when he was young he wanted to be a butcher, since when he went to the market with his mother, the butcher’s work was fascinating and “the way he cut the meat, that was art.”

One young person caused some indecision on the part of Pope Francis by asking who was his favorite saint: “I have several saints friends, but I do not know which I admire the most,” – the Holy Father said – “but I’m a friend of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus; I am a friend of St. Ignatius; I’m a friend of St. Francis...I would say these three, perhaps, are the ones I most keep in my heart.”

He said being Pope gives him a sense of “calm,” and said that it is “a grace from God,” adding that it “feels as I am coming to the end of my life with so much peace.”

The Holy Father said when he was elected, Cardinal

Hummes told him to “not worry, it is the work of the Holy Spirit,” and told him to “not forget the poor.”

When asked about his love for Jesus, Pope Francis said “I do not know if I truly love Jesus. I try to love him, but I am sure that He loves me. I’m quite certain of this.”

Pope Francis said being Pope is “both easy and difficult, as is the life of any person,” explaining “it’s easy because you have a lot of people to help you...and there are difficult moments because there are difficulties in all the work there is.”

Pope Francis was also asked about his prayer life. “I pray in the morning when I wake up: The prayer book all priest pray, called the breviary,” he said. “I pray the Mass, then I pray the Rosary...and then in the afternoon, I take time for Eucharistic Adoration.”

The Pope encouraged the children to always carry a rosary with them, and added he also carries a Via Crucis in his pocket, because it is a reminder that Jesus also suffered and this helps him to be “more good, and less bad.”

At the end of the encounter, Pope Francis addressed the issue of “Why do children suffer?” saying it is question which causes him great pain, and he admitted he did not know the answer to the question. “The only thing that gives me light is looking at the cross, and seeing what Jesus suffered; it is the only answer I can find,” he said.

Registration: 2016 Be A Man Catholic Men’s Conference

First name _____ Last Name _____

Phone _____ Parish _____

Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Guest name _____ Guest Name _____

Registration Fee: \$35 each ~ Early Bird \$30 until 4/1/16 ~ Student \$15 Amount enclosed \$ _____

Registration includes continental breakfast & lunch.

Mail completed form with your check or money order to:

Office for Parish Life, Diocese of Scranton, 330 Wyoming Ave. Scranton, PA 18503

Or Register online at : www.BeAManConference.com

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Be A Man Catholic Men’s Conference – April 23, 2016

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! For the complete schedule and list of speakers, or to register on line, visit www.BeaManConference.com.

Lenten Information

About Lent

Q. How is Lent Observed?

A. Lent was first practiced in the fourth century as a period of self-examination and self-denial to prepare for Easter. While Catholics have observed strict fasting rules over the centuries, nowadays only Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays during Lent are considered fasting days.

The Lenten season is also seen as a time to give up something pleasurable – which could be anything from chocolate to habits like swearing or procrastinating.

Q: Why are Sundays excluded from the reckoning of the forty days?

A: Because Sunday is the day on which Christ arose, making it an inappropriate day to fast and mourn our sins. On Sunday we must celebrate Christ's resurrection for our salvation. It is Friday on which we commemorate his death for our sins. The Sundays of the year are days of celebration and the Fridays of the year are days of penance.

Q: Why are Fridays during Lent days of abstinence?

A: This is because Jesus died for our sins on Friday, making it an appropriate day of mourning our sins by denying ourselves something we enjoy. During the rest of the year Catholics in this country are permitted to use a different act of penance on Friday in place of abstinence, though all Fridays are days of penance on which we are required to do something expressing sorrow for our sins, just as Sundays are holy days on which we are required to worship and celebrate God's great gift of salvation.

Q: Are acts of repentance appropriate on other days during Lent?

A: Yes. Thus the *Code of Canon Law* states: "All Fridays through the year and the time of Lent are penitential days and time throughout the universal Church" (CIC 1250).

Q. When does Lent end?

A. Lent officially ends on Holy Thursday. That is when the "Triduum", great three Days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday occur. Easter is not only a day but an Octave (eight day) celebration leading to a Season of the Church, Easter Season, which ends on Pentecost.

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!"**

Lenten Reminders

Days of Fast and Abstinence – Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. All Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence. All Catholics, 18-59 years of age, are bound by Church law to fast, which means only one large meal and two smaller meals may be eaten. Catholics 14 years of age and older are required to abstain, which means no meat may be eaten.

Operation Rice Bowl - HUNGERING FOR THE JOURNEY - Operation Rice Bowl is the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services. Join our parish community—and nearly 14,000 Catholic communities across the United States—in a life-changing Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. Remember, what you give up for Lent changes lives. Proceeds benefit the poor in our own diocese and throughout the developing world. You are asked to eat one sacrificial meal each week during Lent and to give the money you saved to the Rice Bowl program. An envelope can be found in your monthly offering packet boxes can be found on the table in the back of the church.

Easter Duty – All parishioners are reminded of their obligation to fulfill their Easter Duty. A person's Easter Duty consists of receiving Holy Communion at least once between Ash Wednesday and Pentecost Sunday as well as going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation to confess any mortal sins.

Traditional Pillars of the Church – We are provided with 3 personal challenges associated with our individual observance of Lent:

- Almsgiving – generously giving to those in need
- Fasting – practicing self-discipline and self-denial
- Prayer – reading, hearing, and reflecting on the Word of God

Rediscovering The Faith

Have you been away from the Church? Are you thinking about coming back? Do you know someone who wants to come home to the Catholic Church, but is struggling with their faith? Maybe you or someone you know has experienced one of these thoughts:

I grew up Catholic, but for some reason I just sort of stopped going to Church...

I just moved to a new city, I tried going to a couple different parishes, but I never really felt welcomed...

After my marriage ended, I felt uncomfortable around my family, friends and parish...

I just don't understand why the Church teaches what it does! Some teachings seem so outdated...

If you have experienced one of these situations you are not alone. The Church wants you to know that you are a child of God, called by name, precious in his eyes and loved by him (Is. 43:1,4). The Church also wants you to know that you are missed. Resources to help you rediscover the faith and answer questions about the Church and Church teachings can be found at these websites, www.usscb.org and catholicscomehome.org. We invite you to explore these sites or contact the rectory to talk and learn more about coming home.

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Dr. Richard F. Black



"Help me, Lord,
to walk this Lent
with you wherever
you lead."



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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."



PRAYERS
Needed For...

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, Dean Gilkey, Victoria Salerno, Wanda Trynovich, Tim Cunningham, and Maureen Bailey.



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.