



Fourth Sunday of Lent ***March 6, 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.

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.

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

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 6, 2016

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
Monday 3/7 <i>Is 65:17-21; Jn 4:43-54</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Clifford Parsells (Mary Antoniw)
Tuesday 3/8 <i>Ez 47:1-9,12; Jn 5:1-16</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Betty Frazier (Ostapowicz Family)
Wednesday 3/9 <i>Is 49:8-15; Jn 5:17-30</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Krystoff Brothers (Patrick & Paula Davis)
Thursday 3/10 <i>Ex 32:7-14; Jn 5:31-47</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Maureen Bramley (Grab Family)
Friday 3/11 <i>Wis 2:1, 12-22; Jn 7:1-2,10,25-30</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Del Mar (John Boher)
Saturday 3/12 <i>Jer 11:18-20; Jn 7:40-53</i>	4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions In Memory of Marie Coll (Frank & Ida)
Sunday 3/13 <i>Ez 37:12-14; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45</i>	8:30am 11:00am	In Memory of Scott Wacławik (Grab 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 **James Hopp** (Sister, Valerie)

Stewardship

Gift of Time, Talent & Treasure

Thanks for your continued support and generosity!

Sunday Collection for Feb.28th: **\$4,971.89**

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$5,990.00

Difference: (\$1,018.11)

Year-to-Date Budget Variance: \$3,545.74

Attendance for weekend of February 28th

5:00pm – 158; 8:30am – 186; 11:00am – 133

Total number attending Mass – 477

Number of registered families – 477

Number of registered parishioners – 1003

The Week Ahead

SUNDAY, March 6, 2016

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

MONDAY, March 7, 2016

Confessions – 5:30-7:00pm, Church

TUESDAY, March 8, 2016

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

Broad Acres Mass – 2:00pm

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

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

WEDNESDAY, March 9, 2016

Green Home Mass – 2:00pm

ChristLife Series – 6:30pm, Parish Center

THURSDAY, March 10, 2016

Contemplative Spirituality Group – 8:30am, Parish Center

Cards & Games – 12:00noon, Parish Center

R.C.I.A. – 6:00pm, Parish Center

FRIDAY, March 11, 2016

Cemetery Meeting – 9:00am, Rectory

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

SUNDAY, March 13, 2016

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

Secular Carmelites – 1:00pm, Parish Center

Reflect on your gifts...and your giving!

Envelope usage statistics for the weekend of Feb. 28th

Amount Given	Number of Contributors	Percentage of Contributors	Total Amount
\$0.00	324	68.35%	\$ 0.00
\$0.01 – \$1.00	2	0.42%	\$ 2.00
\$1.01 – \$5.00	13	2.74%	\$ 57.00
\$5.01 – \$10.00	27	5.70%	\$ 254.00
\$10.01 – \$15.00	9	1.90%	\$ 125.00
\$15.01 – \$20.00	30	6.33%	\$ 593.00
\$20.01 – \$25.00	23	4.85%	\$ 565.00
\$25.01 – \$50.00	32	6.75%	\$ 1,215.00
\$50.01 – \$75.00	5	1.05%	\$ 315.00
\$75.01 – \$100.00	5	1.05%	\$ 470.00
\$100.01 – \$500.00	4	0.84%	\$ 745.00
Totals	474		\$ 4,341.00

Loose Collection: \$ 630.89



Liturgical Reflection

Fourth Sunday of Lent

FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

In the chapter preceding today's reading, the judge and prophet Samuel announced to the reigning king, Saul, that God has rejected him as ruler because of his disobedience. At the Lord's command Samuel turns to Jesse, father of the one chosen to succeed Saul. David is chosen and anointed as King. He is the youngest of Jesse's sons and considered the least eligible for this important role. Yet, the reading reminds us that "not as man sees does God see, because...the Lord looks into the heart." As the chosen one of God, David prefigures Jesus the Christ – the Anointed one of God.

SECOND READING: Ephesians 5:8-14

This passage begins by emphasizing an appeal to the Church made in the preceding chapter: you have been given a new kind of life through Christ's self-giving love; now you must live that life! Using images of darkness and light, the author repeats the point that Christians are now "light in the Lord" and so must live in that light, which produces right living of every kind. The light that comes from God illuminates our sight, thoughts, choices, and behaviors. The reading ends with a plea taken from an early hymn again calling believers to accept new life in Christ, the true source of light that illumines the Church's thought and action.

GOSPEL: John 9:1-41

In John's account of the Good News, a simple healing story becomes one of several dramatic, revelatory encounters with Jesus. This most symbolic of Gospel accounts abounds with Old Testament references, layer of meaning, and unfolding insight into Jesus' true identity as God's self-revealing Word made flesh. The man born blind is a model for the elect. The elect are growing in understanding, knowledge, and appreciation of the messianic identity of Jesus Christ. Their eyes are being opened to the salvation Christ has to offer all of us.



ABOUT THIS SUNDAY

Today is known as **Laetare Sunday**. The name meaning "rejoice," comes from the first words of today's entrance antiphon, "Laetare, Jerusalem" ("Rejoice, O Jerusalem").

Rejoice

The passage from Isaiah continues, "rejoice with joy, you that have been in sorrow," and on Laetare Sunday, the purple vestments and altar cloths of Lent are set aside, and rose ones are used instead. Flowers, which are normally forbidden during Lent, may be placed on the altar. Traditionally, the organ was never played during Lent, except on Laetare Sunday. Laetare Sunday is also known as Rose Sunday, and it has a counterpart in Advent: Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, when purple vestments are exchanged for rose ones. The point of both days is to provide us encouragement as we progress toward the end of each respective penitential season.

Ministers of the Altar Schedule

Weekend of March 13th

5:00pm

Servers: G.Macensky, A. Dunkel, X. Tellgren

Lectors: T. Sampson, K.Tellgren

E. Min.: E.Evert, G.Brown, M.Osborn

8:30am

Servers: L.Cimino, E. Cimino, M.Mann

Lectors: R.Kramer, P.Kramer

E. Min.: T.Gamble, L.Whitney, C.Delong

11:00am

Servers: A.Burge, L.Burge, B.Levindoski

Lectors: L.Nonnenmacher, M.Stirnman

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

Parish Activities and Information

LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE



St. Peter's will hold a Lenten Penance Service **today**, Sunday, March 6th at 2:00pm. Three priests will be available to hear confessions. Holy Child will hold Penance Service next Sunday, March 13th at 2:00pm.

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 **Second 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*

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 Wacławik, Val Anthony, Patti Mitchell, Marty Ostapowicz, Dave Bleggi, Steve Tokarz, Lisa Feil, Paul Urner, Coleen Evert, Matt Sampson, and Lisa Pietropola.

LENTEN MATERIAL AVAILABLE

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

CHRISM MASS

All the faithful of the Diocese are invited to attend the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of St. Peter, Scranton, on Tuesday, March 22nd 4:00pm. At this Mass, priests throughout the Scranton Diocese will renew their priestly promises before Bishop Bambera and the oils to be used for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Anointing of the Sick and Holy Orders, will be blessed. Participation in the Chrism Mass is a beautiful way to pray for and support the priests of the Diocese.

EASTER FLOWER MEMORIAL



Each Easter, the flowers in the church during the season memorialize deceased loved ones. If you would like to contribute to this year's Easter flowers in memory of a loved one, please use the envelope found in your monthly packet and place in the collection basket. A list of those we remember will be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

EASTER MASS INTENTIONS

Parishioners are reminded that there are special Easter Mass Intentions envelopes in your monthly packets to remember both living and deceased family members and friends. The envelopes will be placed on the altar during all of the Easter Masses to remember the donor's intentions. Please place your Easter Mass Intentions envelopes in the collection basket.

Holy Week & Easter Sunday Schedules

Palm Sunday - March 20th

8:30am – Mass begins in Parish Center
(5:00pm & 11:00am Masses begin in Church)

Chrism Mass - March 22nd

4:00pm – St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton

Holy Thursday - March 24th

6:00pm – Altar Server Practice
7:00pm – Mass of the Lord's Supper
8:30-11:00pm – Adoration

Good Friday - March 25th

11:00am – Altar Server Practice
12:10pm – Celebration of the Lord's Passion
1:30pm – Sacrament of Reconciliation
7:00pm – Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday - March 26th

8:30am – RCIA Practice & Retreat
11:00am – Altar Server Practice
12:00pm – Blessing of Baskets (In Parish Center)
8:00pm – Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday - March 27th

9:00am & 10:30am – Easter Sunday Masses



TENEBRAE SERVICE

What is a Tenebrae service?

The word "tenebrae" comes from the Latin meaning "darkness." The Tenebrae is

an ancient Christian Good Friday service that makes use of gradually diminishing light through the extinguishing of candles to symbolize the events of that week from the triumphant Palm Sunday entry through Jesus' burial. This increasing darkness symbolizes the approaching darkness of Jesus' death and of hopelessness in the world without God. The service concludes in darkness, sometimes with a final candle, the Christ candle, carried out of the sanctuary, symbolizing the death of Jesus. A loud noise may also sound symbolizing the closing of Jesus' tomb. The worshipers then leave in silence to ponder the impact of Christ's death and await the coming Resurrection. Join us on Good Friday at 7:00pm for this moving service.

SAVE THE DATE



St. Peter's is planning a Year of Mercy pilgrimage to the Holy Door at the Basilica of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Danville. The bus trip will take place on Wednesday, June 15th and will include

Mass at the Basilica then on to Lancaster County with a stop at Kitchen Kettle followed a showing of "Sampson" at Sight and Sound. More details will be in upcoming bulletins.

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.

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.



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.



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

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.

*No T.V.'s
No Early Sales*

That's The Way It Is!



The Catholic religion is extremely ritualistic. I like to say that the Catholic Church never met a ritual it didn't like. There is a ritual for just about everything under the sun. The more complicated the ritual, the better the

Church likes it. Most priests (especially those of my generation) tend to find this aspect of the Catholic Faith one of its most appealing characteristics. Those who know me know that I do not find the ritualistic aspects of the Faith as appealing---for no reason other than personal preference. I don't like complexity. I like simplicity.

Some, upon hearing this ask me why I am a priest if I am not one for complicated, drawn out rituals. It is a fair question, since as a priest I lead and direct the worship of the Church. Does it not follow that I should have an appreciation for the ritualistic aspects of our Faith? This brings me to the point of this article.

The reason that the Catholic Church is so ritualistic in her worship, the reason why so much emphasis is given to worship has to do with the fact that the worship of the Church is a mechanism of Tradition. Understand what I am saying here: I am not saying that we worship in the manner we do just because we have always done it that way, I am saying that the worship of the Church is one of the ways that the Church hands on the Apostolic Faith.

Catholics believe that the certainty of revealed Truth is transmitted in the Scriptures and in the Tradition. Protestants believe the certainty of revealed Truth is transmitted in the Scriptures alone. Because Protestants derive the certainty of the Christian Faith from the Scriptures alone, they do not need to be as concerned with ritualizing the Faith, because their worship is not a mechanism of Tradition the way it is in the Catholic Faith.

The guiding principle of Catholic worship is "Lex Credendi, Lex Orandi." These Latin terms essentially mean this: the law of belief is the law of prayer and the law of prayer is the law of belief. Catholics believe what they pray, and they pray what they believe. This is important because it explains why priests cannot just change the Mass on a personal whim, or skip the prayer in the Missal

for a made up prayer of their own. It explains why we cannot change the readings and why a new translation of the Missal was so important to Pope Benedict. It explains why some priests are very fussy when it comes to how the Mass is celebrated and carried out with regard to music, etc, and why bishops are quick to clean up liturgical abuses.

Sloppy worship leads to a sloppy Faith; watered down worship means a watered down Faith. Changing the Mass means changing the Faith. Prior to the invention of the printing press, the prayer and worship of the Church was the primary means the Church used to hand on the Gospel and teach the Faith. Your average person could not easily access the Scriptures because the cost of a complete Bible was out of reach of most people. Even if the average person could afford a Bible, if they were illiterate, a Bible would not help them.

The prayer, devotion and worship of the Church is how the Deposit of Faith is preserved and handed on, in close union with the Scriptures. They are a way the Church teaches the Faith. It is a way people come into contact with the Faith that is recorded in the Scriptures. The rituals, then, preserve and hand on the Faith. Because of this, we cannot take them for granted, and it is important that we celebrate them correctly, as given to us, without change, addition, alteration, etc. The rituals, the worship of the Church is not our own possession, they belong to the Church. In so far as we are part of the Church through our Baptism, we participate in these rituals, but they are not our individual property. As such we cannot take it upon ourselves to introduce changes.

While I do not share the appreciation for the ritualistic aspects of the Faith of many of my cohorts in ministry, I understand why the rituals are important. I also understand why Catholic worship is not just a matter of personal taste or preference as it might be in the Protestant churches. While I still prefer to celebrate Mass in a simple manner, keeping the complicated rituals and chants to a minimum, I celebrate Mass reverently and understand the importance of the ritual itself.

Easter will soon be upon us, and as much as I prefer simplicity, in the Easter services we will be engaging in many rituals over the Triduum that make present and help us call to mind the Passion of Christ. As much as I prefer simplicity, the Easter rituals in all their complexity help us contemplate the Passion and enter into the mystery of our redemption.

That's the way it is!

The Reverend David Bechtel

May the working of your mercy, O Lord, we pray, direct our hearts aright, for without your grace we cannot find favor in your sight. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

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.

Please call the rectory and let us know you want to be part of this ministry.

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.

Operation Rice Bowl - HUNGERING FOR THE JOURNEY - Operation Rice Bowl is the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services. 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.

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!"**

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 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.



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 - MARCH 2016

Though we often think of the Sacrament of Penance as a highly individualized and private sacrament, we must not forget its communal dimensions. In this sacrament, we are not only reconciling ourselves with God but also reconciling ourselves with our community and the Church as a whole. Every time we sin, we distance ourselves from God and neighbor. We may not have sinned against a particular person, but when our relationship with God is broken, our relationships with others suffer since we no longer have God as our guiding light. This sacrament helps us renew our lives to be witnesses of the Good News of Christ and builds us up as members of the Body of Christ.

- 1. Invite somebody, perhaps someone from a small faith-sharing group at your parish or a friend, to go with you to a reconciliation service at your parish this month before the celebration of Easter.*
- 2. Begin to make amends with someone you are in conflict with. A perfect resolution does not have to occur, but approaching the conflict with an attitude of mercy and compassion will help ease the tension and help you to look on this person with the love of God.*

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

Pro Life News

WORD OF LIFE

"The mercy of God is his loving concern for each one of us. ...he desires our wellbeing and he wants to see us happy, full of joy, and peaceful. ...Just as he is merciful, so we are called to be merciful to each other." *Pope Francis, Misericordiae Vultus, no. 9 © 2015 Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used with permission.*

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.



About Lent

Q. Why Stations of the Cross?

A. While this devotion certainly has a place in Lent, the overemphasis given to it in the past tended to distort the meaning of the season. Because the stations were prayed publicly throughout the whole season, the impression was given that Lent was primarily about commemorating the passion and death of Christ.



Vatican II strongly endorsed the use of devotions as part of Catholic spirituality, but it also called for their renewal, to harmonize them with the sacred liturgy. The liturgy of Lent focuses on the passion and death of the Lord only near the end of the season, especially with the proclamation of the Passion on Palm (Passion) Sunday and again on Good Friday. The weekday readings between the Fifth Sunday of Lent and Palm Sunday also point toward the coming Passion, so that might also be an appropriate time to pray the Stations. The earlier weeks of Lent, however, focus much more on Baptism and covenant than on the Passion.

When we do pray the Stations of the Cross, we can also connect them with the baptismal character of Lent if we place the stations themselves in the context of the whole paschal mystery. In Baptism we are plunged into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, and our baptismal commitment includes a willingness to give our life for others as Jesus did. Recalling his passion and death can remind us that we, too, may be called to suffer in order to be faithful to the call of God.

One limitation with the traditional form of the Stations is the absence of the second half of the paschal mystery. The liturgy never focuses on the death of Christ without recalling his resurrection. Some forms of the Stations of the Cross include a 15th station to recall the resurrection as an integral part of the paschal mystery.

Some contemporary forms of the Stations also make clear the link between the sufferings of Christ in the first century and the sufferings of Christ's body in the world today. Such an approach can help us to recognize and admit the ways that we have failed to live up to our baptismal mission to spread the gospel and manifest the love of Christ to those in need.



Q. Why Blessed Palms?

A. As we near the end of Lent, we celebrate Passion (Palm) Sunday. At the beginning of the liturgy, we receive palms in memory of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As a symbol of triumph, the palms point us toward Christ's resurrection and might remind us of the saints in heaven "wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands" (Rev 7:9). The white robes remind us of baptismal garments, and the palms suggest their triumph over sin and death through the waters of Baptism.

"Open your heart to mercy! Divine mercy is stronger than the sins of men." Pope Francis

News From the Vatican



NEVER TOO LATE TO REPENT, LET US BEGIN TODAY!

February 2016 (VIS) – "Every day, unfortunately, bad news is reported: murders, accidents, disasters.... In today's Gospel

passage Jesus refers to two tragic events, which at the time caused quite a stir: the bloody crackdown by Roman soldiers inside the temple and the collapse of the tower of Siloam in Jerusalem, which claimed eighteen victims." These are the words that Pope Francis started with this afternoon before the Angelus, relating our current lived experience to the Gospel of the day. "Jesus knows the superstitious mentality of his listeners," he continued, "and knows that they interpret those kinds of events wrongly. In fact, they think that, if those persons died so cruelly, it's a sign that God has punished them for some grave offense they had committed, as if to say 'They deserved it.' And the fact that they had been spared from the disaster was equivalent to being 'okay'. They 'deserved it' but I 'am good'.

The Pope explained that "Jesus clearly rejects this view because God does not allow tragedies in order to punish sins. He affirms that those poor victims were not worse than others. Rather, he invites us to draw a warning from such painful events, a warning for all because we are all sinners. He said to those who are asking him: 'If you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!' Even today, in the face of certain misfortunes and tragic events, we might feel the temptation to 'dump' the responsibility onto the victims or even onto God himself. But the Gospel invites us to reflect: what is our idea of God? Are we convinced that God is this way or is it not just our own projection, a god made 'in our image and likeness'? In contrast, Jesus calls us to a change of heart, to make a radical change in our life's path, abandoning the pacts with evil – and we all do this, make pacts with evil, hypocrisy, I believe that we all have at least one piece of hypocrisy – to decisively take the Gospel path."

"But here again is the temptation to justify ourselves: 'What should we convert from? Aren't we all basically good people?' How many times have we thought that: 'All in all, I'm a pretty good person?' – haven't we? – 'Aren't we believers, who even practice enough?' And we think, therefore, that we are justified." The Pope stressed that we

justify ourselves as believers and even practicing ones. Unfortunately, each of us looks a lot like a tree that, for years, has given much evidence of sterility. But luckily for us, Jesus is like the peasant farmer who, with limitless patience, still gives another deferment to the barren fig tree. 'Leave it for this year,' he says to the master. 'It may bear fruit in the future.'"

"A 'year' of grace," he continued, "the time of Christ's ministry, the time of the Church before his glorious return, the time of our life punctuated by a number of Lents, which are offered to us as opportunities for repentance and salvation, the time of a Jubilee Year of Mercy. Jesus' invincible patience. Have you thought on God's patience? Have you thought about his unyielding concern for sinners as they should provoke impatience in how we see ourselves! It is never too late for us to convert, never! God's patience waits for us up till the last minute. Remember the story of St. Therese of the Child Jesus when she prayed for the man condemned to death, a criminal, who did not want to receive the comfort of the Church. He declined a priest's visit, didn't want it. He wanted to die that way. And she prayed, in the convent. And exactly at the moment of his execution he turned to the priest, took the crucifix and kissed it. God's patience! He does the same with us, with all of us! How many times – we don't know. We will know in Heaven – how many times we are there [about to fall] and the Lord saves us. He saves us because he has great patience with us. And this is his mercy. It is never too late to repent but it is urgent, the time is now. Let us begin today."

Before finishing, Pope Francis called upon the Virgin Mary "to sustain us so that we may open our hearts to God's grace, to his mercy. And help us to never judge others but to let daily misfortunes be the opportunity to make a serious examination of conscience and repent."

POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR MARCH

The Holy Father's **universal prayer** intention for February is: "That families in need may receive the necessary support and that children may grow up in healthy and peaceful environments."

His intention for **evangelization** is: "That those Christians who, on account of their faith, are discriminated against or are being persecuted, may remain strong and faithful to the Gospel, thanks to the incessant prayer of the Church."

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



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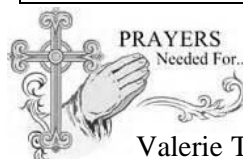
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Thank you for connecting with us!

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, Dean Gilkey, Victoria Salerno, Wanda Trynovich, Tim Cunningham, Maureen Bailey, Tony Pranses, and Rudy & Patti Radocaj.



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

Johanna Whitmer, Raymond Daugherty,
Jackie Knaus

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.