



## ***23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time September 4, 2016***

# **St. Peter's Church**

47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901  
 Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322  
 Website: [www.stpeterswellsboro.org](http://www.stpeterswellsboro.org) ~ Email: [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

### **Rectory Office Hours**

Monday through Friday 9:00–2:00pm

### **Parish Staff**

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – [Dbechtel00@yahoo.com](mailto:Dbechtel00@yahoo.com)  
 Secretary: Connie Spang – [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)  
 Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – [stpadm@ptd.net](mailto:stpadm@ptd.net)  
 Director of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier – [stpreled@ptd.net](mailto: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

### **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 year to all 8<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **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.

### **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.

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

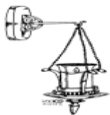
### **Pregnancy Support**

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310  
 Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS  
 Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

### **Parish Contact Listing**

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 – Rectory 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 – Rectory 570-724-3371  
 Worship Committee – Rectory 570-724-3371  
 Sunday Nursing Home Communion – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470  
 Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047  
 Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
<b>Monday 9/5</b> <i>1 Cor 5:1-8; Lk 6:6-11</i>	9:00am	In Honor of the Rummage Sale Workers (Mary Cleveland)
<b>Tuesday 9/6</b> <i>1 Cor 6:1-11; Lk 6:12-19</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Katie Brennan (Tom & Linda Sampson)
<b>Wednesday 9/7</b> <i>1 Cor 7:25-31; Lk 6:20-26</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Barry Temple (Ostapowicz Family)
<b>Thursday 9/8</b> <i>Mi 5:1-4; Mt 1:1-16</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Honor of Patrick & Catherine Lannak 60 <sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary
<b>Friday 9/9</b> <i>1 Cor 9:16-19,22-27; Lk 6:39-42</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Tina Janeski (Dio & Marilyn deGuzman)
<b>Saturday 9/10</b> <i>1 Cor 10:14-22; Lk 6:43-49</i>	4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions In Memory of Marie Franks (Bustin Family)
<b>Sunday 9/11</b> <i>Ex 32:7-11,13-14; 1Tm 1:12-17; Lk 15:1-32</i>	8:30am 11:00am	Living and Deceased Members of St. Peter's Church In Memory of Joseph Vincent Daly (Carl & Mary Lou Smith)



## 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 **Katie Brennan** (Tom & Linda Sampson).

## The Week Ahead

### MONDAY, September 5, 2016

Rectory Closed

### TUESDAY, September 6, 2016

Eucharistic Adoration – 8:00am-7:00pm

Benediction/Evening Prayer – 6:45pm

Finance Council Meeting – 8:00am, Rectory

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

### WEDNESDAY, September 7, 2016

Adult Education Program – 6:30pm, parish Center

### THURSDAY, September 8 2016

Cards & Games – 12:00noon, Parish Center

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

### SUNDAY, September 11, 2016

Altar Serve Training – 9:30am, Church

Secular Carmelites – 10:00am, Parish Center

Mandated Reporter Training – 6:00pm, Parish Center

Rel. Ed Teacher Meeting – 7:00pm, Parish Center

## Ministers of the Altar Schedule

### Weekend of September 11<sup>th</sup>

#### **5:00pm**

Servers: E.Poirier, J.Poirier, W.Poirier

Lectors: C.Evert, D.Sherman

E. Min.: G.Poirier, E.Evert, G.Brown

#### **8:30am**

Servers: N.Ingerick, M.Ingerick, M.Mann

Lectors: N.Kennedy, N.Bickham

E. Min.: M.Bialas, D.deGuzman, N.Josten

#### **11:00am**

Servers: K.Kramer, J.Gordon, L.Gordon

Lectors: D.Gordon, M.Stirnaman

E. Min.: L.Stager, D.Stager, B.Brown

## FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS



This month's food pantry items are:  
*Canned Tuna, Ham, or Chicken.*

Place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church anytime throughout the month.

## A Prayer for Labor Day

*Lord on this Labor Day, we thank you for the blessing of work. We ask for strength to complete each day. We ask for rest when we are weary. We ask for your guidance and hope for everyone seeking employment. We ask that you be with those whose faces we might never see, but who work tirelessly each day for the good of all of us. Amen.*

## Welcome to St. Peter's Church!

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. Please complete this form and return it to the parish office or drop it in the offertory basket.

### Request for Parishioner Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_



## Liturgical Reflection

23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

**FIRST READING: Wisdom 9:13-18**

The author of the Book of Wisdom begs the question: Who can know the wisdom of God? Mortal beings are timid and unsure as they search for what God intends. But the wisdom of God is imparted through the Holy Spirit. Those who receive this wisdom will stand in awe of God's wonder and providence and their path of life will be made straight.

**SECOND READING: Philemon 9-10, 12-17**

Paul writes to Philemon asking him to accept Onesimus, a runaway slave whom Paul has met and converted to Christianity, and to continue the work of the Gospel. Paul writes from prison but accepts his situation because it is in the name of Jesus Christ and for the sake of the Gospel. Nonetheless, Paul is committed to doing what he can to continue the work of the Gospel through Philemon and Onesimus.

**GOSPEL: Luke 14:25-33**

Jesus teaches the difficult demands of being his disciples. This may have been one of the "hard sayings" that caused some to walk away from his mission. Jesus teaches that in order to follow him, one must leave all other claims on their time and energy. Even family obligations have to be reconsidered by those who choose to follow him. Following Christ not only requires placing him ahead of all other values and concerns, it also demands a willingness to carry our cross and suffer with him. .

## Parish Activities and Information

### ALTAR SERVER TRAINING

Training will take place on September 11<sup>th</sup>, following the 8:30am Mass (approximately 9:30am) for anyone in Grade 5 or above who is interested in becoming an Altar Server. Please meet in the Church.

### INTERESTED IN THE CATHOLIC FAITH?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process by which adults are welcomed into the Catholic Church. It begins with a period of inquiry in which you may ask questions before you make a commitment to become Catholic. *An informational meeting will take place on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm, in the Rectory.* Please call the Rectory to register or for more information.



### REGISTER NOW FOR RELIGIOUS ED

Registration information has been mailed to all returning students. Please fill out the registration form and return by September 11<sup>th</sup>. If you have a new student or did not

receive the mailed information, please call or email the Religious Education office and information will be mailed to you.



## RELIGIOUS ED KICK-OFF SUNDAY

Mark your calendars. Catechetical Sunday is September 18<sup>th</sup> and will be the first class for students in grades Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Following the 8:30am Mass, students will report to their classrooms and a short parent meeting will be held in the church. At the conclusion of the parent meeting, we will be joined by the students to kick off the year with donuts and coffee/juice on the lawn for everyone.



## ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Please join us on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm, in the Parish Center for a video presentation on the life and influence of John Henry Cardinal Newman, within the Catholic Church. Cardinal Newman was instrumental in the Oxford Movement and was the most prominent convert from the Anglican Church to Catholicism. Also, mark your calendars for other upcoming presentations: The life of Catherine of Sienna – September 14<sup>th</sup>; The life of St. Thomas Aquinas – September 21<sup>st</sup>. All our welcome!

## MASS INTENTIONS FOR 2016



MASS INTENTIONS

We are now accepting Mass Intentions and Sanctuary Candle Memorials for 2017. Please stop by the rectory to request your Mass or Candle or place your intention, along with the \$10 stipend, in a marked envelope and drop in the collection basket.



## FALL SALE

This year's annual fall clothing, books and house October 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> in the Parish Center.

October 2<sup>nd</sup> – Donations accepted 12:00 – 3:00pm

October 3<sup>rd</sup> – Set up & Donations accepted 8:00am – 5:00pm

October 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> – Sale Hours 8:00am – 5:00pm

October 6<sup>th</sup> – Sale Hours 8:00am – 3:00pm

**Take what you want for a donation on Thursday, Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>**

No Early Sales! Please, no donations of televisions.

**Bake Sale** – We will 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 Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> or Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> from 8:00am – 5:00pm. The bake sale is very popular and sells out early, so we would appreciate as many baked goods as possible.

## Stewardship

Sunday Collection for August 28<sup>th</sup>: \$4,436.00

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$5,990.00

Difference: (\$1,554.00)

Year-to-Date Budget Variance: (\$2,643.20)

Collection for Church in Eastern Europe: \$1,002.00

Envelopes Mailed – 478; Envelopes Used – 135

We are grateful to all those who financially sacrifice every week to support our parish and its ministries!



## That's The Way It Is!

Last week I discussed the twin pillars of Protestantism. Justification by Faith alone (Fide Sola) is the primary pillar Protestantism was founded. The second pillar is Scripture alone (Scriptura Sola.) This week I am going to examine Scripture alone. Space does not permit detail, so I am going to try my best to hit the most important points in my description of the pillar.

While all Protestants accept Scripture alone, not all Protestants agree on the definition. Protestants are also not in agreement on how to apply the doctrine. This makes discussing and defining the doctrine rather difficult. I think I can simplify things by saying that within Protestantism there is a moderate, more historical definition of Scripture alone. There is also a less moderate, more extreme definition accepted by fundamentalist Protestants.

The mainline Protestant sects define the doctrine of Scripture alone thusly: The Bible is the sole infallible rule of Faith for the Christian and for the Church. The Bible is the Norm of norms without norm. The Bible is the supreme court of final appeal on all matters of Faith, life and worship. Scripture alone does not reject the concept of tradition, the authority of the Church or General Revelation. Scripture alone simply says that the authority of tradition and the authority of the Church are lower authorities than that of Scripture; they are normed by Scripture. While the concept of General Revelation is affirmed, we do not form doctrine or bind the Christian Conscience on what can be learned from General Revelation.

Protestants cite as the Scriptural basis for the doctrine, 2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is God-breathed (Theopneustos) and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." The Protestant notes that Paul is addressing Timothy and telling him where to go for teaching, rebuking, etc. Paul does not tell Timothy to look to Rome, look to a bishop, look even to an Apostle, look to Tradition, but to go to the Scriptures. The Protestant says that is exactly what Protestants do today: they go to the Inspired (Theopneustos) Word of God for truth, not the pope, not a bishop and not tradition.

The less moderate fundamentalist definition is called "Scriptura Solo" (Scripture only) as opposed to Scriptura Sola (Scripture alone.) Fundamentalists assert that there is no authority in the Church save Scripture. Fundamentalists, reject that the Church has authority and that tradition has authority. Whether this position allows for General Revelation is unclear. For this reason, some fundamentalists do not celebrate birthdays or even Christmas on December 25. Those are not in the Bible.

You can see why it is more extreme. The moderate Protestants admit that this position is unworkable, is not the position of the original Protestant reformers and is not

biblical. Hence, whereas the doctrine of Scripture alone allows for authority in the Church, tradition, and General Revelation, Scripture only does not. That is what makes it different. That is what makes it extreme, unbiblical and unworkable. The Bible clearly points to the fact that the Church has authority and also points to Tradition. That fact alone is enough to refute this doctrine as an aberration.

When I taught theology I made sure when I covered the Reformation to cover these points in detail. I spent a lot of time on this. I wanted my students to know and understand what the reformers said and what they did not say. This is because the work of many Catholic apologists, and even theologians often confuse and conflate the two different doctrines.

The way these doctrines are applied in Protestantism is going to depend on the ideology of the sect in question. Liberal sects tend to believe that the community imputes and projects meaning on to the Bible. Hence, the teachings of the Bible are not static. The teachings of Scripture evolve with the values and traditions of the community. This means that whenever Scripture condemns sinful behaviors that the community no longer views as sinful, those verses are either dismissed as irrelevant or reinterpreted so as to harmonize with the values of the community. You can see what this leads to: the Scriptures have no meaningful or substantive authority in the Church.

Conservative Protestant sects (and Catholics) believe that the authority of the Bible informs the values of the community. The meanings do not evolve and do not change with the values of the community. Behaviors condemned as sinful in 33AD are sinful in 2016, unless explicitly abrogated by the Scriptures. (The Jewish dietary laws are an example. The Apostles abrogated those laws and some other Jewish laws. That is why we no longer keep them.)

Next week I will explain the Catholic understanding of Justification and the relationship of Faith and works and why we do not accept Justification by Faith alone. The following week I will explain the Catholic concept of authority in the Church and why we do not accept Scripture alone. I am going to assume (correctly I hope) that I do not need to treat the aberration Scripture only. I am assuming that it is self evident that Scripture only is simply not correct.

That's the way it is!

The Reverend David Bechtel

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## Neighboring Parish News

### GOLF SCRAMBEL FUNDRAISER

A golf scramble fundraiser will be held on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at River Valley Club in Westfield and benefits St. Thomas and St. Catherine Churches. The shotgun start begins at 11:00am. The cost is \$50 for members and \$60 for non-members. For more information call St. Thomas Rectory 814-258-5121.

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# Pro-Life News

## PRIESTS FOR LIFE

Mother Teresa of Calcutta has been declared a saint by the Catholic Church. Back in 1994, she spoke at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, DC, and said the following words: "I feel that the greatest destroyer of peace today is abortion, because it is a war against the child, a direct killing of the innocent child, murder by the mother herself. And if we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love and we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts. Jesus gave even His life to love us. So, the mother who is thinking of abortion, should be helped to love, that is, to give until it hurts her plans, or her free time, to respect the life of her child. The father of that child, whoever he is, must also give until it hurts. By abortion, the mother does not learn to love, but kills even her own child to solve her problems. And, by abortion, the father is told that he does not have to take any responsibility at all for the child he has brought into the world. That father is likely to put other women into the same trouble. So abortion just leads to more abortion. Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want. This is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion."

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## Jubilee Year of Mercy

*This Holy Year will conclude on Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe and living face of the Father's mercy.*

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Jesus' loving gaze of tenderness and mercy extends to all who seek forgiveness no matter how great or small their sins may be, Pope Francis said. While many often feel "cast aside" because of their sins, Jesus offers encouragement and "tells us, 'Courage, come to me.' "It is the moment of forgiveness, of inclusion in Jesus' life and the life of the church. All of us are sinners; whether great or small, we all are. The Lord tells us, 'Courage, come, you are no longer discarded. I forgive you, I embrace you.' This is mercy," he said.

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## News From the Vatican



### NEW WORK OF MERCY ENSHRINED IN FIRST PAPAL MESSAGE FOR CREATION

(Vatican Radio) 9/1/2016 - To mark the September 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Prayer for Creation, Pope Francis has added a new work of mercy for Catholics to perform: *caring for our common home, the planet and all its inhabitants.* "We usually think of the works of mercy individually and in relation to a specific initiative: hospitals for the sick, soup kitchens for the hungry, shelters for the homeless, schools for those to be

educated, the confessional and spiritual direction for those needing counsel and forgiveness." However, when we look at the works of mercy as a whole, "we see that the object of mercy is human life itself and everything it embraces," the Pope said. Since human life itself and all that it entails naturally includes caring for creation, Francis proposed "a complement" to the two traditional sets of seven corporal and spiritual works of mercy. "May the works of mercy also include care for our common home," he said, explaining that as a spiritual work of mercy, care for creation "calls for a grateful contemplation of God's world which allows us to discover in each thing a teaching which God wishes to hand on to us." As a corporal work of mercy, he said, it "requires simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness and makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world." Francis cautioned that "God gave us a bountiful garden, but we have turned it into a polluted wasteland of debris, desolation and filth." "We must not be indifferent or resigned to the loss of biodiversity and the destruction of ecosystems, often caused by our irresponsible and selfish behavior," he said. Mankind is called to "till and keep" the earth in "a balanced and respectful way," he said, noting that "to till too much, to keep too little, is to sin." He encouraged Christians to make an examination of conscience, evaluating the ways in they have contributed to "the disfigurement and destruction of creation," given that "we all generate small ecological damage." After doing a sincere examination of conscience, "we can confess our sins against the Creator, against creation, and against our brothers and sisters," he said, explaining that we confess sins against the environment because "we are penitent and desire to change."

The grace received from confession must then be put into action with concrete ways of thinking and acting that are more respectful of creation, he said, suggesting the reduction of water use, recycling, carpooling, turning off unused lights and limiting the amount of food cooked to only what will be consumed as ideas to start with.

Care of creation should also contribute "to shaping the culture and society in which we live," Pope Francis said, adding that economics, politics, society and culture "cannot be dominated by thinking only of the short-term and immediate financial or electoral gains."

"Instead, they urgently need to be redirected to the common good, which includes sustainability and care for creation."

Francis concluded his message by stressing that despite our faults and the daunting challenges posed by caring for the environment, "we never lose heart."

The Creator, he said, "does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us...for he has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward."

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# CANONIZATION OF MOTHER TERESA SEPTEMBER 4, 2016

VATICAN CITY – When Pope Francis canonizes Mother Teresa on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, he will be honoring a nun who won admirers around the world and a Nobel Peace Prize for her joy-filled dedication to the "poorest of the poor." He will also be recognizing holiness in a woman who felt so abandoned by God that she was unable to pray and was convinced, despite her ever-present smile, that she was experiencing the "tortures of hell."

For nearly 50 years, Mother Teresa endured what the church calls a "dark night of the soul" — a period of spiritual doubt, despair and loneliness that many of the great mystics experienced, her namesake St. Therese of Lisieux included. In Mother Teresa's case, the dark night lasted most of her adult life — an almost unheard of trial.

No one but Mother Teresa's spiritual directors and bishop knew of her spiritual agony until her correspondence came to light during her beatification cause. The letters were then made available to the general public in a 2007 book, "Come Be My Light."

For the Rev. Brian Kolodiejchuk, the Canadian priest who published the letters and spearheaded Mother Teresa's saint-making campaign, the revelations were further confirmation of Mother Teresa's heroic saintliness. He said that by canonizing her, Francis is recognizing that Mother Teresa not only shared the material poverty of the poor but the spiritual poverty of those who feel "unloved, unwanted, uncared for."

"That was her experience in her relationship with Jesus," Kolodiejchuk said in an interview. "She understood very well when people would share their horror stories, their pain and suffering of being unloved, lonely. She would be able to share that empathy because she herself was experiencing it."



Tens of thousands of people are expected for the canonization ceremony Sunday for the tiny, stooped nun who was fast-tracked for sainthood just a year after she died in 1997. St. John Paul II, who was Mother Teresa's greatest champion, beatified her before a crowd of 300,000 in St. Peter's Square in 2003.

Francis has made the canonization the high point of his Jubilee of Mercy, a yearlong emphasis on the church's merciful side. Francis has an obvious interest in highlighting Mother Teresa's mercy-filled service to outcasts on the periphery, given that her life's work exemplifies the priorities of his own pontificate.

But Francis is also sending a more subtle message to the faithful through the canonization of the ethnic Albanian nun: That saints can be imperfect — they can suffer as Mother Teresa did and even feel unloved by God, said Ines Angeli Murzaku, a professor of church history at Seton Hall University in New Jersey and herself a native Albanian.

"That existential periphery which is suffering and being marginalized, he wants to bring that to the attention of the world," she said in a telephone interview. Mother Teresa "is so real. She's not remote. She's not a perfect, perfect saint."

That said, her blind faith in enduring the "darkness," as she called it, and persevering through it seems almost superhuman to outsiders.

Take the Feb. 28, 1957 letter she wrote the then-archbishop of Kolkata, Jesuit Archbishop Ferdinand Perier. "There is so much contradiction in my soul. Such deep longing for God, so deep that it is painful, a suffering continual, and yet not wanted by God, repulsed, empty, no faith, no love no zeal," she wrote. "Souls hold no attraction. Heaven means nothing, to me it looks like an empty place. The thought of it means nothing to me and yet this torturing longing for God." "Pray for me please that I keep smiling at him in spite of everything."

In another letter, she acknowledged that her smile was "a big cloak which covers a multitude of pains."

Revelations that the smile was a mask to inner doubts about God's presence fueled criticism of Mother Teresa — spearheaded most famously by the late Christopher Hitchens — that the Balkan nun was something of a fraud.

Kolodiejchuk, though, says she was no hypocrite. He said that the smile was a genuine and heroic attempt to hide her private sufferings, even from God, and prevent others from suffering more.

"You can be joyful even if you're suffering because you are accepting, and you are working and acting with love that gives meaning to the suffering," he said in the courtyard of one of the Missionaries of Charity houses on the periphery of Rome.

Sister Prema, the current superior general of the Missionaries of Charity, recalled being in awe of the revelation and not being able even today to fully understand the depth of Mother Teresa's pain. "It took me some time, and it still takes me time, to reflect about it and to understand it more deeply," she said in an interview. "I think a soul who has not experienced



it (the darkness) will not be able to understand what it is about. This is some mystery of the spiritual life which souls who know about it can connect with and associate with, but souls who do not know, we stand before a mystery." Asked if she was in that latter group, the German nun paused and said quietly: "Yes."

Kolodiejchuk, the postulator for the cause, says that in retrospect, Mother Teresa's "darkness" was actually a critical part of her vocation, kept hidden from the world that only saw a firm but loving mother superior who was the first in the chapel each morning and often worked herself to exhaustion at night tending to society's most unloved. "We assumed at least she was enjoying this wonderful consoling union and love from Jesus," he said. "But we discover, no it's even the opposite. For me, this darkness is the single most heroic aspect of her life."

### **Before She Became Teresa**

Her middle name, Gonxha, means "little flower" in Albanian. Even before blossoming into her life as a religious sister, young Agnes Bojaxhiu showed signs of passionate devotion to Christ. Early on, she began celebrating her birthday on the day of her baptism, August 27. Who could have predicted that this "little flower" would go on to serve the poorest of the poor thousands of miles away?

### **Life as a Young Sister**

Captivated by stories of missionaries, Agnes left her family home in Skopje in 1928 at the age of 18 to join the Sisters of Loreto. "Be so kind to hear my sincere desire," she humbly wrote to the Loreto Mother Superior. "I want to join your Society, so that one day I may become a missionary sister, and work for Jesus who died for us all."

Needing to learn English first, the young postulant spent six weeks in Loreto Abbey in Dublin, Ireland. She set sail for India on December 1, 1928, to give her life to service.

### **Call within a Call**

For years, Mother Teresa refused to talk about this seminal moment in her life. But worldwide interest in her "call within a call" would not diminish. Reluctantly, she spoke about it. "God was calling me to give up all and to surrender myself to him in the service of the poorest of the poor in the slums." The call happened on September 10, 1946, as she traveled by train from Calcutta to Darjeeling. Suddenly, a new mission presented itself. "To fail would have been to break the faith," she said.

### **Relief for Calcutta's Suffering**

Mother Teresa opened wide the doors of mercy and charity for the poorest of the poor in Calcutta. It was her life's calling—what she considered to be an order from God. Mother Teresa directed her Missionaries of Charity to serve "the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people who have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone."

**"People are often unreasonable and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.**

**If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. If you are honest, people may cheat you. Be honest anyway.**

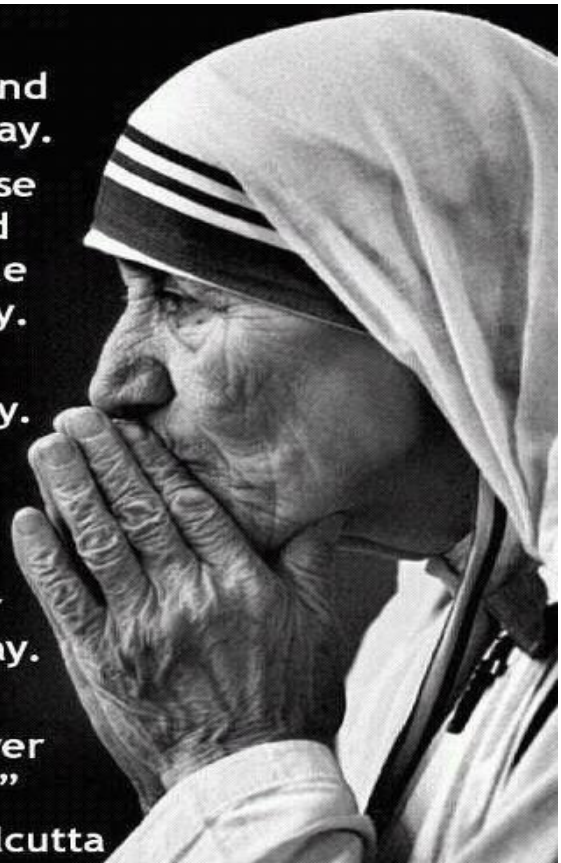
**If you find happiness, people may be jealous. Be happy anyway.**

**The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.**





**Do good. Give the world the best you have and it may never be enough. Give your best anyway.**

**For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway."**

**- Mother Teresa of Calcutta**



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## 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, 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, Adrienne Gilbert, Rita Grinnan, Bob Murphy, Richard Wheeler, Carolyn Antoniwi, Sylvia Smith, Jean Thurman, Robbie Butler, Susan Cleveland, Lynn Bower, 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, 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, Connie Kenderdine, Darleen Kohler, Callie Cavanaugh, Victoria Salerno, Wanda Trynovich, Tim Cunningham, Tony Pranses, Bob Snyder, Don Brooks, Kathy Macensky, Paul Beuter, Craig West, Avery Trescott, Jerry Eckert, Michael Liebner, Cole Selerno, Margaret Miller, Peg Padden, and Mark Kilmer.



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

*Craig Shaffer*

*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.*