St. John the Evangelist-St. Charles Borromeo
Sunday Bulletin

St. John the Evangelist
31 E. Main Street
Pawling, NY 12564
Weekday Mass:
M-F 8:00 AM,
First Saturday 9:00 AM
Saturday Vigil: 5:00 PM
Sunday: 7:30, 9:30 and 11:00 AM

St. Charles Borromeo
62 Mill Street
Dover Plains, NY 12522
Wednesday: Noon
Saturday Vigil: 4:00 PM
Sunday: 9:00 AM
6:00 PM La misa en Español

Holy Days of Obligation

Vigil Mass: St. Charles at 4:00 PM
St. John at 5:00 PM

Day of: St. John at 8:00 AM
St. Charles at 12:00 PM

Full-Time Clergy
Rev. John F. X. Palatucci, Pastor
Fr. Sibi K. Thomas, Parochial Vicar
Deacon Jerry Cartwright
Deacon Ari Lekovic

Weekend Associates
Rev. Mark Vaillancourt
The Most Rev. Peter Byrne, D.D.,
Auxiliary Bishop Archdiocese of New York
Asociado del Domingo a St. Charles/Sunday
Associate at St. Charles

Parish Music Director
Mr. Conner David McCain

Trustees
Mr. Will Jackson, Mrs. Jerelyn Smith

PREP-Religious Education
Ms. Nan Kramer, Program Coordinator:
releds tjohn@aol.com, (845) 289-0055

Penance and Reconciliation
St. Charles, Sat. 2:30-3:30 PM in Gagnon Hall
St. John, Sat. 3:30-4:30 in the sacristy.
Please wear a mask. You may also call for an appointment as well. We can arrange house calls for the homebound when requested.

For information about Sacraments, please call the parish office at (845) 855-5488, or see our parish website at sjescb.org

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
January 24, 2021

Weekly Readings

SUNDAY:
First Reading
Jonah 3:1-5,10
God spared the people of Nineveh because they heeded the message God sent through Jonah.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 25:4-5,6-7,8-9
The Lord teaches us his ways.

Second Reading
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Paul warns the Corinthians that they must act differently because the world in its present form is passing away.

Gospel Reading
Mark 1:14-20
Jesus calls the fishermen, Simon and Andrew, James and John, to be his disciples.

MONDAY –
Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle
Acts 22:3-16 or Acts 9:1-22; Mark 16:15-18

TUESDAY – Memorial of Saints Timothy and Titus, Bishops
2 Timothy 1:1-8 or Titus 1:1-5; Mark 3:31-35

WEDNESDAY–
Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17; Mark 4:1-20

THURSDAY –
Hebrews 10:19-25; Mark 4:21-25

FRIDAY –
Hebrews 10:32-39; Mark 4:26-34

SATURDAY –
Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19; Mark 4:35-41

Parish House and Main Office
39 East Main Street • Pawling, NY 12564
(845) 855-5488 FAX: (845) 855-1273
Email: scbsje@gmail.com • **Website:** www.sjescb.org
Office hours: 9-3 Monday-Thursday, 9-2 Friday.
Closed all national bank holidays
and Holy Days of Obligation of the Church.

PLEASE NOTE:

Bulletins will not be placed on the tables near the entrance or given out prior to Mass. Instead, due to the current pandemic they will be given out after Mass only from now on.

MASKS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES DURING MASS AS MANDATED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK.

DEVOTIONS

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - St. John, Monday - Friday after the 8:00am Mass until 4:00pm.

Divine Mercy Chaplet - St. Charles every Sunday prior to the 9:00 AM Mass.

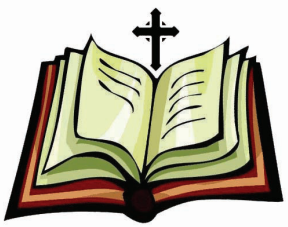
Miraculous Medal Novena - St. John every Monday morning immediately after the 8:00 AM Mass.

Litany and Prayers to St. Jospeh - Every Wednesday morning immediately following daily Mass at both churches.

RCIA
Christian Formation Process

Are you or someone you know ready to become fully Catholic? Deacon Jerry Cartwright is our RCIA/RCIT (RCIA for Teens) Coordinator. He would be more than happy to engage you in some conversation on becoming Catholic or being fully initiated in the faith. **Please leave a message at the rectory and Deacon will return your call ASAP!**

Mass Book



The following dates are still available in our Mass Book for January and February. If you wish to offer a Mass for a loved one deceased or living, or another personal intention, please contact the parish office at your convenience and we will make these available as you request.

Thanks, Fr. Palatucci

St. Charles

JANUARY
Sunday - 9:00 AM
31
Sunday - 6:00 PM
24, 31
Wednesday - 12:00 PM

FEBRUARY
Sunday - 9:00 AM
28
Sunday - 6:00 PM
7, 14, 21, 28
Wednesday - 12:00 PM
3, 24

St. Johns

JANUARY
Weekday - 8:00 AM

FEBRUARY
Weekday - 8:00 AM
3, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26
Saturday - 5:00 PM
13

Memorials

Sanctuary Lamp
at both churches - $15.00

Please call the Rectory Office to make arrangements.

Mass Intentions

St. Charles Borromeo

Saturday, January 23
4:00 PM Joe & Ida Sgaggero
(Donald Sgaggero)

Sunday, January 24
9:00 AM In Thanksgiving to God
(The Maduemezia Family)
6:00 PM

Wednesday, January 27
12:00 PM 25th Anniversary of Fr. Sibi K. Thomas' Ordination (Jeri, Judy, April, and Lisa)

Saturday, January 30
4:00 PM Harry Garvis
(Dennis & Kate Garvis)

St. John the Evangelist

Saturday, January 23
5:00 PM Terrence Deneny
(Catherine Reynolds)

Sunday, January 24
7:30 AM Lorri Pezzuti
(Mike Pezzuti)
9:30 AM Martin J. Galvin
(John Galvin)
11:00 AM Intentions Of Ed & Dianne Pagnott
(Bob & Judy Ball)

Monday, January 25
8:00 AM Douglas & Bernice Hay
(P. Venus)

Tuesday, January 26
8:00 AM Thomas Mcgrath
(Betty Grogan)

Wednesday, January 27
8:00 AM Intentions Of Fr. Thomas Lynch
(The Curtin Family)

Thursday, January 28
8:00 AM Miss Pro Populo

Friday, January 29
8:00 AM 25th Anniversary of Fr. Sibi K. Thomas' Ordination
(The Curtin Family)

Saturday, January 30
5:00 PM Martin J. Galvin
(John Galvin)

Please Remember in Your Prayers...

The deceased clergy of St. Charles Borromeo and St. John the Evangelist. Deceased Members of the Cunnion and Palatucci Families.

THE INFIRMED: Evelyn Meunier, Earl Slocum

THOSE WHO DEFEND US: Staff Sergeant Ashley Carey, Air Force; CH (MAJ) Fr. James B. Collins, Army; MAJ Robert Dugan, Marine Corps; Paratrooper Connor Maile, Army; CH (CPT) Fr. Peter Pomposello, Army; LTC Kevin Smith, Army; CPT Timothy Vaughn, Army; CPO Kevin Walsh, Navy.

To add a name or have one taken off the prayer list, please call the rectory office or e-mail scbsje@gmail.com.

Flower Memorialization Program

Our parish has a flower memorial program through the Annex Florist in Pawling.

If you wish to memorialize a floral arrangement for the parish, please call Ed or Mary at the Annex Florist in Pawling. They'll be happy to work with you and give you some choices. After you purchase it, please let us know who it's for, and we'll make mention of it in our bulletin.

Priest Schedule for next Sunday, January 31ST *Schedule is subject to change without notice.	
St. John	
5:00 P.M. Vigil	Fr. Sibi K. Thomas
7:30 A.M.	Fr. John F. X. Palatucci
9:30 A.M.	Fr. John F. X. Palatucci
11:00 A.M.	Fr. Sibi K. Thomas
St. Charles	
4:00 P.M. Vigil	Fr. John F. X. Palatucci
9:00 A.M.	Fr. Sibi K. Thomas
6:00 P.M. Spanish Mass	Bishop Peter Byrne

Pro Life Message

48 Years of Deception

by Mr. John Canevari

It's been said that language is everything, and it is this linguistic distinction that defines us as being human. And so, with borrowed language from a Pro Life email publication I receive, I've titled this missive *48 Years of Deception* in an effort to express the notion that, with nearly half a century of infanticide now in our past, we have been horribly deceived. At the forefront of this deception has been the careful nuancing of our language, and through this nuancing, we've succumbed to the lie that abortion is just one "issue" in a plethora of many we Christians face. As well, we have fallen prey to the evolution of our language from one of descriptive relevance to one of deceptive indifference. The murderous and destructive force within our culture which our language calls abortion, is one simple innocuous word with a horrifying meaning.

By now, most of us are well-acclimated to the abortion terminology spoken these days, and these words roll off the tongues of politicians, news correspondents, teachers, or even preachers with the simplest of ease. Words like "termination," "fetus," "lump of tissue" and "reproductive healthcare" serve to minimize and dehumanize the actuality of what is happening with abortion. The repetition of 48 years and the cunning of an enemy hell-bent on destroying innocence, has, for the most part, succeeded in suppressing our natural instinct to respond in horror to this abortion language being spoken. Our everyday parlance has found its way to curtail words which would have, at an earlier decade, caused most of us to shutter with disgust. This is not the case any longer, as the abortion industry has provided us a lexicon that applies language, in a most casual manner, with nearly complete acceptance and ambivalence, as if that which is rolling off our tongues is not describing the murder of an innocent human baby.

We're currently in the month of January, and there is a day within this month, the 22nd, which is indelibly stamped forever as a day that represents both an evil triumph as much as a call to continued resilience to repel that satanic triumph. It's been 48 years since the calumnious decision of Roe vs Wade has allowed for the right to destroy innocent life in the womb, and by extension, the entry of this litany of deceptive words into our everyday conversation. That Supreme Court decision is a study in language particularity, as the words of that decision are twisted and refined to reflect the supposed presence of this "right" clandestinely hidden between the clear language-lines of our constitution. If there is one thing that Satan has a full understanding of, it's our language, and exactly how to twist it into evil.

As we reflect upon these past 48 years since Roe vs Wade, perhaps it would benefit us, as Christians who value life, to listen and speak more intently and honestly to the words we use in our everyday language regarding abortion. Yes, there is a truth to the adage that language is everything, but if that language obfuscates the truth and hides the reality of evil, our language becomes nothing. Let us, once again, speak with the honesty of declarative words about what abortion and all its euphemisms are truly about. Through our honesty of language, perhaps some may come to realize the evil that abortion is.

Mr. John Canevari is a member of our parish, and the Pro-Life Representative for St. John the Evangelist Knights of Columbus Council #545

Pastor's Corner

Dear Parishioners,

As you know, St. Charles Rectory was put up for sale last year. The sale was finalized in October 2020. I apologize for waiting so long to inform you about the details of the sale. Not getting this information to you sooner was no more than a misstep on my part.

Part of the reason for the delay was due to the end sum of the sale. I received a letter from the Archdiocese of New York (ADNY) in October, explaining the final sale of the property. Quite frankly, I was disappointed and voiced this to the Archdiocese. In my initial conversation with them, I was under the impression the parish would get the bulk of revenue from the sale, which we did not. Below is the breakdown of the sale and how much we received as quoted in part from the letter the ADNY wrote to me in October:

> "Saint John the Evangelist/Saint Charles Borromeo Parish, is in strong financial condition [...] and no outstanding obligations to archdiocesan programs[...]. However, it is noted that the archdiocese has incurred expenses of $2,596 for preliminary legal fees in preparation of this property sale and an additional $60,661 for legal fees related to the environmental cleanup at Saint John the Evangelist back in 2016, during the tenure of Father Giuliano.
>
> As such, we are proposing the following distribution of property sale proceeds:

Gross sale proceeds	$285,000.00
Closing Costs	$26,500.56
Net sale proceeds	$258,499.44
Real estate fee	$4,275.00
Closed parish costs	$63,256.66
Remaining proceeds	$190,967.78
50% Parish PAC deposit	$95,483.89
50% ADNY	$95,483.89

> Under the norms provided by canon law, a bishop is permitted to levy a taxa of up to 50% on proceeds from extraordinary bequests or property transactions. Thus, the remaining proceeds would be split equally between the parish and the archdiocese. This contribution would allow us to continue to provide financial support to those most in need throughout the archdiocese."

As you can see from the $285,000 sale, we received $95,483.89. I suppose we should be thankful that we received anything at all since its common practice when a sale of property takes place, the ADNY receives all the funds to pay back a parish's outstanding debt. For our part, we are indeed fortunate not to have any outstanding debt, as many parishes do. However, my biggest concern was the $63,256 that was taken from this sale to pay for the environmental issues that arose at St. John's during the construction at 33 E. Main in Pawling. There is no need to go into too much detail here, but contaminated soil was discovered on St. John's property during the renovation of the Fr. Moriarity Center. The problem was resolved equitably, with the owner of 33 E Main paying for the soil removal. For this, I am grateful. However, I voiced my sincerest displeasure that the lawyer and environmental fees were paid back with funds from the sale of St. Charles' rectory. As I see it, this money should have been taken out of St. John's PAC funds, a savings account we have with the ADNY, in 2016. I'm not happy about how this was handled, but nothing can be done since the sale is now final. All we can do at this point is take the proceeds offered and add them to the St. Charles account.

I plan to use the $95,000, some Renew + Rebuild funds, and PAC money, to make improvements at St. Charles during 2021. These improvements will include:

- Painting the outside of the church.
- Making aesthetic improvements to the inside of the church.
- Improving St. Charles cemetery by
  - o Paving the road.
  - o Adding the memorialized bricks to the Marian Gazebo now located there.
  - o Possibly opening a water line to the cemetery from the street.

To conclude, again I do apologize that I did not explain this to you sooner. I hope this letter has informed you about the distribution of the proceeds of the final sale of our rectory and the money we received from it.

If you have any questions or concerns about this, please feel free to call me or come see me at the parish office.

Sincerely yours,
Fr. Palatucci

January into February Liturgical Observances

The italicized are optional memorials. All others are required.

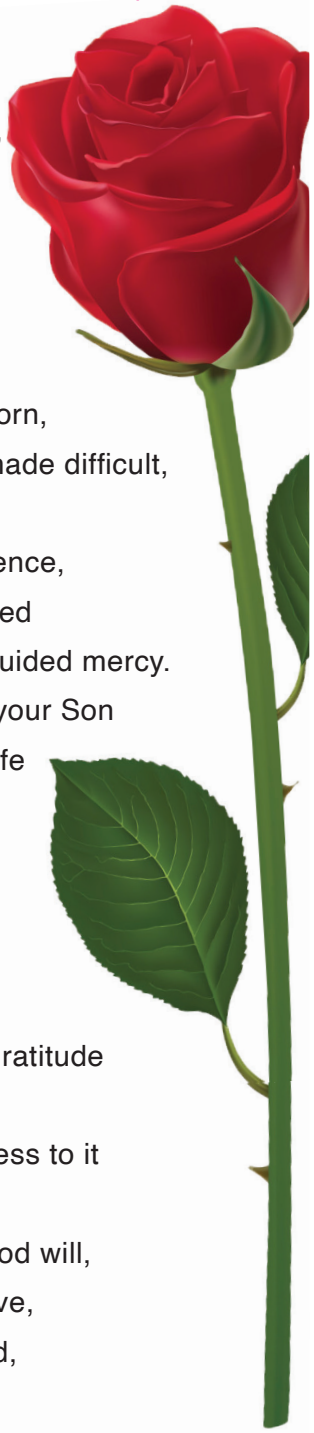
25. The Conversion of St. Paul, the Apostle.
26. St. Timothy and Titus, Bishops
27. *St. Angela Merici, Virgin*
28. St. Thomas Aquinas, Priest, Doctor of the Church

February

2. The Presentation of the Lord. (Blessing of Candles)
3. *St. Blaise, Bishop and Martyr.* (Blessing of Throats)
5. St. Agatha, Virgin, Martyr
6. St. Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs
8. *St. Jerome Emiliani; St. Josephine Bakhita, Virgin*

A Pro-Life Prayer

From St. John Paul II



O Mary,
bright dawn of the new world,
Mother of the living,
to you do we entrust
the cause of life
Look down, O Mother,
upon the vast numbers
of babies not allowed to be born,
of the poor whose lives are made difficult,
of men and women
who are victims of brutal violence,
of the elderly and the sick killed
by indifference or out of misguided mercy.
Grant that all who believe in your Son
may proclaim the Gospel of life
with honesty and love
to the people of our time.
Obtain for them the grace
to accept that Gospel
as a gift ever new,
the joy of celebrating it with gratitude
throughout their lives
and the courage to bear witness to it
resolutely, in order to build,
together with all people of good will,
the civilization of truth and love,
to the praise and glory of God,
the Creator and lover of life.

Evangelium Vitae, The Gospel of Life, 105

Neighbors Helping Neighbors
PAWLING RESOURCE CENTER

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Presents

Stuff-A-Truck FOOD DRIVE

SHOW THANKFULNESS BY FEEDING THOSE IN NEED

Sunday, January 31, 2021
7:00 am to 12:30 pm
St. John the Evangelist Church
31 East Main Street
Pawling, New York

Items Needed by the Pawling Resource Center

Canned Fruits; Canned Black Beans; White Rice in Bags; Bags of Dry Beans, Lentils, Split Peas; Cake and Muffin Mixes; Flour, Baking Supplies; Shelf Stable Milk; Coffee; Paper Good, especially Paper Towels and Tissues; Baby Diapers, Size 5 & 6; Laundry Detergent & Dish Soap; Toiletry Items - Shampoo, Conditioner, Deodorant

There will be a Stuff-A-Truck in February for the Center of Compassion in Dover Plains. Details to come.

Thursday Evening Eucharistic Holy Hour Adoration at St. Charles

Beginning Thursday, February 18, Deacon Ari and Elsa Lekovic and their family will host a monthly adoration evening at St. Charles Church beginning at 7 PM.

It's essential to sign up for this so we know how many will be attending each month. It will also help them contact people if there's a snowstorm or another event that may prevent them from hosting the Holy Hour.

If interested, please call the parish office, and we'll add your name to the list.

THE FATHER WE NEED

Fr. Paul D. Scalia Sunday, December 27, 2020

Most of us know today's Gospel scene (Lk 2:22-40) as the Fourth Joyful Mystery: The Presentation in the Temple. But it is also one of the Seven Sorrows and Seven Joys of Saint Joseph. His heart is filled with sorrow at Simeon's prophecy that the Christ Child "is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed." At the same time, Joseph rejoices to hear his Son proclaimed as the Lord's "salvation" and "a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to…Israel."

Now, we should all sorrow and rejoice when meditating on this scene. But Joseph experiences this sorrow and joy in a unique manner: as the father of Jesus. Indeed, his experience of this event flows from and points to the reality of his fatherhood.

We often use various qualifiers for Joseph's fatherhood. Although accurate to an extent, they can also give the impression that his fatherhood was a fiction or make-believe. The term "Earthly Father" suggests a father/son relationship limited to this world. "Foster Father" or "Adoptive Father" both imply that at some point our Lord became Joseph's son. In fact, Joseph and Mary were legally married at the time of Christ's conception. So, at no point in our Lord's life was He not the Son of Joseph. The Gospels don't use any qualifiers. Today's passage refers to Joseph and Mary straightforwardly as Jesus' "father and mother." Later, at the finding in the Temple, our Lady herself says, "Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously." (Lk 2:48) Twice John refers to our Lord simply as "the Son of Joseph." (Jn 1:45; 6:42) The only qualification in the Gospels is parenthetical: Luke's mention of Jesus as "the son (as was supposed) of Joseph." (Lk 3:23) Since this comes immediately after our Lord's Baptism, it is clearly meant to distinguish Christ's Father revealed at the Jordan from His father known in Nazareth. It is fatherhood that Pope Francis emphasizes in Patris Corde, his letter announcing the Year of Saint Joseph (December 8, 2020 through December 8, 2021). And with good reason. As many have observed, the crisis of fatherhood is at the source of our Church's and our nation's woes. At the core of the Church's scandals is the betrayal of spiritual fathers. Our nation's upheaval is the inevitable result of decades of absent fathers. Mary Eberstadt has called it "the fury of the fatherless."

Joseph's fatherhood is a necessary medicine for these ills. But first, we have to get it right. Our failure to appreciate Joseph's fatherhood lies in our misunderstanding of fatherhood itself. We confine fatherhood to its physical, earthly dimensions; it is the biological siring of a child or perhaps the equipping of the child for success in this world. In fact, the greater part of fatherhood is not begetting a child or training him for worldly success. No, it is the imparting of wisdom, patrimony, and identity.

Precisely because he is not Jesus' biological father, Joseph calls our attention to the deeper, more important dimension of fatherhood. He did not generate our Lord, nor does he have any worldly means to bestow upon Him. But as the husband of Mary, Joseph is in fact Jesus' legal father – a designation with much greater meaning in ancient Israel than in our culture. It was Joseph's duty to raise his Son in the traditions and faith of Israel, to pass on to Him the practices and wisdom of God's people. Insofar as "Jesus advanced [in] wisdom and age and favor before God and man" (Lk 2:52), it fell to Joseph to teach Him how to pray, to bring Him to the synagogue, and to familiarize Him with scripture. "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what deeds thou didst perform in their days, in the days of old." (Ps 44:1) It is wonderful to consider Joseph teaching this verse to our Lord, introducing Him to the patrimony of Israel, to what "our fathers have told us." Those fathers had bestowed an identity on their children, had brought them to know who they were – and were not – in the world and in history. The fidelity of those fathers meant that the Israelites knew themselves as God's people. This is precisely what fathers in our culture have failed to do. They might give their children some material wealth and advice on how to get ahead in the world – or at least how to be comfortable. But for decades fathers have failed to give their children their proper identity. They have failed to pass on the patrimony of the West, of our nation, and most of all of Christianity.

This is in large part because those fathers had themselves impiously rejected what came before them. Impiety is sterile. Since the past meant nothing to them; so now they have nothing for the future. Worse still, being orphaned from the past makes one vulnerable in the present. So, what we see in "wokeism" is an orphaned generation, cut off from its patrimony of wisdom and culture, and thus prey to whatever new theories come along.

We have seen the same phenomenon in the Church. Impious priests, for whom the past was meaningless, failed to hand on to generations of Catholics their rightful inheritance of the Church's teachings and liturgy. So much of our current sickness comes from this disconnect, this forgetfulness of who we are – and who we are not – in the world and in history.

Time to "go to Joseph." (Gen 41:55) From him, the father of Jesus, we learn the true meaning of fatherhood and the incomparable worth of a man who faithfully fulfills that mission.

This article first appeared in The Catholic Thing online magazine on December 27, 2020.

Fr. Paul Scalia is a priest of the Diocese of Arlington, Va, where he serves as Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. His new book is That Nothing May Be Lost: Reflections on Catholic Doctrine and Devotion.

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Oh, Jerusalem by Greg Olsen

Pray: Beloved Lord Jesus: You know that many times my agenda and my passions take control of my life. I surrender to You my mind and my senses so that, placed in You and free from my limitations, they may follow our Father's perfect paths. Amen.

No better time than now

This Sunday's Gospel reading is a call to surrender ourselves fully to God. "NOW is the time of fulfillment" - not just 2000 years ago, not at the Second Coming of Christ, but right now in your life when and where you need Jesus the most.

"The kingdom of God is at hand" - what you need from the Lord is right here, at hand, ready for you.

"Repent, and believe in the gospel" means "Come follow Me and learn from Me to become like Me." For the first disciples, it meant dropping whatever they were doing to spend so much time with Jesus that their whole lives were forever affected. And this is what it means for you and for me: We have to put aside our own agendas and busy schedules to spend more time following Jesus wherever he leads us.

In the modern world, we have become more dependent on our technological devices than on Jesus. Many of us cannot even go on vacation without remaining accessible to their employers via the cell phone. Somehow, we need to find a way to take a stand against this. It's one of the social justice teachings of the Church: We are actually called by God to rebel against working on Sundays and other days of rest. Why? Because we need to spend that time with Jesus getting renewed, restored and re-energized.

Unfortunately, Jesus doesn't walk through the door and circle dates on our calendar and write "Rest with Jesus" so that we can plan ahead. We have to follow his lead at a moment's notice - every moment. To experience the kingdom of God on the earthly side of heaven, we have to be willing to drop everything to follow Jesus into unfamiliar places at unexpected times. We have to learn to follow his lead even in situations where his way is the surprising way.

Questions for Personal Reflection:

What's on your to-do list? What keeps you busy? What are your goals for the future? What are you dreaming of? If Jesus has a different plan for your day or for your life, how easily could you switch over to new ideas and plans?

Questions for Community Faith Sharing:

What are some of the nets you've abandoned in the past in order to follow Jesus? How difficult was that to do? Are you happy about it now? Why? How was this an experience of the kingdom of God on earth?

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REFLEXIÓN DE LAS BUENAS NUEVAS

Oh, Jerusalem by Greg Olsen

Ora: Amado Señor Jesús: Tú sabes que muchas veces mis criterios y mis pasiones toman el control de mi vida. Yo te entrego mi mente y mis sentidos para que, puestos en Ti y libres de mí, sigan el camino perfecto del Padre. Amén.

Jonás 3, 1-5.10

Salmo 24, 4-9

1 Corintios 7, 29-31

Marcos 1, 14-20

No hay un mejor momento que ahora

La lectura del Evangelio de este domingo es un llamado a entregarnos completamente a Dios. "AHORA es el tiempo del cumplimiento" – no solamente hace 2000 años, no en la Segunda Venida de Cristo, sino ahora mismo en tu vida, cuándo y dónde más necesitas a Jesús.

"El Reino de Dios está cerca" – lo que necesitas del Señor está aquí mismo, cerca, listo para ti.

"Arrepiéntete y cree en el Evangelio" significa "Ven, sígueme y aprende de Mí, para que te vuelvas como Yo." Para los primeros discípulos, significó dejar lo que estuviesen haciendo para estar tanto tiempo con Jesús, que sus vidas fueron afectadas para siempre. Y esto es lo que significa para ti y para mí: tenemos que hacer a un lado nuestras agendas y múltiples ocupaciones para estar más tiempo siguiendo a Jesús dondequiera que Él nos guíe.

En el mundo moderno, nos hemos vuelto más dependientes de nuestros aparatos electrónicos que de Jesús. Muchos de nosotros ni siquiera podemos ir de vacaciones sin permanecer disponibles para nuestros jefes a través del teléfono celular. De alguna manera, necesitamos encontrar la forma de oponernos a esto. Es una de las enseñanzas de justicia social de la Iglesia: somos en realidad llamados por Dios para rebelarnos contra el trabajo en los domingos y otros días de descanso. ¿Por qué? Porque necesitamos emplear ese tiempo con Jesús siendo renovados, restaurados, y revitalizados.

Desafortunadamente, Jesús no entra por la puerta y encierra las fechas en nuestro calendario y escribe "Descanso con Jesús" de modo que podamos planear con anticipación. Tenemos que dejar que Él nos guíe en cualquier momento – en todo momento. Para experimentar el reino de Dios en el lado terrenal del cielo, tenemos que estar dispuestos a dejar todo para seguir a Jesús a lugares extraños y momentos inesperados. Tenemos que aprender a seguir Su guía, aún en situaciones en las que Su camino, es el camino de la sorpresa.

Preguntas para la Reflexión Personal:

¿Qué tienes en tu lista de actividades? ¿Qué te mantiene ocupado? ¿Cuáles son tus metas para el futuro? ¿Cuáles son tus sueños? Si Jesús tiene un plan diferente para tu día o para tu vida, ¿qué tan fácilmente podrías ajustarte a nuevas ideas y planes?

Preguntas para Compartir la Fe en Comunidad:

¿Cuáles son algunas de las redes que has abandonado en el pasado para seguir a Jesús? ¿Qué tan difícil fue hacerlo? ¿Estás feliz ahora de haberlo hecho? ¿Por qué? ¿De qué manera esto fue una experiencia del reino de Dios en la tierra?

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WORDS of FAITH

OUR PRAYERS: The Benedictus

Deep in every human heart is a desire for the living God that expresses itself in prayer. In the Catholic tradition, some prayers have become classic expressions of what the human heart seeks. Words of Faith: Our Prayers explores prayers that for centuries have revealed a faith that fosters a deep, personal, growing, and loving relationship with Jesus Christ. These prayers teach us much about who we are and about the God to whom we belong.

—**Keith J. Egan,** Series Editor

We Pray

† Blessed be the Lord,
the God of Israel;
he has come to his people
and set them free.
He has raised up for us
a mighty savior,
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets
he promised of old
that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy
to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath he swore
to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands
of our enemies,
free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called
the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord
to prepare his way,
to give his people knowledge
of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall
break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in
darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the
way of peace.

—The Liturgy of the Hours

We Practice

The Benedictus is the Canticle of Zechariah found in Luke 1:68–79. The traditional title is the first word of its Latin version. In general, a canticle is a biblical prayer or hymn, much like a psalm but drawn from sources other than the Book of Psalms. Canticles from the Old Testament are prayed at Morning Prayer (Lauds) and from the New Testament at Evening Prayer (Vespers). The canticles of Zechariah, Mary, and Simeon—all taken from the Gospel of Luke—are the high point of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer respectively. In communal settings, these are usually chanted with the participants standing as they would for any proclamation of the gospel.

To pray the Benedictus at the beginning of the day is to welcome God's ongoing creative activity in the world and to seize the unique opportunity that each day brings. The rising sun is itself an invitation to new life and Luke's beautifully crafted prayer helps us to focus on Jesus as the "dawn from on high" come to guide us toward peace.

DID YOU KNOW?

Although no one can be sure of Jesus' or John's birthday, the ancient Church made choices and observed them in the liturgical calendar. The Birth of John the Baptist corresponds with the summer solstice (June 24) and Christmas corresponds with the winter solstice. In the northern hemisphere where the Church was born, the sun is at its height on John's birthday but gradually begins to decline as the days become shorter and nights longer. On Christmas, our ancient ancestors celebrated the "rebirth of the sun" as the days were surely and faithfully getting longer. As they identified Jesus with the light of the world, they were reminded of John's affirmation: "He must increase; I must decrease"(John 3:30).

By Fr. Corbin Eddy. Fr. Eddy served for many years as pastor and teacher, most recently on the faculty of St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Maryland.
Series Editor, Keith J. Egan, PhD, is President of the Carmelite Institute; Adjunct Professor of Theology, University of Notre Dame; and Aquinas Chair Emeritus, St. Mary's College.

We Believe

In Luke's telling of the birth and infancy of both John the Baptist and Jesus, he sets the stage for their ministry. John was born into a priestly family, while Jesus is of royal descent. Neither of them grow into a priest or king as ordinarily understood. Rather, they center their ministry on prophetic teaching and preaching, and are both big surprises. The Benedictus summarizes Luke's understanding of the role of each in God's plan. Even though Jesus is not yet born at this point in Luke's story, Zechariah acclaims his coming as fulfillment of the divine promise. In the course of the prayer, Zechariah references themes that will become prominent in the rest of the gospel: the universality of salvation in Jesus, the forgiveness of sins, concern for the lowly, and the journey motif that leads to joy and peace.

Toward the end of the prayer, Zechariah directly addresses his infant son, likening his prophetic ministry to the promised return of the fiery Elijah who would go before the Lord to prepare the way. His thought promptly returns to the image that makes this prayer so appropriate for the morning: Jesus as "dawn from on high—guiding into the way of peace."

We Live

For Christians there is a difference between optimism and hope. Optimism often naively assumes that everything is somehow going to turn out right. Hope affirms the ongoing presence and power of God at work in the world as well as our human potential to respond to that presence. Hope does not simply sit back and wait.

- Seize every opportunity for good as an invitation to bring God's creative energy into the world.
- Time is a gift of God, with each new day offering fresh hope and promise. As you rise from sleep, make it a habit to join Zechariah in blessing the Lord God who enlightens your path and guides your feet in the way of making peace.

With Children

- Get up early and watch a sunrise, perhaps on a family member's birthday. Celebrate the new day with prayer and a special breakfast. Talk about your hopes for the new day. Wonder together how Jesus is like the dawn.

Let us praise God together on our knees,
let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall on my knees
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

—*from* Let Us Break Bread Together, *American Folk Hymn*

A BIT OF HISTORY

In the first chapter of his gospel, Luke masterfully tells the story of an elderly couple, Zechariah and Elizabeth. He is a priest and she is from a priestly family. They are virtuous but childless. Although childlessness in the Judaism of the time was thought to be a punishment, Luke uses it to connect Elizabeth with the great mothers of the Hebrew tradition like Abraham's wife Sarah, who was in the same situation.

Zechariah was a member of the priestly division of Abijah, who, twice a year, for a week at a time, served in the Jerusalem temple. He was chosen by lot to represent his division, to enter the sanctuary, and to make an offering of incense. While this was a great honor, he was not ready for the angel.

When the angel Gabriel appeared and announced the spectacularly good news that Elizabeth was with child, Zechariah was caught off guard and did not trust the experience. If anyone should have been prepared for an angelic annunciation, it was this experienced, mature, and virtuous priest in the midst of his sacred duties, but such was not the case. Because of his skepticism, Zechariah was struck dumb—clearly a curse for a leader in the magnificent faith tradition of Israel.

His speech was only restored when he and Elizabeth's son, John (whom we know as the Baptist), was born and Zechariah inscribed the child's name as given by the angel. That was when he broke out into this beautiful song that, in Luke's mind, both literally and figuratively heralds a new dawn for Israel and for the world.

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