Church of Saint Edward the Confessor

Pastor:

MSGR. PAUL P. ENKE



REV. MR. JOHN BARBOUR







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Mass Schedule

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE:

SATURDAY: SUNDAY: 8:15 а.м. 10:45 A.M.

HOLY DAY MASS SCHEDULE:

TBA IN BULLETIN

WEEKDAY MASS SCHEDULE:

MONDAY, TUESDAY,

WENESDAY, FRIDAY: 9:00 а.м.

ADORATION:

MONDAY: 9:30 A.M.-12:00 NOON 9:30 A.M.-12:00 NOON FRIDAY:

CONFESSIONS:

SATURDAY: 4:00-4:30 P.M.

BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

MONDAY NOON

E-mail: church@saintedwards.org



MASSES THIS WEEK

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Sunday, January 10

Armand & Margaret Lanciault (RIP) 8:15 a.m.

Cindy Lanciault (RIP) by Rita Baldwin

Living & Deceased Members of 10:45 a.m.

St. Edward Parish

Monday, January 11

9:00 a.m. Jaron Shook (RIP)

by Gerry & MaryAnn Moses

Tuesday, January 12 - St. Marguerite Bourgeoys

Phillip L. Stockdale (RIP) (Anniversary) 9:00 a.m.

by Mitch & Kathryn Stockdale

Wednesday, January 13 -

St. Hilary, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

9:00 a.m. Catherine Abraham (RIP)

by Mark & Paula Coleman

Thursday, January 14

Recorded Mass only.

Intentions of Liz Richards by a Parishioner

Friday, January 15

9:00 a.m. Living & Deceased Members of

Stevens & Olsofka Families

by Jean Stevens

Saturday, January 16

5:00 p.m. Helen Reding (RIP)

by Jim & Patricia Ott

Sunday, January 17 -

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Joe Halla (RIP) by Anita Bowser 8:15 a.m. Living & Deceased Members of 10:45 a.m.

St. Edward Parish

Participate in weekend Mass from your home via Online Mass at the parish website www.saintedwards.org.

BAPTISM OF THE LORD JANUARY 10, 2021 - YEAR B

PRELUDE

TBD

INTRODUCTORY RITES

ENTRANCE: designated antiphon – sung by cantor

GLORIA: recited

LITURGY OF THE WORD

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Isaiah 12: You will draw

water joyfully... (arr. O. Alstott)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

(arr. O. Alstott)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

SANCTUS/WE PROCLAIM/AMEN/AGNUS DEI: Mass

in Honor of St. Benedict COMMUNION: TBD

CONCLUDING RITE

RECESSIONAL: (tentative) instrumental: Shall We

Gather at the River

CANTORS

5:00 p.m.: TBD

8:15 a.m.: Michael Flanigan 10:45 a.m.: Sandy Wolfe



"I rejoiced when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1

We welcome all parishioners and visitors who have come to worship.

To our visitors, you may have come as a stranger to us, yet you are known to Our Lord, Jesus Christ. In His name we pray you will find peace, hospitality and friendship with us.



The parish extends deepest sympathy to the families of Betty Grove, Jane Rita Flynn, and Jo Ann Clarke who passed away recently. We pray they will rest in eternal peace in the presence of God.

SUPPORTING ST. EDWARD CHURCH

"Each one must do as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

Thank you for your generous support of St. Edward Church.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Offertory for the week of December 27 was \$5,665.75. Online Giving was \$5,467.00.

Religious Retirement Fund Collection was \$953.00. Diocesan Christmas Charities Collection was \$790.00. Offertory for the week of January 3 was \$8,756.00 Online Giving was \$5,642.00. Solemnity of Mary Collection was \$176.00

OFFERTORY BASKET

Please place your offertory envelope in the basket as you enter or exit the church.

Donate Online

NEW LOOK TO DONATE BUTTON ON WEBSITE

If you are unable to come to Mass, please consider Online Giving. Sign up on the St. Edward website home page at www.saintedwards.org. Donations may always be made online for SVdP. Use "Food Pantry" Fund or "The Haven" Fund to provide the much-needed support to help others.

Note: If your credit card has been changed, expired, or was compromised, you will need to log in to update your online account to continue your online contributions. As a safeguard, the program will automatically suspend your contributions if one if these events occur. Please contact the Parish Office if you need help.



To mail in your offering by check, send to: St. Edward Church, 785 Newark-Granville Road, Granville, OH 43023. (A separate check is preferred for Mass Stipends and

St. Vincent de Paul.)

SANTA'S ATTIC NEWS

Due to the current situation and for the safety of our volunteers, the Santa's Attic committee has moved the collection days to the spring. We hope you will keep your gently used Christmas

decorations until that time when we can collect them outdoors. We are grateful for your continued support of Santa's Attic.

A WORD FROM YOUR PASTOR

- 1. Now that we are back on a regular schedule, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who gifted me and our parish over the Christmas season (which ends today). I do my best to thank all personally, but things sometimes get jumbled up with the number of cards I receive. So, all of you who did send a card and/or gift my way, please know how grateful I am for your kindness to me. It is a wonderful tribute to your generosity. Please know that I am extremely grateful and ask God to bless you for that generosity.
- P.S. Paddy is grateful too.
- 2. A tremendous big "Thank You!" to the many who responded to my request to help us out this Christmas. We received, over a period of time preceding and including Christmas, the amount of \$59,146.00. This is a wonderful tribute to your love and support of our parish during these difficult times. This past weekend's collection was \$14,398.00 - another great collection. Again, thank you so much!

2021-22 ST. EDWARD'S PRESCHOOL **REGISTRATION**

Enrollment for the 2021-22 preschool year will be the last week in January. Parishioners and students currently enrolled have priority. Open enrollment for the public begins February 1.

Registration Information Packets will be available beginning Saturday, January 23, and Sunday, January 24, on a table outside of the Preschool office, in the Gathering Space, and on the Preschool page on the parish website at: https://saintedwards.org.

For more information, contact Adrienne Evans, St. Edward's Preschool Director, at (740) 587-3275 or at preschool@saintedwards.org.

Preschool classes are:

- 3-year-olds Tuesday/Thursday from 9:00 to 11:30
- 4-year-olds Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 9:00 to 11:45 a.m.
- Pre-K classes for 4/5-year-olds are:
- Monday through Thursday from 12:30 to 3:15 p.m.



This Week at St. Edward

Sunday, January 10 ~ THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Mass – 8:15 a.m.

9:30 to 10:30 a.m. – PSR Drive-Through Book Pickup

Mass - 10:45 a.m.

SVdP Collection

7:30 to 8:30 p.m. - Youth Group

NO SANTA'S ATTIC COLLECTION

Monday, January 11

Mass – 9:00 a.m. Adoration after Mass until noon



Tuesday, January 12

Mass – 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, January 13

Mass – 9:00 a.m.



Friday, January 15

Mass – 9:00 a.m. Adoration after Mass until noon



Confessions – 4:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Mass – 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 17 ~ 2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mass – 8:15 a.m.

Mass – 10:45 a m

Participate in Online Mass via the parish website www.saintedwards.org



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

"Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His name." Psalm 96

Christ is born! Gloria in excelsis Deo! As we conclude this Christmas season, many thanks to all the singers, bell ringers, and instrumentalists who have contributed so much to our music ministry in these past few weeks. May all of us at St. Edward's join with the Church in heaven and on earth as we praise God throughout this new year.

~ Paul Radkowski, Music Director music@saintedwards.org, 740-587-3254

PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION



"Train the young in the way they should go; even when old, they will not swerve from it." Proverbs 22:6

PSR Drive-Through Book Pickup Sunday, January 10 between Masses from 9:30-10:30 a.m.



How it will work:

Last names beginning with A-G – pick up at the glass **office doors.**

Last names H-Z – pick up at the **Green doors** to the Parish Hall.

Remain in your cars. Display your last name on your car window with the number of students you have enrolled in PSR (ex. Edward-Smith 2)



Second Grade PSR is ONLINE

~ Rebecca Bucknam, PSR Director reled@saintedwards.org or 740-587-4160

Advertise Your Business in the Bulletin

email or text.

Do you have a business? If you would like parishioners to support your business, please consider advertising in the church bulletin. Our sponsors/advertisers of the bulletin allow our parish to have the bulletin provided at no cost and we greatly appreciate your support! Our bulletin sales representative is now working to obtain sponsors. If interested, contact the parish office at 740-587-3254.

THIS YEAR JOIN FLOCKNOTE

It's a New Year and a good time to try something new!

Make 2021 the year to sign up for Flocknote and keep up-to-date on all the latest parish news!

Text Church785 to 84576 to receive your Flocknote by

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD



Priests, Prophets, Kings

Loving Father,
at our Baptism we were anointed
in Christ's name
to be priests, prophets, and kings.
Our mission is his.
Help us to worship you, Lord God,
and to offer our whole lives to you.
Embolden us to share your love
and salvation.

Empower us to seek your kingdom of justice and peace.

When the light of our faith wavers, and our white garments become stained and torn,

cleanse us and renew your Spirit within us. Guide us each day along the way of your Son so that we, your beloved children, may be pleasing to you in all that we do.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, January 10, 2021

Our Mission

Today's Readings: Isaiah 55:1–11; Isaiah 12:2–3, 4bcd, 5–6; 1 John 5:1–9; Mark 1:7–11 or Isaiah 42:1–4, 6–7; Psalm 29:1–2, 3ac–4, 3b, 9–10; Acts 10:34–38; Mark 1:7–11. Jesus, in his humanity, had to discern how to best offer his life to God. He drew inspiration from the promises God had made to Israel and, through Israel, to all people—promises of prosperity, justice, and peace. Jesus may have especially identified with the mysterious servant spoken of by the prophet Isaiah. This servant bravely brings God's salvation to everyone. As John the Baptist urged people to prepare for the next stage of salvation, his words would have resonated with Jesus, who was baptized as a sign of his commitment to the mission that was taking shape within him.

Our Baptism immerses us into the life of Christ, into his earthly ministry, his sacrificial death, and his union with God the Father. As members of Christ's body, we ask ourselves, "What is my mission? For what good work has God's Spirit descended upon me?" Perhaps God is calling us to spend time with someone who is struggling. Perhaps our mission is to change an unhealthy work environment. Our mission might be to address injustice in our community. In all these ways and more, we, God's beloved children, participate in the mission of Christ. In fulfilling our mission we, too, will hear God declare that he is well pleased with us.



THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

During Ordinary Time this year we will hear most often from the Gospel of Mark. However, the Gospel passage for the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time is always from John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke present Jesus' identity through the lens of his ministry, but John's focus is mostly on Jesus' identity as God's divine Son.

The Christmas season is filled with feast days that highlight Jesus' divinity. The passages from John's Gospel that we hear on the Second Sundays in Ordinary Time transition us from an emphasis on Jesus' identity to his public ministry. As we accompany Jesus in his ministry, today's passage reminds us to stop and spend time with the Lord so as to discover and rediscover all that he is.

Gospel/Ignatian Contemplation

Popularized by St. Ignatius of Loyola, Gospel contemplation is a way to pray with the Scriptures. It works best with passages in which there is some action, such as a healing. Because Mark's Gospel is filled with short passages in which people are doing something, it is well suited for Gospel contemplation.

To begin, read the passage you have chosen several times. Note the people, setting, and any dialogue. Let the scene take ever clearer shape in your mind. Then imagine that you are there, in the story. You might be one of Jesus' disciples, a person in the crowd, or someone who seeks healing. Notice who is with you, what you say and do, and, most especially, how you interact with Jesus and how he interacts with you. Gospel contemplation is one way to meet our Lord in our sacred texts. It might be helpful for those who are hesitant to try it to remember that the Gospels were written so that we, like generations before us, may encounter Christ and find salvation in him.

The Gospel of Mark

Since it contains very little teaching and few parables, the Gospel of Mark is the shortest and most fast-paced of our four Gospel accounts. It is also the darkest. The shadow of the cross looms from the first chapter as we hear Jesus begin his ministry right after John the Baptist has been arrested (1:14). Jesus' first miracle is casting out a demon, a symbol of the evil he must confront (1:21–26). Chapter 2 consists entirely of stories in which people challenge Jesus and object to his or his disciples' actions. By chapter 3 people are already plotting his death (3:6). As the Gospel continues, Jesus will face opposition from his family, the villagers of his hometown, and his disciples.

The portrait of Jesus that emerges from this threatening narrative is a Jesus who struggles and suffers. He is the messiah, but he is a suffering messiah. "Suffering messiah" is a contradiction, an oxymoron. No one expected the messiah, God's chosen one, to suffer and be killed. Christians today are so familiar with the story of Jesus' passion and death that we forget how shocking it was, how horrible and horrifying. St. Mark reminds us.

As we move through the Gospel of Mark and hear how Jesus is challenged, misunderstood, ridiculed, and physically attacked, we're reminded that true discipleship has costs. Seeking the reign of God brings us into opposition with others who either don't understand how we're trying to live or who downright reject the kingdom of God that we seek. Jesus knows this. He has been through it. He now stands with us as we continue striving for his kingdom, confronting evil in all its forms until at last he raises us up to life with him in his kingdom forever.





We are in need of auction items. Please help us to offer a "hand-up to those who are homeless by making a donation to our yearly Spring Fling Auction Dinner.

Donor Form

Thank you for your contribution to SVDPHF's Auction. It will take place VIRTUALLY on March 11th, 2021, and possibly @ Bryn Du Fieldhouse, Granville, OH.

NOTE: DONATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY February 20, 2021*

*Items received after the 20th will not be in the printed event program and may be excluded.

☐ Business Do		Oonor		☐ Individual Donor	
Donor Name (to be d	displayed	d):			
Contact Name:					
Mailing Address:					
Telephone:					
*e-mail:					
Pick-up address (if different):					
T. 37					
Item Name:					
Description:					
☐ Item(s) and/or Gift Certificate enclosed ☐ Please send a volunteer to pick up my					
☐ Please create a gift certificate for me donation					
Expiration Date:		Retail Value (FMV):		Suggested Minimum Bid:	
Donor					
Signature:					

NOTE: Unusable donations will be donated to the SVDP Thrift Store.

Donations are tax deductible. SVDPHF is a 501(c)(3). Tax ID # is 80-0191758.

Please return the completed form to: St. Vincent Haven, 115 Wilson Street, Newark, OH 43055 Or fax to: 740-670-0824

For more info, please contact Kevin Murphy (740-250-3544, <u>murphdude@yahoo.com</u>), or John Paul Munhall (740-670-0822, <u>johnpaul@svdphaven.org</u>)

YOUTH GROUP

"Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather show yourself as an example of those who believe." 1 Timothy 4:12



LET'S START THE NEW YEAR PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST!



Spend an hour with Jesus!

Next Youth Gathering: Sunday, January 10

Where: Main Church Time: 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Wear your mask

~ Zachary Ratliff, Youth Minister youth@saintedwards.org

Know Your Saints

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys was born in France in 1620 on Good Friday. In 1640 her heart was transformed when she looked up at a statue of the Blessed Virgin. She felt compelled to imitate Mary's life on earth. In 1653 she volunteered to go to Quebec where she was a nurse and teacher to children and established a school. She travelled back to France three times to bring more teachers to Quebec. On one trip a plague epidemic broke out and she cared for the sick and buried the dead. The teachers lived in poverty and traveled where needed to teach and perform works of mercy. She died in Montreal, where she was called Saint Marguerite, and was canonized in 1982 by Pope John Paul II. Her Feast Day is January 12.

St. Hilary, born in 315 in Poitiers, France, is the doctor of Christ's divinity. As Bishop, he brilliantly defended the sacredness of Jesus, defeating Arianism which denied the divinity of Christ. He spent the better part of his adult life studying, writing, speaking and arguing to ensure the Nicene Creed was understood and adhered to against determined opposition of it at the highest levels. He even spent time in exile by the Emperor for not conforming to Arian teachings. The life of St. Hilary proves that good theology matters. He is the patron saint of lawyers. His Feast Day is January 13.

Sponsor of the Week



JOB OPENING - DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

St. Elizabeth Church is looking for a full-time Director of Music. The job description is on the website at www.stelizabethchurch.org. Please submit cover letter, resume, and references to Father Antony Varghese, at FrAntony@ stelcc.org. Contact the parish office at (614) 891-0150 with questions. Applicants should send an application as soon as possible.

LIVING I DO



Mother Teresa has said, "Peace begins with a smile." The way to a peaceful marriage is paved with smiles! Start with one from the first moment you see your spouse; even if it has been a rough day. A smile says, "We're in this together," creates a space for sharing, and becomes an antidote to any resentment that can poison your Marriage.



REMINDERS DURING COVID

For the safety of our staff during the Covid epidemic, please DO NOT ENTER the office. Also, do not cross the roped off areas that are Emergency Exits only. ENTRY and EXIT from the church are only

through the main front doors. Masks must be worn when entering the church. Thank you.

STEWARDSHIP~TIME~TALENT~TREASURE

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

IS 42:1-4, 6-7 or IS 55:1-11; PS 1-2, 3-4, 9-10 or IS 12:2-3, 4bcd, 5-6; ACTS 10:34-38 or 1 JN 5:1-9; MK 1:7-11



Our Christmas season concludes with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Jesus was not baptized because He needed to repent — rather, He was revealing who He is and what He came to do.

It is from His mission that we can receive the Sacrament of Baptism — when we become adopted sons and daughters of God. From that moment, we belong to Christ — we become His stewards. Our lives should be a reflection of this relationship. The way we live should reveal Whose we are.

In our First Reading, the prophet Isaiah shares a message of hope, "Why spend your money for what is not bread, your wages for what fails to satisfy?" We should ask ourselves, "Who is the king of our hearts?" As Christian stewards, it should be God. We often fill our lives with things that satisfy us only for a moment. If we truly do belong to Christ, then we will make Him our top priority. What we fill our lives with should reveal that He is King.

In our Gospel, Mark reveals the intimate relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus and God the Father proclaimed, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." We, too, have access to an intimate relationship with God. But like all good relationships, it flourishes with effort. How we spend our time and share our gifts says a great deal about Whose we are.

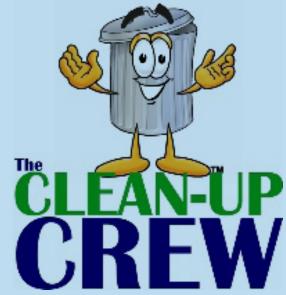
- Stewardship Reflections by Catholic Stewardship



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE

Jesus said, "I am among you as one who serves." Luke 22:27

This weekend is SVDP Collection.



YOUR HELP NEEDED AT SVDP FOOD PANTRY!

- Saint Vincent de Paul Food Pantry needs volunteers to keep the pantry safe and clean.
- If you or your family are looking for a service project for the New Year, then you have found it!
- Basic cleaning needed: sweeping, mopping, dusting, cleaning freezers & fridges.
- Hours for the cleaning crew: TBD on your availability.
- SIGN UP online at <u>bit.ly/pantrycleaning</u>
- Or call/text Gregg Gassman at 740-755-0032 or Paul Gassman at 740-334-8898.



da Vinci, Leonardo. The Baptism of the Lord. 1472–1475, oil on wood, Uffizi Gallery, Florence

Lectio Divina

SCRIPTURE READING + MEDITATION + PRAYER + CONTEMPLATION

"What page, what passage of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not the truest of guides for human life?" ~Saint Benedict, from the *Rule of Saint Benedict* (73:3)

"Whatever I may have written, I think it all can be reduced in the end to this one root truth: that God calls human persons to union with himself and with one another in Christ, in the Church which is his Mystical Body. It is also a witness to the fact that there is and must be, in the Church, a contemplative life which has no other function than to realize these mysterious things, and return to God all the thanks and praise that human hearts can give him." ~FR. THOMAS MERTON, OCSO

Monday, January 11 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:14-20 After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel." As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Then they left their nets and followed him. He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

Meditation: The word "gospel" literally means "good news." What is the good news which Jesus delivers? It is the good news of peace (restoration of relationship with God), of hope (the hope of resurrection and heaven), of truth (God's word is true and reliable), of promise (he rewards those who seek him), of immortality (God gives everlasting life), and the good news of salvation (liberty from sin and freedom to live as sons and daughters of God). In announcing the good news, Jesus made two demands: repent and believe. Repentance requires a life change, a change of our heart and our mind, sorrow for sin and its consequences, a hatred of sin, and a firm resolution to avoid sin in the future. The Lord gives us grace to see sin for what is really is -- a rejection of his love and wisdom, and a refusal to do what is good and in accord with his will. His grace brings pardon and help for turning away from everything that would keep us from his love. To believe is to take Jesus at his word and to recognize that God loved us so much that he sent his only begotten Son to free us from bondage to fear and sin. God loves us so much that he made the supreme sacrifice of his Son on the cross to bring us back to himself.

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: When Jesus preached the gospel message he called others to follow as his disciples and he gave them a mission – "to catch people for the kingdom of God." What kind of disciples did he choose? Regular, ordinary people – in this particular case, fishermen. In the choice of the first apostles we see a characteristic feature of Jesus' work: he chose very ordinary people, non-professionals, had no wealth or position. They were chosen from the common people who did ordinary things, had no special education, and no social advantages. Jesus wanted ordinary people who could take an assignment and do it extraordinarily well. He chose these individuals, not for what they were, but for what they would be capable of becoming under his direction and power. When the Lord calls us to serve, we must not think we have nothing to offer. The Lord takes what ordinary people, like us, can offer and uses it for greatness in his kingdom. Do you believe that God wants to work through and in you for his glory?

Tuesday, January 12 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:21-28 Jesus came to Capernaum with his followers, and on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. In their synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you

are—the Holy One of God!" Jesus rebuked him and said, "Quiet! Come out of him!" The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a loud cry came out of him. All were amazed and asked one another, "What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him." His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of Galilee.

Meditation: In the infancy of this New Year ask yourself a couple of very simple questions: Do you believe that God's word has power to change and transform your life? And are you eager to hear and believe the word of God? When Jesus taught he spoke with authority. He spoke the word of God as no one had spoken it before. When the Rabbis taught they supported their statements with quotes from other authorities. The prophets spoke with delegated authority – "Thus says the Lord." When Jesus spoke he needed no authorities to back his statements. He was authority incarnate – the Word of God made flesh. When he spoke, God spoke. When he commanded even the demons obeyed. Do you respond to God's commands as God wants you to?

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Saint Augustine once remarked that "devils confessed Christ, but lacking charity it availed nothing...They confessed a sort of faith, but without love. Hence they were devils." We must always remember that faith is mighty, but without love faith profits nothing (ref. 1 Corinthians 13). True faith works through love (ref. Galatians 5:6) and abounds in hope (ref. Romans 15:13). That is why faith is both a free gift of God and the free assent of our will to the whole truth that God has revealed. To live, grow, and persevere in the faith to the end, we must nourish it with the word of God. The Lord gives us his Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds that we may grow in his truth and in the knowledge of his great love for each of us. If we approach God's word submissively, with an eagerness to do everything the Lord desires, we are in a much better position to learn what God wants to teach us through his word. Thus today we should ask ourselves: (1) Am I eager and desiring to be taught by the Lord, and, (2) once taught by Christ, will I conform my life according to the Word of the Lord?

Wednesday, January 13 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time Saint Hilary of Poitiers, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:29-39 On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Meditation: Who do you take your troubles to? A self-help book? An advice columnist on a blog or app? A TV talk show host? What about Christ? Jesus' disciples freely brought their troubles to him because they found him ready and able to deal with any difficulty, affliction, or sickness which they encountered. When Simon brought Jesus to his home, his mother-in-law was instantly healed because Jesus heard Simon's prayer. Saint Jerome reflects on this passage: "Can you imagine Jesus standing before your bed and you continue sleeping? It is absurd that you would remain in bed in his presence. Where is Jesus? He is already here offering himself to us. 'In the middle,' he says, 'among you he stands, whom you do not recognize' (ref. John 1:26) 'The kingdom of God is in your midst' (ref. Mark 1:15). Faith beholds Jesus among us. If we are unable to seize his hand, let us prostrate ourselves at his feet. If we are unable to reach his head, let us wash his feet with our tears. Our repentance is the perfume of the Savior. See how costly is the compassion of the Savior."

Prayer: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we may rightly understand and truthfully profess the divinity of your Son, which the Bishop Saint Hilary taught with such constancy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Do you allow Jesus to be first in your life? Do you make the Lord and healer number one in your personal life, family, and community, especially in times of trial, challenge, fears and anxiety?

Learn to approach Christ with expectant faith. God's healing power restores us not only to health but to active service and care of others. There is no trouble he does not want to help us with, and there is no bondage from which he cannot set us free.

Thursday, January 14 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:40-45 A leper came to him and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched the leper, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. Then he said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

Meditation: No one who sought Jesus out was refused his help. Even the untouchables and the outcasts of Jewish society found help in him. Unlike the people of Jesus' time who fled at the sight of a leper, Jesus touched the leper who approached him and he made him whole and clean. Why was this so remarkable? Lepers were outcasts of society. Their physical condition was terrible as they slowly lost their limbs and withered away. They were not only shunned but regarded as "already dead" even by their relatives.

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Beyond the human fear of contracting leprosy, Jewish law forbade anyone from touching or approaching a leper, lest ritual defilement occur. This leper did something quite remarkable. He approached Jesus confidently and humbly, expecting that Jesus could and would heal him. Normally a leper would be stoned or at least warded off if he tried to come near a rabbi. Jesus not only grants the man his request, but he demonstrates the personal love, compassion, and tenderness of God in his physical touch. The medical knowledge of his day would have regarded such contact as grave risk for incurring infection. Jesus met the man's misery with compassion and tender kindness. He communicated the love and mercy of God in a sign that spoke more eloquently than words. St. Francis of Assisi once said: "Preach the Gospel at all times – if necessary, use words." In other words, our Christ-directed actions speak louder than words in helping others at all times. Talk can be cheap. And so we might ask ourselves today: Do my actions speak louder than my words about how I live my life as a proclaimed disciple of Christ?

Friday, January 15 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 2:1-12 When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to him, "Child, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" –he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

Meditation: Jesus' treatment of sinners upset the religious teachers of the day. When a cripple was brought to Jesus because of the faith of his friends, Jesus did the unthinkable. He first forgave the man his sins. The scribes regarded this as blasphemy because they understood that only God had authority to forgive sins and to unbind a man or woman from their burden of guilt. Jesus claimed an authority which only God could rightfully give. Jesus not only proved that his authority came from God, he showed the great power of God's redeeming love and mercy by healing the cripple of his physical ailment. This man had been crippled not only physically, but spiritually as well. Jesus freed him from his burden of guilt and restored his body as well.

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Do you know the healing power of forgiveness? Remember what we pray for each time we pray the "Lord's Prayer" – "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Before we can fully experience God's love and mercy in forgiving us, we must first extend that same level of love and mercy to those who seek our forgiveness. If we don't we risk placing walls between us and the love and mercy of Christ. The Lord is every ready to bring us healing of body, mind and soul. Do you allow anything to keep you from experiencing the love and mercy and forgiveness of Jesus Christ?

Saturday, January 16 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 2:13-17 Jesus went out along the sea. All the crowd came to him and he taught them. As he passed by, he saw Levi, son of Alphaeus, sitting at the customs post. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed Jesus. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners sat with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many who followed him. Some scribes who were Pharisees saw that Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors and said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus heard this and said to them, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Meditation: Many people were drawn to Jesus, including the unwanted and the unlovable, such as the lame, the blind, and the lepers, as well as the homeless such as widows and orphans. But public sinners, like the town prostitutes and corrupt tax collectors, were also drawn to Jesus. In calling Matthew to be one of his disciples, Jesus picked one of the unlikeliest of men – a tax collector who by profession was despised by the people. Why did the religious leaders find fault with Jesus for making friends with sinners and tax collectors like Matthew? The orthodox Jews had a habit of dividing everyone into two groups: those who rigidly kept the law and its minute regulations and those who did not. They latter were treated like second class citizens. The orthodox scrupulously avoided their company, refused to do business with them, refused to give or receive anything from them, refused to intermarry, and avoided any form of entertainment with them, including table fellowship. Jesus' association with the latter, especially with tax collectors and sinners, shocked the sensibilities of these orthodox Jews.

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: When the Pharisees challenged his unorthodox behavior in eating with public sinners, Jesus' defense was quite simple. A doctor doesn't need to visit healthy people; instead he goes to those who are sick. Jesus likewise sought out those in the greatest need. A true physician seeks healing of the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. Jesus came as the divine physician and good shepherd to care for his people and to restore them to wholeness of life. The orthodox were so preoccupied with their own practice of religion that they neglected to help the very people who needed care. Their religion was selfish because they didn't want to have anything to do with people not like themselves. Jesus stated his mission in unequivocal terms: "I came not to call the righteous, but to call sinners. Ironically the orthodox were as needy as those they despised. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (ref. Romans 3:23). The Lord fills us with his grace and mercy. And he wants us, in turn, to seek the good of our neighbors, including the unlikeable and the trouble-maker by showing them the same kindness and mercy which we have received. Do you thank the Lord for the great kindness and mercy he has shown to you?

Scripture passages (NAB translation) courtesy of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; prayers are from *The Roman Missal*, Catholic Book Publishing, 2011; information about saints, solemnities, feasts and memorials courtesy of Catholic Culture.

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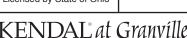
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