

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 19, 2017

Mass Intentions

Saturday, February 25th

5 P.M. – Robin Pekar

Sunday, February 26th

7 A.M. – M/M Frankie Nerada, Sr.

9 A.M. – Charles Haley

This Sunday's Holy Scriptures

Lev 19:1-2, 17:9-18; 1 Cor 3:16-23; Mt 5:38-48

Your Gift to God: February 12th

Sweet Home	\$1,741
Building Fund	\$20
DSA	\$30
Koerth	\$518
Building Fund	\$20

May God reward your generosity!

Celebrate the Lord's Abundant Mercy

Each Saturday the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance/Confession) is available from 4:00 P.M. to 4:40 P.M. in the Sweet Home confessional.

**Ash Wednesday – March 1st
Mass Schedule:**

7:00 A.M. & 6:30 P.M.

Ash Wednesday Collection

The collection at the Ash Wednesday Masses is for the Church in Eastern Europe.

Planning Ahead: CCD/Faith Formation

There will be **NO CCD** classes held on Ash Wednesday (March 1st) so that families can attend Mass.

For Your Information

A question has been raised concerning Contributions Statements that are available by request to the Pastoral Center in Yoakum (293-3518). The reports are based on those who utilize envelopes--those who requested envelopes during the Census Update were assigned a number in June and from that time forward any donation made (even without having an actual envelope since the new service did not begin until the end of the year) was credited to that envelope identification number. If someone did not have an envelope number prior to that time the report will only reflect from the point when a number was assigned at the request in June/July (prior to that point the donations were listed as loose in the deposit).

Fast & Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence.

For members of the Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.

If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the "paschal fast" to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus, and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily his Resurrection.

www.qpcatholicchurch.com

Make sure and check out the parish website for Queen of Peace and St. John the Baptist. A few of the historical pictures are there (still looking for pictures of the church interiors) as well as CCD/Faith Formation calendar, registration and weekly bulletin. There is also a link to the diocesan cemetery database for both cemeteries and links to Catholic sites of interest.

Baptismal Preparation Class

The next class of Baptismal Preparation will be Saturday, March 11th at 9:00 A.M. in Yoakum at the St. Joseph Family Center Meeting Room.

Projects Update

Queen of Peace Church: The majority of the frames were installed on the Church in Sweet Home. The remainder will require a lift and so they were postponed until the glass arrives and the lift can be utilized to install framing and glass at same time. The glass hopefully will arrive in the next two weeks and then the work should wrap up quickly.

St. John the Baptist Church: Work on the floors continues in Koerth and the Altars are also being spruced up.

Rectory: Sheetrock taping and floating is being done and painting should begin shortly

TMIY

That Man Is You continues to enrich the lives of the men who risk a bit more involvement and challenge in their journey of faith. You don't have to start from the beginning--if thinking about it or considering a way to more actively engage your faith and strengthen your roots--don't procrastinate! **Come and join us this Wednesday at 6:00 A.M. in the St. Joseph Parish Family Center!**

Cemetery Inquiries

Anyone with questions regarding the Catholic Cemeteries should contact the local representatives for the Cemeteries.

Queen of Peace:

Harvey Matussek & J. O. Hermes

St. John the Baptist:

Gene Velek & Jerry/Joyce Kurtz

They can provide the needed information and help with locating available plots. They will also provide the needed details to complete a purchase/reservation and receive a deed for record purposes.

Catholic Faith Advocacy Day

The Diocese of Victoria will be participating in the Catholic Faith in Action Advocacy Day, on April 4, 2017, at the Texas Capitol in Austin. Participants from the Diocese of Victoria will join thousands of Catholics, from the 15 dioceses in Texas, to advocate for policies promoting life, justice, charity, and religious freedom and to educate our legislators and other state leaders in a better understanding about what we believe as Catholics. A select group of volunteers will also be prepared to visit with the elected state legislators who represent the ten counties of the Diocese of Victoria. If you are interested in participating, call Father Gary Janak, Chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria, at (361) 573-0828, email: chancellor@victoriadiocese.org or visit <https://victoriadiocese.org/advocacy-day> for more information.

ALPHA

Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith that will run over eleven weeks. The format for Alpha is simple: a meal, a talk, and good conversation. Each talk looks at a different question around the most important aspects of life and faith, like – *Is there more to life than this? Who is Jesus?* and *How do I pray?* There's no obligation to say anything. And there's nothing you can't say. It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest, friendly, and open environment. Please join us for these sessions that will be led by Fr. Jacob on Monday evenings at the St. Joseph Family Center in Yoakum from **6:30-8:00 P.M. starting February 20.** For more information contact the office or Fr. Jacob at: parochialvicar@stj catholicchurch.com.

www.alphausa.org/catholic.

Gratitude

The parish family extends its gratitude and appreciation to Renken's Nursery of Victoria who have offered to clean and "dress up" the area in front of the Queen of Peace statue at the Sweet Home Church entrance. Their generosity is greatly appreciated!

"Whoever keeps the word of Christ, the love of God is truly perfected in him."

Listening is pastoral care, and even you can do it

Sometimes a moment comes, unbidden, and your Christian “presence” is called for

Russell E. Saltzman February 2, 2017

“Being pastoral” isn’t a phrase reserved for clergy alone. Let me assume, though, that you have never taken a course in pastoral counseling and, equally, pastoral theology is a subject you have heard but the definition isn’t anything you can remember. That’s fine; don’t worry about it.

Sometimes, though, “being pastoral” is a role that is thrust upon us where events suggest we must become a Christian presence in someone’s life. We try for that all the time, I presume, but this time we’re talking about being a particular Christian presence in another person’s particular life.

I am thinking of those “in person” encounters with someone who has simply decided to talk to you about themselves and their perplexing problem.

It is not a role that anybody ought to go seeking, understand. That would be presumptuous and possibly prideful. I am speaking of those moments that come unbidden, a situation that demands one’s best “pastoral” response.

And, come to think, perhaps “pastoral” is not the most precise word to use. The phrase “Christian encouragement” comes to mind—variations of which pepper the Epistles. That may be a better concept to explore. Either way, it works out the same.

So who would want to talk to you? You would be surprised. It could be simply a situation where a friend, an acquaintance, a co-worker, almost anybody says to you in one manner or another, “I need to tell this; may I tell you?”

It may not even be that direct, but unexpectedly you find yourself in possession of another person’s personal trouble and their worry, even their fear. What they tell you might be a problem they are having, or one a family member is experiencing and they wonder how they can help—any number of situations come to mind.

What should you do, in any case?

1) Behave, for starters, as a friend who is a Christian. Ask, first, if they are seeking your advice. Sometimes,

yes. Other times, no, not really. It may be the case (and often is) they just want someone to hear them tell it. If that’s what is going on, job’s done. Intentional listening without interruption is a forgotten art but always a source of relief for somebody facing difficult choices.

And if that is the situation do not offer unsolicited advice. Do be certain to say that you, if they wish, are ready to listen any time and they may feel free to bounce off you as needed. With that comes an explicit—you say it aloud—promise of confidentiality.

2) Let’s say, though, they *do* want your advice. Uh-oh, things are getting complicated, aren’t they?

Keep in mind, if you are being asked, you can bet they probably have also asked someone else, perhaps many someones.

Here is where you, again, stay quiet and listen deeply. You solicit from them what they have already heard. You ask if any of that makes sense to *them* (not if it makes sense to you). What is their opinion on the advice they’ve been given?

They will have one and possibly that is why they’re asking you for what may be different advice. They’re not happy with it; it’s too hard, or sounds too easy or impossible. You’re job here is to help them walk through that thicket by asking questions, not giving answers.

You are not listening to render a judgment or offer an opinion or tell them where they’ve failed. Even less should you offer what *you* would do. No, you are asking for *their* judgment, *their* opinion, on what they’ve already been told. What is it they like or don’t like about the advice they’ve been given?

3) Help them examine the alternatives. Ask if they foresee any predictable consequences following one bit of advice over another. They may talk themselves out of all of it. Or, again, an out-loud conversation is always clarifying; they may know what they need to do just from a conversation with you, and all you’ve done, really, is listen.

4) Slip back up to Number 2 above. What if they have not approached anyone one else and you are the first they’ve asked, and they want your advice? Even if they have not asked anyone else, nonetheless, they will have in mind various scenarios of what they might do. Once again, hit your deep listening mode and ask what they have come up with, and what they like or dislike given the alternatives.

5) When the conversation is done, pray. A snippet of Psalm 17 will do: “Keep us as the apple of your eye; hide us in the shadow of your wings.” Then say Amen.