

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS: February 6-7, 2021

We're still on the modified Phase II restrictions of this Pandemic that requires us to (1) sanitize our hands regularly and at prescribed times, places and situations, (2) wear our face mask or shield or both in public places including churches and other houses of worship, and (3) maintain the 6-foot social distancing. Let's keep vigilant. Thank y'all!

In a week's time we will be entering the Holy Season Lent with Ash Wednesday being on February 17th. Due to the current Pandemic restriction of avoiding physical contact, our reception of the Blessed Ash this year will be different. The new directives we have received from the Vatican through the Bishop's Office regarding the distribution of the Blessed Ash instructs us to "*sprinkle the blessed ash on the head of people without saying the usual formula.*" The Clerics and Ministers have been asked **NOT** impose the blessed ash on your foreheads while saying the familiar formula to avoid physical contact.

Before y'all think that this is a NEW way of imposing blessed ashes to the faithful – **IT IS NOT!** The practice of imposing blessed ashes over the foreheads in a cruciform was introduced in the early 19th century. But from time immemorial, the sprinkling of blessed ash on the head of the faithful had been our tradition. This tradition is still practiced in some parts of the world, e.g. Italy, Middle East and some European countries. The sprinkling (or "putting on ashes") has its Biblical roots in the Books of Ezekiel (27:30), Job (2:8), 2Samuel (13:19), Esther (4), Jonah (3:6), and in the Psalms (22:6). It is a way to manifest one's mourning (or sorrow) over one's sins and as an act of repentance. Ironically, thanks to this pandemic we will be able to return to the roots of this practice, even briefly, as we begin our Holy Season.

Also, due to the heightened Pandemic restrictions, **we will NOT be able to have our annual Lenten Gumbo this year.** Please refer to upcoming Bulletin for some ideas on how to observe the Holy Season of Lent this year.

The readings for the last weekend in Ordinary Time will ask us to look at how we lament or express our miseries. Whether you admit it or not, all

of us have frustrations and disappointments that sometimes compel you to vent, fuss, complain, or just make unnecessary faces or sounds that warns everyone you are not happy! Don't be ashamed to admit or embarrassed to accept – this is a common trait we all share. The question is, "how do you deal with your frustrations and disappointments?" Or in the words of the readings this weekend, "how do you lament?"

The fictional character of Job in the 1st reading today is a classic example of how some people lament in their misery. He begins with stating the fact about our lives: "Is not man's life on earth a drudgery?" That's all we need to hear; the rest of his words are a litany of pains! But don't we all complain like Job – sometimes? Don't we sometimes see life as "a drudgery," where everything we do seems to be in vain? In this book, Job is voicing out the common complaints of every person and giving us a taste of our own ways of lamenting and of dealing with life's frustrations.

Even Paul in the 2nd reading this weekend "fusses" at some of his detractors from Corinth who are accusing of everything from "getting something back from what's he's doing" to "having ulterior motives." Well folks, Paul let them have it in this reading. Paul was really frustrated from the indifference he was receiving from these so-called "intelligent and cultured people" even though he only wanted them to be saved! As St. Paul had experienced, it is difficult to preach the Good News to anyone who seem "to know it all."

Jesus too was not spared from frustration. He was trying to preach to the people and reveal God to them. But most people only wanted to see His miracles and to have more of them. Jesus eluded them in order that He may fulfill His tasks.

While we all are still reflecting on how we lament in our miseries, perhaps the words of the psalmist (147:1-6) can help us focus. "*Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.*" When we are frustrated and disappointed, instead of fussing, complaining or venting-out, let's praise the Lord instead for He is very, very close to all the brokenhearted!

Father Vic+

January 23rd/ 24th**Weekly Offering**

© J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.

Weekly Envelopes	\$ 6,778.00
Weekly Loose	982.00
Weekly ACH	350.00
	\$ 8,110.00

Latin America \$1,255.00

Thank you for your generosity !

Our Sunday Bulletin is supported by the advertisers who are listed on our back page. What better way to say THANK YOU than to remember them the next time you go shopping.

THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON OF AMERICAN HISTORY

In the modern world, virtually everyone everywhere condemns slavery. Yet, it is not long ago in our nation's history that this was not the case and human beings were deprived of their "inalienable rights" including the rights to "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

This provides the most important lesson of American history and the continuing battle against contemporary forms of slavery and exploitation. First, we must oppose all forms of modern relativism, which attempt to establish "no absolutes." If a practice (such as slavery) is morally wrong, it is wrong and unacceptable under all conditions in any society. In other words, a moral evil does not become good prevailing law at a particular time.

Slavery is just one offence against human dignity. Today, abortion is the most heinous and extensive violation of human rights.

Abortion like slavery refuses to recognize the fact that a human being is precisely that, a human being and instead, reduces human beings to "things" or chattels. The moral of the story is that we must always vigorously oppose any measure which undermines the dignity of any human being and reduces them to the status of means rather than ends.

This is precisely what abortion-on-demand and the culture of death does and why it is so vitally important that we work unceasingly to oppose it!

Pro-Life Articles

Due to heightened precautions given by the State Government and Diocesan Officials, and their requested vigilance with the implementation of the modified Phase II Pandemic Restrictions, we regret to inform everyone that we will NOT have our Annual Lenten Gumbo this year (2021). As one of our acts of charity during Lent, the proceeds of our Lenten Gumbo benefits the Good Samaritan Food Bank of Thibodaux. Even though we will not have this annual event this Lent, we are still asked by the Church to perform acts of charity during the Holy Season – "to live simply so that others can simply live." In the spirit of Lenten giving, we invite y'all to drop -off the proceeds of your almsgiving and acts of charity in the Baptismal Font of the Church every Sundays of Lent until Palm Sunday, March 27 -28, 2021. We will send to the Good Samaritan Food Bank the proceeds of our Lenten Almsgiving and Acts of Charity at Easter time. Thank y'all for your continued support.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

St. Joseph Co-Cathedral Youth Formation department is in need of volunteer mentors for all grades .

Please call Sue or Patty at the Life Center at 447-1387 for more information.



shutterstock - 376126934

Please remember

**Lee Ledet
Brad Clement
Kathryn Adams**

who passed on into the Kingdom of our Father recently. Please pray also that their families may find comfort and consolation through their faith.