

7:00 Welcome, prayer intentions and Opening Prayer

St. John of the Cross, a patron saint of prisoners because he was unjustly imprisoned by fellow Carmelites for nine months in a dark cell, enduring torture, starvation and isolation, transformed his suffering into profound mystical poetry, finding God in the darkness and demonstrating that spiritual freedom transcends physical confinement, making him a symbol of hope and perseverance for those in captivity.

St. John said, “**The endurance of darkness is the preparation for great light.**”

Dear Lord, we thank You for giving us St. John of the Cross as an example of turning to You in suffering which leads to spiritual freedom.

May those for whom we pray also be transformed.

St. John of the Cross, pray for them.

7:05 Upcoming Sunday gospel; discuss question of the week

John the Baptist's Testimony to Himself

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, ‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.’”

I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel.”

John testified further, saying, “I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, ‘On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.’”

Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God.”

Jn 1:29-34

*Discuss at small group tables: John the Baptist professes that Jesus is the Son of God. How do your life and words do the same?

7:15 Core Team Updates

1. Share a personal witness story (Prison Ministry, Suzette)
2. General ministry progress - Alison
SMM website, go to Outreach ministries
 - Our Advent speaker, Christine Marallen and her book
 - Active prayer & pen pal ministry - Alison
 - Stories of Dennis, Andres
 - Faith Formation families collaboration: Valentines service project supporting both Lebanon and Dayton Correctional
 - Join prayer chain specific to Prisoner prayer intentions:
gateofmercyandhope@gmail.com
 - Active family support - Kathy
 - Pls advise Kathy Loveless or Ree Foltz if you know parishioners/ Contacts with experience in social services (housing, cash assistance, medicaid, 2nd Chance hiring, Catholic Charities who can help us plan for supporting/mentoring released offenders
 - Ree meeting with Catholic Charities
 - Alison meeting with Knights of Columbus
 - Prison Ministry (Lebanon Correctional Institution)
Alison, Nancy, Suzette
 - 2025: 11 men were fully Initiated into the Church
 - Strong start to 2026 at Lebanon with 30 men weekly in January
 - Currently have 3 men in OCIA targeting an Easter Initiation with a larger group beginning in Mar/Apr

- Serenelli Re-entry and mentoring ministry - Barry, Karen
- New HQ building newly donated near the Serenelli House
- Discernment in-process for becoming a Serenelli parish chapter
 - 9 parishioners have visited and explored:
725 Delhi Ave., Sedamsville
 - 4 Active *monthly participants* at Serenelli Saturday,
*2nd Saturdays, 8 - 12 ~ All are Welcome!
 - <https://serenelliproject.org/>

7:30 **5 Love In Action teams working sessions:** :30 mins.

- Praying Pen Pals - Ree, Corey
- Family support - Kathy, TJ
- Prison Ministry - Nancy, Suzette
- Serenelli Project/Mentoring - Karen, Barry
- Lebanon bi-annual Kairos Retreats - Alison

Team format, round table:

- Introductions, burning questions?
- Lead's needs, Team's needs
- What worked well in 2025 - Wins
- New Ideas for 2026 - Hopes

8:00 **Small group Updates:**

- < 5 mins., One Win or take-away that you would like to share with the large group?

8:20 What's coming, Thank you and **Closing prayer**

- One Lenten Stations of the Cross devoted to our imprisoned brothers and sisters In Christ
- Guest Speaker, Bobby Kenney, You Are Loved mission (Mar/Apr)