



Saint Francis of Assisi of Western Fayette County

ROMAN CATHOLIC PARISH

101 West Church Avenue, Masontown, Pennsylvania 15461

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Website: www.sfoafayette.org



*A Parish of the Diocese of Greensburg
A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust*

Bishop Larry J. Kulick, J.C.L.



Rev. Dick Anthony Cortado
Administrator

dcortado@dioceseofgreensburg.org

Masses in Masontown

Monday, Wednesday, Friday ..8:00 am
Saturday6:00 pm
Sunday..... 8:00 am & 11:30 am

Confessions: Saturday 5:00-5:30 pm

Adoration: First & Third
Fridays - 4:30 to 6:00 pm

Masses in Footedale

Tuesday & Thursday8:00 am
Saturday:4:00 pm
Sunday.....9:30 am

Confessions: Saturday 3:00-3:30 pm

Adoration: Second & Fourth
Wednesdays - 12:30 to 2:00 pm

Office Hours: Monday through
Friday - 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

Bulletin Articles: The deadline
for placing articles in the bulletin
is Monday at Noon.

New Parishioners, Welcome!

Please register as soon as possible.

Communion to the Homebound is
provided on a regular basis. Call the
Parish Office to be added to our list.

Sacrament of Baptism: By
appointment. Prior to your baby's
Baptism, you must be a registered,
practicing member of this parish.

Sacrament of Marriage: Requires
parish membership by at least one of
the parties for six months prior to
making arrangements for marriage.

Weddings should be scheduled
one year in advance.

Prayer Chain: To request prayer,
please call Patty 724-245-9746
or Valeria 724-583-9460

February 11, 2024



6th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said,
"If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he
stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him,
"I do will it. Be made clean." - Mk 1:40-41

Thoughts from Father Anthony - Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year B

All three readings today teach us that we are called to become pure and holy but we don't become holy by some ritual observances. We become holy by confessing our sins to God, offering our lives for God's glory and sharing God's love with everyone around us without discriminating against anyone based on color, race, culture, religion, lifestyle, wealth, or social status. The word *Vayikra* (Hebrew name of the Book of Leviticus) means that God called Moses and His chosen people to holiness and purity. That is why the first reading teaches the theme of freedom from bodily and ritual impurity as a sign of internal holiness. This freedom is symbolized by the precautions against contracting leprosy given in the first reading and by the healing of the leper described in the Gospel.

The first reading shows the ancient Jewish attitude toward leprosy and gives the rules for the segregation of lepers. This provides a background for Jesus' healing of a leper. In today's Responsorial Psalm (Ps 32), the psalmist says: "*I confessed my faults to the LORD and You took away my guilt.*" He teaches us that we become holy by confessing our sins and being reconciled with God every day. The psalm serves as a mini treatise on reconciliation, covering the meaning of the spiritual leprosy of sin and showing how we are forgiven by a Sacramental encounter with God: "*I turn to You, Lord, in times of trouble and You fill me with the joy of salvation.*" In today's second reading, Saint Paul exhorts us to become holy *by doing everything for the glory of God* and by showing sensitivity toward others who are different from us, rather than passing judgment on them.

Today's Gospel describes how Jesus heals a leper, liberating him both from the disease of leprosy and from the unjust, inhuman social, ritual, and religious isolation and ostracism to which lepers were subjected. Leprosy in biblical times covered a wide range of skin diseases from ringworm or psoriasis to what is today known as Hansen's disease – a truly horrific condition which, if untreated, can lead to loss of fingers and toes and other deformities of the body. Fear of contagion forced victims to live outside the community and endure a much more severe form of isolation than that endured by the victims of the Covid-19 virus today. Lepers were treated as outcasts, castaways, untouchables. Their miserable plight was made even worse by the ingrained belief that their disease was a punishment from God for sin; thus, to their physical affliction was added the psychological and mental affliction of feeling rejected not only by society but even by God.

As our first reading from the Book of Leviticus makes clear, a leper was declared 'unclean' by one of the priests, compelled to wear 'his clothing torn and his hair disordered,' to 'shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean," and to 'live outside the camp' (Lev 13:45-46). Moreover, Jewish Law forbade anyone from approaching or touching a leper under the pain of incurring ritual defilement. Hence the life of a leper at the time of Jesus was nothing short of a 'living hell.' Death would have been preferable to living with leprosy. This context makes the story of Jesus' cure of a leper in today's gospel quite remarkable. First there is the extraordinary courage and faith of the leper. In spite of the frightful stigma he had to endure, he still has the courage to approach Jesus, trusting that He will accept and cure him. To come close to Jesus, he had to risk the anger of the people around Jesus and the likelihood of being chased away with stones. With an exemplary combination of faith and humility, he goes down on his knees before Jesus and pleads with him in words that must have squeezed the very heart of Jesus: "*If you want to, you can cure me.*" (Mk 1:40). Even more extraordinary is the response of Jesus, especially the manner in which He cures the leper. Moved with compassion for the leper, He says: "*Of course I want to. Be cured.*" Then, with a gesture not only forbidden by the Mosaic Law but profoundly counter-cultural, He reaches out and touches the leper with His hand. This gesture - touching the untouchable - spoke more eloquently than any words could and brought spiritual as well as physical healing to the unfortunate man. It was a gesture of acceptance and empathy that restored the leper's humanity and sense of self-worth as well as curing him: 'At once the leprosy left him and he was cured' (Mk 1:42).

The sense of touch is at the core of what it means to be human. Far more than words, it conveys concern, empathy, support and affirmation but we cannot do otherwise. The love of God impels us to imitate the example of Jesus and bring His compassionate and healing touch to the lepers of our time: by praying for them, by sending inspiring words, by calling them and asking them if everything is fine to the isolated, despised and broken women and men longing for acceptance and love.

Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta gave a good example of this. She was a model of charity. The apostolate of the very congregation she founded, The Sisters of Charity, exemplified what she had witnessed in her life. She cared for the discriminated, untouchables, dehumanized and destitute. It was very Christian-like. Jesus destroyed the common belief not to mix with the unclean. Instead, He showed that by caring for the sick, one does not get sick but rather brings healing to both body and soul. This is also the call to all of us. Christians destroy barriers which tend to add to the dehumanization of fellow human beings. We mingle with them. We live, eat, sleep and even care for them, if necessary. Abandoning or out casting them does not make us remain clean and they, unclean. It is in serving them that they are rescued for their disadvantageous situation. Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta once said, "*The world changes with your example, not your opinion.*"

(Meditation based on today's Gospel, Mark 1:40-45)



LENT begins this week and is the 40-day season of preparation for the Paschal Triduum which begins with the evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. The *40 days* are counted from the First Sunday of Lent until Holy Thursday. The four days between Ash Wednesday and the First Sunday are an introduction to the season. Mass readings on these days were chosen to teach us about the three Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.



Prayer is communication with God. **Fasting** is self-denial, self-control, simple living. **Almsgiving** is giving to those in need. We share our goods, our money, our talents and our time. These three disciplines function best when they are done together - they balance each other. The word itself, *discipline*, reminds us that we are disciples of Christ.

Ashes, an ancient Jewish sign of penitence, begin Lent. Black and gritty, they remind us that just as something that has burned is gone, what we have and who we are on this earth is not permanent. There is an urgency in the Lord's call to conversion. Worn humbly, ashes remind us that we call each other to live the gospel.

This Wednesday is Ash Wednesday

Proclaim a Fast, the Scriptures demand, and so we do. We begin Lent with a reminder to return to the Lord, just as the people of Israel did with prayers and sacrifices. Jesus reminds us that our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving must be done simply, not as a show for others.

Ash Wednesday is *not* a holy day of obligation but it is a day of fast and abstinence. Ashes will be distributed during **two Masses this day**: Noon in Footedale and 6pm in Masontown. Receive ashes and wear them humbly.

LENTEN REGULATIONS

The Catholic Church asks us to follow these minimal regulations for Lent:

† **Abstinence** - All Catholics who have reached their 14th year are bound to abstain totally from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

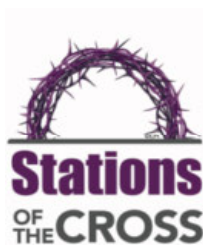
† **Fasting** requires limiting oneself to one full meal, with light nourishment taken on two other occasions.

All of the Fridays of Lent are to be "meatless" for all Catholics.



Lenten Prayer Partner Exchange - All are invited to select a tag from the baskets and pray for the family or individual listed during Lent. Keep it a secret; then at Easter, drop them a card and let them know that you have been praying for them. This act of charity provides a spiritual blessing for you and your prayer partner.

Lenten Prayer Cross - All are invited to place their Lenten prayer intentions on the large cross in Church.



Stations of the Cross Wednesdays in Masontown

5:00 pm: Adoration

6:00 pm: Stations of the Cross

Fridays in Footedale

11:00 am: Adoration

12:00 pm: Stations of the Cross



LENTEN FISH DINNERS

The **Christian Mothers** will host **Lenten Fish Dinners** the Fridays of Lent - **February 16 through March 22.**

The meals will take place at the social hall in Footedale from 11am to 6pm; eat in or take out.

This week's side dish is homemade pierogi.

To place an order, please call 724-245-2932.

The **Knights of Columbus** will host a **Lenten Fish Fry** on **Ash Wednesday** and **each Friday during Lent** at the cafeteria in Masontown - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Dine in or take out. To order, call 724-583-8210.

Again this year, **Faith Formation** and **Youth Ministry** will sponsor **Basket Raffles** during the Lenten Fish Dinners **at both sites.** Proceeds will benefit activities that support both programs. If you wish to help them by donating a basket, it can be delivered to the Parish Office in Masontown or the Social Hall in Footedale.

Thank you for supporting our young people.

RECONCILIATION

During the penitential season of Lent, we are encouraged to turn from sin and darkness and have a change of heart as we embrace and are embraced by Christ's love.

We are encouraged to be reconciled to the Lord early and often in this season. **The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered each Saturday 3:00 to 3:30 pm in Footedale and 5:00 to 5:30 pm in Masontown.**



Dear Friends of the Diocese of Greensburg,

As Catholics, we all are familiar with the miracle of the loaves and the fishes. Simply, Jesus received and shared. The theme of the 2024 Diocesan Lenten Appeal is *Receive and Share*. I ask you to prayerfully consider making a donation. Thank you for your help. It is in the sharing of what we have that we truly become disciples of Christ.

Yours in Christ,

+ *Larry J. Kulick*
Bishop Larry J. Kulick



Diocese of Greensburg

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It was pity that moved the heart of Jesus to heal the leper. He worked this miracle because the leper, in his faith, boldly asked him to. Have that same courage in approaching God with your needs. Have that same faith in His power to heal.

PARISH CASH BASH - Sunday, **March 17** - at the social hall in Footedale. Doors open at 2:00 pm; drawings begin at 2:30 and continue every ten minutes through 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$20, include food and refreshments and are now available at the Parish Office.

SarrisFundraising.com
Support our Faith Formation Program with your online order **now through March 22**. Enter our code - **10-3965** and place your order which will be shipped directly to your home. A flat shipping fee of \$5 per order applies.

Neighboring Events

Pysanky Egg Decorating Classes
Saint John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, 201 E Main St., Uniontown, offers Pysanky (Slavic, Eastern European and Ukrainian style egg decorating) Classes on Monday evenings (6-8pm) **February 12 through March 18**. Questions? call 724-438-1382, leave your name and phone number. All are welcome!

Thursday Morning Bible Study, *Identifying Lesser Known Prophets of the Passion*, February 22, 29 and March 7 & 14, 10/11:30 am - in person and virtual - presented by Sister Melita Marie, OSBM. Registration (\$20 per session) is due by February 19. Contact Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer by phone 724-438-7149 or by email at hpmsm@verizon.net.

Stepping Stones Bereavement Support begins a new session on **March 4** for the newly bereaved and those still struggling with their grief after an extended period of time. The program is held at Third Presbyterian Church, 425 Union St., Uniontown on Mondays 7:00 to 8:30 pm. The program uses articles, DVDs and conversation. For questions/registration, call Lillian at 724-439-1683.

The Practice of Stewardship

In today's second reading, Saint Paul urges the Corinthians to "do all for the glory of God." If we follow that advice in everything we do, we cannot help but be good stewards! See 1 Corinthians 10:31

Thank you for the following donations to Saint Francis of Assisi Parish:

in memory of **Irene (Martin) Keener** by her family and friends

In memory of **Fr. Alvin Cabungcal** and **Fr. Peter Peretti** by Rosemary Reagan

Stewardship of Treasure

February 4: \$6,339; monthly \$1,160; loose \$554; online \$282; total \$8,335

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MASS SCHEDULE ©LPI

Saturday, February 10 -- Vigil: 6th Ordinary Sunday

4:00 pm-F *Joan Cech (Jim & Lance Newman)*
 6:00 pm-M *Mary Homa (Sharon & Mark Lovett)*

Sunday, February 11 -- 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00 am-M *Mary Michalik (Daughter, Janet)*
 9:30 am-F *Pro Populo*
 11:30 am-M *Teofilio Pates (Rick/Nancy Zatlokovicz)*

Monday, February 12 -- Weekday

8:00 am-M *Deceased of McNarsky Families (R/N Zatlokovicz)*

Tuesday, February 13 -- Weekday

8:00 am-F *Andrea Shimek (John & JoAnn Pecsco)*

Wednesday, February 14 -- ASH WEDNESDAY

12:00 pm-F *Pro Populo*
 6:00 pm-M *Maxine & Thomas Allison (D/V Galluzzo)*

Thursday, February 15 - Thursday after Ash Wednesday

8:00 am-F *Bridget M. Berisko (Sons)*

Friday, February 16 -- Friday after Ash Wednesday

8:00 am-M *William & Theresa Hoist (J/P Fedor)*
 11:00 am-F *Adoration*
 12:00 pm-F *Stations of the Cross*

Saturday, February 17 -- Vigil: 1st Sunday of Lent

3-3:30 pm-F *Confessions*
 4:00 pm-F *Mike & Ann Bernot (Family)*
 5:00-5:30 pm-M *Confessions*
 6:00 pm-M *Elaine Kovak (SFOA Music Ministry)*

Sunday, February 18 -- 1st Sunday of Lent

8:00 am-M *Victor Salek Jr. (Anna Salek/Rose Lacey)*
 9:30 am-F *Pro Populo*
 11:30 am-M *Donald & Ellen Duffy (Oppman Family)*

Mass Readings for the Week Ahead

Monday: Jas 1:1-11; Mk 8:11-13
 Tuesday: Jas 1:12-18; Mk 8:14-21
 Wednesday: Jl 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-18
 Thursday: Dt 30:15-20; Lk 9:22-25
 Friday: Is 58:1-9a; Mt 9:14-15
 Saturday: Is 58:9-14; Lk 5:27-32
 Next Sunday: Gn 9:8-15; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15

Question of the Week: Who can I reach out to in order to help make my family/community/world whole? How can I go about doing so?



Adoration and Stations of the Cross
Friday, February 16, in Footedale
 Adoration 11:00 am
 Stations of the Cross 12:00 pm



As we approach Ash Wednesday and the season of repentance and penitence, we hear how Jesus responded to a man who was considered unclean, both physically and spiritually. Over the following forty days, we will approach our Lord as sinners, in need of forgiveness, in need of being “made clean.”

May Jesus’ response to the leper in today’s Gospel assure us of his love and mercy for us despite our failings, despite our sinfulness.

♥ **Today is World Marriage Day**, a day that honors husband and wife as head of the family, the basic unit of society and salutes the beauty of their faithfulness, sacrifice and joy in daily married life. The theme for WMD is “*Love One Another*” - the commandment given to us by Jesus in John:14. It speaks to us in a simple but challenging way of how our Father wishes us to live. Loving one another is a daily decision - simple, but challenging.



Memorial Candles burn this week in loving memory of or for the special intention of:

† **Sanctuary** - *Fr. Peter Peretti*
 by the Parish Family of Saint Francis of Assisi

† **Blessed Mother** - *Betty Stoffa*
 requested by her family

Dolores Franczyk
 requested by her family

† **Saint Joseph** - *Robert J. Carpeal Jr.*
 requested by his parents
 Judy & Robert Carpeal and family

† **Saint Anthony** - *Irene O'Brien*
 requested by Pete Rohol

† **Sacred Heart** - *Richard Hanula*
 requested by Pete Rohol

Bridget M. Berisko
 requested by son, Philip



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