

# Parish News...

Mask Update: From the Syracuse Dioceses: In keeping with the expiration of the mask mandate in most public places in New York State, the Diocese of Syracuse will no longer mandate that masks be worn in diocesan churches and offices, effective February 10. The Diocese of Syracuse will continue to follow the mask requirements for schools. Although not mandated, the faithful are more than welcome to wear masks out of concern for the health and safety of others. It is necessary that all non-vaccinated individuals continue to wear a mask in offices and churches.



Ash Wednesday is fast approaching -March 3<sup>rd</sup> and is the beginning of the Lenten Season for our Church. It is an observance which represents the first day of Lent and the starting of approximately 6 weeks of fasting and penance. Per the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) 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 Latin 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 Latin Catholic Church from age 14 onwards

As like last year, I will be sharing ways families can prepare for the Season of Lent.

Adult Catechism: Adult Catechism continues on the first Sunday of every month @ 10AM. Classes will be held in the Cow Palace for all interested in learning to love & grow in faith. A different topic will be discussed each month related to the teaching of the Catechism.

Year-end Reminder: If a family requires a statement of contributions for 2021, please contact the Parish Office @315 316 0506 during normal hours Monday – Thursday 9am-3pm. End of year statements are only prepared for those parishioners who request them.

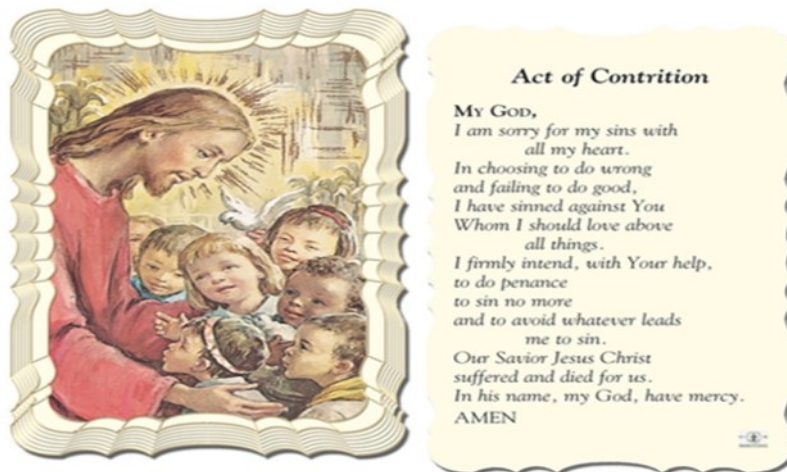


# Faith Formation

**School Break:** Due to the February School break, there will be no class on February 20<sup>th</sup>

**First Reconciliation & First Communion Families:** These Sacraments are fast approaching. It is extremely important the children not miss any further classes unless due to illness. I will be sending home this week a list of important dates regarding banners and due dates, Blessing Cup and practices. Also, if your child was not baptized at Sacred Heart/St Mary's and you have not provided the Parish with a copy of the Baptismal Certificate, please provide to me as soon as possible.

**First Reconciliation:** Has been scheduled March 5<sup>th</sup> at 11AM. Last week the children were sent home with the Act of Contrition to learn. Please practice with your children. Following the Sacrament there will be reception for the families sponsored by the CCM.



**CONFIRMATION STUDENTS 10<sup>th</sup> Grade:** It is important that all students attend classes in order to make Confirmation on May 19<sup>th</sup>. The attendance has been reviewed and number of students have missed a number of classes. Students will be allowed 2 absences from class unless due to illness. If more than 2 more missed, the student may not be able to make Confirmation.

Confirmation Retreat is March 19<sup>th</sup> @ St. Paul's Church Whitesboro. Please mark your calendar to attend.

Many students still have not provided any information regarding Community Service. As a requirement for Confirmation students are required to complete at least 20 hours before Confirmation. If anyone has any questions about how to complete this requirement, please discuss it with me after class.

**Mask Wearing:** While the State of New York has lifted the mask mandate, this does not apply to schools at the present time. Parents, please remember that entering the building all are required to wear a face mask. NO exceptions. There will be extra if needed for the children if required

Lent is fast approaching. This year I am planning a Stations of the Cross for the families of the Parish. The children from all grades will be participating in announcing the Stations. The Stations of the Cross, also known as the Way of the Cross or Via Dolorosa (Sorrowful Way) is a popular Lenten devotion. Many parishes join as a group and pray the Stations of the Cross on the Fridays of Lent to call to mind the Passion of Christ, that is, the journey Jesus took from his condemnation to his death. I will be reaching out to Father Arthur or Deacon Kirk to help lead the children with the Stations of the Cross.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday @ 3:15pm prior to Mass and the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month after the 12:10 Mass**

## **Mass Schedule**

**Saturday 4pm**

**Sunday 7:30 AM, 8:30AM, 10AM Polish Mass and 11am**

Let's remember that as Catholics, it is important to attend Sunday Mass. At Mass we are able to stand mystically at the foot of the cross and witness for ourselves the same self-sacrifice of Jesus, in an unbloody manner. Mass is a celebration of this sacrifice. It is the active participation of all that come together in the place of worship. While Faith Formation before the 11AM Mass, all families are welcome to this Mass. If unable to attend this Mass, please attend the Church Masses. Faith Formation Classes alone do not teach your children about their faith. It is important they see their faith in the Mass.



**While I have found these wonderful reflections on the Gospel readings, it is not meant to take the place of the Sunday Mass. Remember to attend Mass to hear Fr. Arthur or Deacon Kirk's a much better spiritual teaching of the Gospel reading**

### **Sunday Reading**

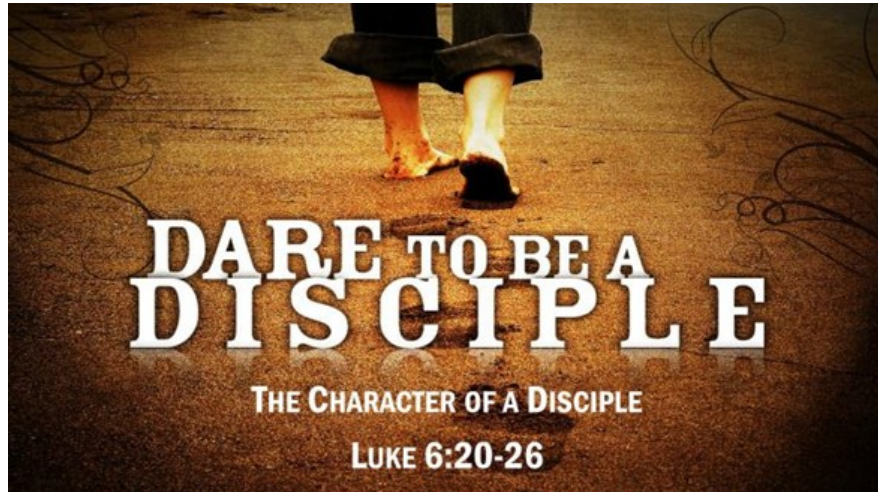
**Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time**

**First Reading: Jer 17: 5-8**

**Responsorial Psalm: Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 & 6**

**Second Reading: 1 Cor: 15-12, 16-20**

**Gospel Luke: 6:17, 20-26**



**This week's Gospel from St. Luke is known as the Sermon of the Plain. It is similar to St. Matthews "Sermon on the Mount. In St. Luke's Gospel reading Jesus shares the rules for the Kingdom of Heaven but St. Luke goes beyond the Beatitudes and shares that Jesus is telling of the matches of a series of "woes for those who turn away from God by refusing to do their part in helping those who suffer.**

This week's reflections comes form Aires Patulot

Aires Patulot is a Catholic writer, speaker, musician, and minister. Holding degrees in theology and pastoral studies, he has ministered around the world over twenty years and is currently the director of campus ministry at a Catholic school. He is the founder of Called to Rise Ministry and Fatherhood Arise Ministry and he co-hosts The Fatherhood Arise Podcast, found anywhere you listen to podcasts.

"A few years ago I watched an episode of *Hard Knocks*, where camera crews followed around an NFL football team and recorded all their practices and trainings during the offseason. A certain player kept saying the words "Bless 'em." When he was on the field opposite another player he would catch the ball and say "Bless 'em." When he passed his teammates he would give high fives and say, "Bless 'em." The player went on to say that God had given him a unique set of skills and every time he used those skills, he was blessing the world.

I laughed to myself because I wasn't sure if that was how blessings worked. For him, every expression of his own gift was a blessing to the world. I would love to see the world in this way.

Interestingly in today's gospel, Jesus is also upending our idea of being blessed. Now I am having images of Jesus running by us, catching a touchdown pass, and saying "Bless 'em" as he does a victory dance.

Those who are poor, bless 'em.

Those who are hungry, bless 'em.

Those who weep, bless 'em.

Those who are hated, bless 'em.

Now, I always thought that I was blessed if things were going my way. If my life was comfortable, I had money in my pocket, and all the lights turned green before I hit the brakes, then I knew God loved me and I was blessed. These beatitudes totally upend my expectations and invite me to evaluate blessings in a different way.

Turning our expectations upside down, Jesus shows us that our sufferings are blessings. The things that we hide from and want to avoid are actually avenues to grace. Not that we should seek these things out. In my experience I haven't had to go too far to experience a bit of inconvenience to downright soul-sucking circumstances. Jesus reminds us that our lives will be filled with the reality of difficulty. After all, we live in a post-fall, sin-infused world. Suffering will come to meet us and has most likely been a familiar companion on the journey. But even in that, we do not have to be afraid.

Our mourning is an invitation into blessing. Our persecution brings us ever closer to Jesus. We bring our whole selves, our victories, and our challenges as blessings to our brothers and sisters. We do not have to hide our weaknesses or our problems. They too are the ways we will bless the world. As we are, as God made us, as God calls us. Bless 'em."

We must always remember that Jesus came for the last, the least and the lost. He came to bring glad tidings to the poor and freedom to the oppressed. He provided hope for the hopeless and taught the people the importance of faith. Then He asked them to be servants of all if they wanted to be the greatest. In short, He wants all of followers to be like Him and to walk in His path. That is the life that is truly blessed.



**Theme:** True happiness is found in Jesus

Isn't this true for so many people today? A lot of people are chasing after happiness, but like the bubbles, happiness is always just out of reach. Or, just when we think we have it, our bubble may burst. What are some of the things that people believe will make them happy but may fall flat? (Pause for responses.)

**Money:** (Hold up money.) Many people think that money will bring them happiness, but it doesn't. Once you spend it, it is gone, and you still don't have happiness.

**Food:** (Hold up the food.) Some people seek happiness in food. They eat because they are sad or depressed and they think that food will make them feel better. It doesn't. After they eat, they are still unhappy.

**Entertainment:** (Hold up video game controller.) Many people think that doing fun things is the same thing as being happy, but it isn't. Oftentimes, people who are laughing on the outside are crying on the inside.

**Popularity:** Some people think that being popular with other people will bring them happiness. They will do anything or say anything to make other people like them, but popularity doesn't last. It is here today and gone tomorrow. There is no lasting happiness in popularity.

Jesus knew that people often look for happiness in the wrong places. He even said we might be happier if we were poor, hungry, crying, and disliked by others. Why would Jesus suggest such a thing?

When we are poor, we can trust in God to supply everything we need instead of depending on our own wealth.

When we are hungry for God and His righteousness, we realize that only He can satisfy our hunger.

When we are crying, we can trust in God to comfort us and ease our pain.

When we think we have no friends, we have a friend in Jesus. Jesus is the friend who will never leave us.

We all want to be happy, don't we? Don't spend your time chasing bubbles. Look to your Heavenly Father. He is the source of true happiness.

Dear Father, help us to remember that we can never find happiness by seeking the things this world has to offer. True happiness can only be ours by following Jesus. Amen.

## Weekly Prayer

**This Monday is Valentine's days' so I focused on finding a prayer for Valentine's Day. Brief history was that this day is based upon the story of St. Valentine.** Saint Valentine is the patron saint of love. Believers say God worked through his life to perform miracles and teach people how to recognize and experience true love.

**I love this prayer. It is what we teach the children about loving God with their whole heart mind and soul**





### **COVID Update:**

1) From Danielle E. Cummings, Office of Chancellor:

In keeping with the expiration of the mask mandate in most public places in New York State, the Diocese of Syracuse will no longer mandate that masks be worn in diocesan churches and offices, effective February 10. The Diocese of Syracuse will continue to follow the mask requirements for schools. Although not mandated, the faithful are more than welcome to wear masks out of concern for the health and safety of others. It is necessary that all non-vaccinated individuals continue to wear a mask in offices and churches.

From the Office of Formation for Ministry:

### ***Bulletin Announcement:***

***Formation for Ministry Online Information Session, February 16, 2022, 6:30 pm.*** Do you serve as a lay minister in your parish? Is God calling you to learn more about your faith? Come and see how Formation for Ministry can help you grow in faith and knowledge to serve the Lord. Register at [formationforministrysy.org](http://formationforministrysy.org) or call 315-470-1491.

Have a Blessed Week.

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