



CONTACT

605.787.5168 - OLBH.ORG
olbh@olbh.org
12365 Sturgis Road
Piedmont, SD 57769
Office Open M-F
8:30-2:30 PM

LITURGY & PRAYER

Sunday Liturgy:

Saturday, 5 PM

Sunday, 8 & 11 AM

Daily Liturgy:

Tuesday-Friday, 8 AM

Eucharistic Adoration:

Wednesday, 8:30-7:30 PM

Reconciliation:

Wednesday, 5:30-6:30 PM

Saturday, 3:30-4:30 PM

First Fridays, 8:30-9:30 AM

First Friday Devotion:

Following Daily Mass on
First Fridays

CLERGY

Pastor:

Fr. Andrzej Wyrostek

awyrostek@diorc.org

Deacons:

Walt Wilson, Retired

John Osnes josnes@diorc.org

Greg Sass gsass@diorc.org

STAFF

Parish Administrative Assistant & SEC

Katie Harwood

katie.harwood@olbh.org

Coordinator of PreK-12 Faith Formation

Rhonda Gehlsen

rhonda.gehlsen@olbh.org

Coordinator of Adult Faith Formation & Evangelization

Amy Haakenson

amy.haakenson@olbh.org

Director of Liturgy & Music

Lorraine Rieth-Ptacek

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Maintenance Coordinator

Todd Phillipe

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Bookkeeper

Lorinda Collings

lorinda.collings@olbh.org

The Saturday Vigil Mass at 5 PM is
livestreamed on the Our Lady of
the Black Hills Facebook page and
then posted on olbh.org.

**"For our sake he made him to be sin who did
not know sin, so that we might become the
righteousness of God in him."**

(2 Cor 5:21)

Jubilant from John

Where is Jesus in the Parable of the Prodigal Son? We can easily identify our Heavenly Father as the benevolent father who generously gives his inheritance to his undeserving son and as the merciful father who runs to welcome the prodigal home after he has wasted it. We can readily identify with either or both of the two sons, one of whom recognizes that he has sinned and strayed from his father's care and the other who cannot see his own sin because of his self-righteous arrogance. But where is Jesus in the parable?

The Parable of the Prodigal Son is so compelling that it is easy to forget who is telling the tale—and more importantly, why he does. So, rewind to the first verse of this Sunday's Gospel reading: "Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, 'This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.'" (Lk 15:1). When we put the parable in its context, we discover that the Pharisees and scribes are the self-righteous, older son—and that Jesus, who keeps company with sinners, identifies with the fallen nature of the prodigal. As St. Paul states, "For our sake, [God] made him to be sin who did not know sin..." Why? "... so that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor 5:21). In other words, so that we, the prodigal sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, can be reconciled to the Father and become saints through life in Christ.

Our "homework assignment" for the past week was to read the introduction to Part Three of the *Catechism* that is entitled "Life in Christ." The introductory section begins with a quote from St. Leo the Great: "Christians, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God's own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning" (CCC 1691). Like the prodigal son, we have been restored to the nature and nobility of children of our Heavenly Father and made heirs to his Kingdom through his prodigious mercy. St. Leo's words harken back to those of St. Paul in this Sunday's second reading: "Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. And all of this is from God" (2 Cor 5:17-18).

However, our status as the new creation is not an assured possession. Our life in Christ is something that must be constantly worked at so that we do not return to our "former base condition." Renewing our status and dignity as beloved children of God is the work that St. Paul calls the "ministry of reconciliation." Just as Jesus drew sinners near and communed with them during his earthly ministry, so his Mystical Body continues to mercifully call us to repentance and reconciliation through the ministry of the Church. This restorative ministry will be exercised in a Communal Penance Service here at OLBH on Monday evening, March 28, at 6:00-7:30PM. Our Heavenly Father is always watching and waiting for his beloved but prodigal children to come home. As you continue your Lenten journey, I encourage you to take advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation to experience our Father's merciful love.

Keep the Faith!

Deacon John

Form Your Conscience – New Paragraphs
I invite you this week to work on the Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraphs 1716-1748. Please read, reflect, and pray with these paragraphs. We will continue toward forming the conscience next week.

-Fr. Andrzej

Confessions, Stations of the Cross, Fish Fry



Come Fridays during Lent for Confessions 5-6 PM, Stations of the Cross 6-6:30 PM, Knights of Columbus Fish Fry 6:30 PM. The

Knights will have to-go options and eat in options.



RECONCILIATION
 Come and be forgiven.

Communal Penance Liturgy
 Monday, March 28th,
 6-7:30PM

OUR LADY OF THE BLACK HILLS CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
 12365 STURGIS ROAD, PIEDMONT | OLBH.ORG

Communal Lenten Penance Liturgies:

Rapid City, Blessed Sacrament, March 24, 4-7 p.m.

Lead, St. Patrick, March 27 — 3:30 p.m.

PIEDMONT, OUR LADY OF THE BLACK HILLS, MARCH 28 - 6-7:30 PM

Rapid City, St. Therese, March 31, 6-8 p.m.

Sturgis, St. Francis, March 20 — 3 p.m.

Graduates

We are planning a graduation Mass. If you have a graduating senior this year, please contact Rhonda in the office so we can include you and your student in the festivities. Rhonda can be reached at rhonda.gehlisen@olbh.org or at 605-787-5168.

Theology on Tap

The next Theology on Tap gathering will be on Monday, **April 4th**, from 7:15-9:15 PM at the OLBH Rectory. Brendan Cleary will present on **An Exploration of Meaning: a discussion of the foundations of happiness, meaning, and fulfillment.** All in their 20s and 30s are welcome to attend. Snacks are provided, byob. Call Amy in the office with questions at 605-787-5168.

Prayers Needed

Please pray for our Confirmation and First Communion students as they prepare to receive their sacraments.

Chrism Mass
 A CELEBRATION OF THE BLESSING OF HOLY OILS
 AND THE RENEWAL OF PRIESTLY PROMISES

**LIVE STREAMING BEGINS AT
 3:30 P.M., APRIL 11**

WWW.RAPIDCITYDIOCESE.ORG/LIVE
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Divine Mercy Novena

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy will be prayed each day at 3 PM from Good Friday, **March 15th**, until Divine Mercy Sunday, March 24th. Please pray with us here in the Church at Our Lady of the Black Hills. The Chaplet will be prayed at 6 PM on Easter Sunday. All are welcome. The Chaplet will be led by Wes and Karen Mendenhall.

ST. THOMAS MORE MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLS - ST. ELIZABETH SETON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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 NOW INTERVIEWING FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR
 call Molly at 605-348-1477 or visit rccss.org - district - employment opportunities



Thank you for your donation.

Please prayerfully consider automatic contributions via electronic withdrawal, check service, or at www.olbh.org/donate. Please prayerfully consider including the Western South Dakota Catholic Foundation and Our Lady of the Black Hills in your estate planning.

"All good giving and every perfect gift is from above" (Jas 1:17)			
March 19-20, 2022			
	Automatic	Basket	Total
Adopt a Seminarian	54	-	54
Sunday Collection	2,759	5,386	8,145
Rectory	42	-	-
St. Vincent de Paul	-	-	-
Building Fund	-	1,050	-
Priest Retirement	-	270	-
Catholic Relief	-	-	330
Total Contribution	2,855	6,706	9,731.12

Weekly Schedule

Monday, March 28

7:30 AM Early Bird Bible Study

No Mass

6-7:30 PM Lenten Penance Liturgy

Tuesday, March 29

8 AM Mass for the repose of Father William McKenney, S.J.

Wednesday, March 30

8 AM Mass for Aubrie Hohm

8:30-7:30 PM Adoration

9-12 Noon Food Pantry Open

5:30-6:30 PM Confessions

6:15-7:30 PM Faith Formation

Thursday, March 31

8 AM Mass for Marjorie Waits

9 AM "Just Men" Bible Study

9 AM Women's Bible Study

Friday, April 1

8:30 AM Mass at St. Elizabeth Seton School

for the repose of Betty Soebbing

5-6 PM Confessions

6 PM Stations of the Cross followed by the Knights of Columbus Fish Fry

Saturday, April 2

Saint Francis of Paola, Hermit

9-12 Noon Food Pantry Open

3:30-4:30 Confessions

5 PM Mass for the community of OLBH and for our Sister Parishes

Sunday, April 3

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

8 AM Mass for Grace Weaver

9:30 AM RCIA Class

9:30-10:45 AM Faith Formation

11 AM Mass for the repose of Randy Blauvelt

Intentions of the Holy Father for March:

Pope's Intention: For a Christian response to bioethical challenges. We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

Prayer Chain Requests

To request an intention for the prayer chain, contact Sue at 605-431-0310 or at ssacolgan@gmail.com.

Eucharistic Adoration

To sign up to Adore or to fill in as a substitute, please contact Dave Allardyce at 605-791-2303.

Prayers for the Deployed Member of our Parish

Chris Hunt • Quenten Johnson

Prayers for the Deceased of our Parish

Randy Blauvelt (brother of Brad)

Prayers for Life and Health Concerns

These individuals are in special need of your prayers. To have someone placed on the prayer list, contact Katie in the office.

Edwin and Omel Weaver (parents of Bob Weaver)

Blanche Rieth | Jean Schacher | Bernard Wiehl

Sid and Mary Ann Pulaski | Marjorie Lee

Lowell Amiotte | Randy Oberle | Tracy Rudnick

Joan Wrobel (aunt of Rachael Held) | **Ana Maria Killion**

Vickie Crowley | Cap Holzer | Linda Schacher

Doug Wermers | George Bradstream

Marek Kopec | Brett Whealy | Jennifer Kinney

Robert Forest (father of Cathy Long) | **Joyce Kinney**

Tony Corbine | Wayne Gamroth | Lillian Halverson

Tim Curns | Dean Antonsen | Billy Hudson

Christy Marie (sister of Linda Schacher)

Alicia Castor (niece of Kathleen and Lowell Amiotte)

Troye Rhodes (great nephew of Wade)

John Mangan (brother-in-law of Diane Gittings)

Jim & Vonnie O'Dea (parents of Holly Phillips)

Carol Michaelson (mother of Linda Schacher)

Joyce DePaulo | John Mizenko Sr. (father of Jeff)

Norbert Liebig | The Nalley Family | Jean Scheope

Ruth O'Neil (mother of Lisa Katzenstein)

Jasper Wermers (grandson of Peggy and Doug)

Tim Keller (son-in-law of Cap and Arlene Holzer)

Craig Lindemann (Uncle of Maggie Whiteside)

Derek Dowdy (grandson of the Gittings)

Kit Soyland | Kevin & Julie Spors | Barb Coyle

Frank Weyrich (brother-in-law of Marcia Senn)

Crescencia Yanez (aunt of Brenda Mizenko)

† Necrology †

To remember in prayer for the repose of their souls. Those whose deaths are recorded in the parish; and the bishops, priests, and deacons that served the Diocese of Rapid City.

March 29	Delmar Walz (1994)
March 30	Rev. Florian Francis (Frank) Kruswicki (1968)
	Bernard Leo Daschel (2003)
March 31	Michelle A. Pittillo (1999)
	Susan I. Forsstrom (2021)
April 2	Rev. Edward S. Calahan (1944)
	Rev. D. Craig Cower (2017)
	Vera M. Eberlein (1987)

Welcome Visitors!

We hope you have enjoyed sharing in the celebration of the Mass with us. Whether you are new to the area or have lived here for years, coming to visit, or returning after a long break, welcome to our parish family. Please come again! We have opportunities for all ages and stages of faith. Please pick up a welcome packet from the counter in the gathering space. If you are passing through, we hope you will call our parish your "home away from home" and visit again soon!

Ministry Schedule

Mass Times	Saturday 4/2 5 PM	Sunday 4/3 8 AM	Sunday 4/3 11 AM
Presider	Fr. Andrzej	Fr. Andrzej	Fr. Andrzej
Altar Server	Dustin Hoiten - Lead Dominic Hoiten	Freddy Weishaar - Lead Emmett Edwards Leo Edwards	Mya Lyon - Lead Anyu Juelfs Dakota Lyon
Eucharistic Minister - Body	Deacon John Osnes	Deacon John Osnes	Deacon John Osnes
Hospitality	Alan and Marie Rundell	Gary & Sandy Langfeldt	Aaron Denekamp Cathleen Denekamp
Lector	Deacon Walt Wilson - 1st Reader James Johns - 2nd Reader	LaChel McCollar - 1st Reader Jeremy Thompson - 2nd Reader	Craig Kelso - 1st Reader Laura Kelso - 2nd Reader
Sacristan	Joe Schacher	Mike Coyle Barb Coyle	Ermma and Bruce Lehman

Daily Readings

Monday: Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a and 13b; Jn 4:43-54

Tuesday: Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Mt Jn 5:1-16

Wednesday: Is 49:8-15; Ps 145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18; Jn 5:17-30

Thursday: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-20, 21-22, 23; Jn 5:31-47

Friday: Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Ps 34:17-18, 19-20, 21 and 23; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Saturday: Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12; Jn 7:40-53

Sunday: Is 43:16-21; Ps 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6; Phil 3:8-14; Jn 8:1-11

The weekly readings are found anytime online on the USCCB website or by clicking: [Weekly Readings](#)

Birthright is having a Baby Jesus Shower

We uphold that any pregnant girl or woman has the right to whatever help she may need to carry her child to term and to foster respect for human life at all stages of development.

Needs: Baby clothes (newborn-6months) | preemie diapers | blankets | new and gently used maternity wear

Place the items you would like to donate in the box in the Narthex. To learn more about

Birthright visit <https://birthright.org/rapidcity/> or call 605-348-1732.

Theology on Tap

We will meet in just under 2 weeks on Monday, April 4th, from 7:15-9:15 PM. Brendan Cleary will be presenting on An Exploration of Meaning. He will discuss the foundations of happiness, meaning, and fulfillment. Brendan is a physician, military officer, husband, father, and writer. We will meet at the OLBH Rectory, 8242 Stagestop Road, it the first house on your right and has a large horseshoe shaped driveway. All in their 20s and 30s are welcome to join us! No RSVP is necessary. You are welcome to bring your own beverage, snacks are provided. Call Amy with questions at 605-787-5168.

40 Days for Life prayer services in Rapid City

Blessed Sacrament Church, prayer services will be led by various clergy every Saturday morning April 2 - 9. Meet by the Memorial to the Unborn near the west parking lot. Schedule: 7:50 a.m. silent prayer; 8 a.m. clergy will lead corporate prayer for the unborn, pregnant mothers, those who work with abortions, the nation, leaders, and to honor the Lord's will; 8:15 a.m. silent prayer; service concludes at 8:20 a.m. Sponsored by Rapid City Right to Life.


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Elementary Classroom Teacher 6 - 12 Special Education Teacher

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**Rapid City Area Retreat
April 22-24, 2022**

For caring confidential information
contact Carol
605.374.5639 | ckling@sdplains
www.rachelsvineyard.org | 1.877.HOPE.4.ME



Livestream will be available on our website and simultaneously streamed on the diocesan Facebook page. Visit: rapidcitydiocese.org/live or facebook.com/DioceseofRapidCity

8 am, Apr 10 - Palm Sunday
3:30 pm, Apr 11 - Chrism Mass
7 pm, Apr 14 - Holy Thursday
3 pm, Apr 15 - Good Friday
8:30 pm, Apr 16 - Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday, April 17th

Mass will air at the following times on the following stations: KNBN NBC at 6-7am and 4-5pm | ConnectCenter1 | KNBN.2 Rapid City at 7-8am and 10-11am | ConnectCenter1 KWSD Sioux Falls at 6-7am and 10-11am CT

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- 2 - Strawberries and Cream Scones
- 1 - 8 oz Container of Vanilla Glaze

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Holy Week and Easter Livestream Schedule



What, really, do the liturgies of the triduum celebrate? Most all of us believe we know the answer. We assume that Thursday commemorates the day Jesus instituted the eucharist; Friday commemorates the day he was executed on the cross; and the vigil commemorates his emergence from the tomb. We assume, further, that the liturgies of these days are dramatic “reenactments” of events – by turns touching, tragic, and triumphant – which happened during Jesus’ last days and culminated in his victory over death. We assume, in other words, that the paschal triduum is simply springtime’s parallel to winter’s Christmas. As it gathers on these days, the liturgical assembly is often thought to be engaged in acts of historical “reconstruction” that recreate scenes in the “upper room,” on Calvary, and at the tomb. People are encouraged to imagine they are at the tomb. People are encouraged to imagine they are “actually present” at these events – comforting Jesus during his fearful watch in Gethsemane, walking with him along the *via Crucis*, and witnessing his miraculous “return to life” on Easter morning. This view may frequently be reinforced by popular hymns that focus on the “historical facts” of the celebration.

But is “history” the central focus of celebration during the Triduum? Certainly, the early Christian creeds anchored belief in the historical, this-worldly circumstances that accompanied Jesus’ suffering and crucifixion “under Pontius Pilate.” Jesus’ life, career, and death were in other words attached to a specific time in a specific place. His proclamation of God’s arrival in the present moment (God’s “reign”), his bold challenge to understand God in and as one’s neighbor, his rejection of “religion” as a means of social or political control – all this took place not in some cosmic cloud of unknowing but in a remote province of the later Roman Empire at a time of sociopolitical transition.

Precisely because these faith-anchoring events are historical, however, they cannot be repeated or “reenacted.” That is why the church’s long tradition insists that what happened once in history passes over into the mystery of the assembly’s liturgical/sacramental celebrations. What the paschal triduum actually celebrates is mystery, not history; anamnesis, not mimesis. The liturgies of these days do not “take us back” to the upper room or the path to Cavalry. Their ultimate purpose is not to retrace or relive the last hours of Jesus’ life – nor to catch sight of him emerging from the tomb at Easter’s dawning. They celebrate not what once happened to Jesus but what is now happening among us as a people called to conversion, gathered in faith, and gifted with the Spirit of holiness. They celebrate God’s taking possession of our hearts at their deepest core, recreating us as a new human community broken like bread for the world’s life – a community rich in compassion, steadfast in hope, and fearless in the search for justice and peace.

*Act of Consecration
to the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Basilica of Saint Peter
25 March 2022*

O Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, in this time of trial we turn to you. As our Mother, you love us and know us: no concern of our hearts is hidden from you. Mother of mercy, how often we have experienced your watchful care and your peaceful presence! You never cease to guide us to Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Yet we have strayed from that path of peace. We have forgotten the lesson learned from the tragedies of the last century, the sacrifice of the millions who fell in two world wars. We have disregarded the commitments we made as a community of nations. We have betrayed peoples' dreams of peace and the hopes of the young. We grew sick with greed, we thought only of our own nations and their interests, we grew indifferent and caught up in our selfish needs and concerns. We chose to ignore God, to be satisfied with our illusions, to grow arrogant and aggressive, to suppress innocent lives and to stockpile weapons. We stopped being our neighbour's keepers and stewards of our common home. We have ravaged the garden of the earth with war and by our sins we have broken the heart of our heavenly Father, who desires us to be brothers and sisters. We grew indifferent to everyone and everything except ourselves. Now with shame we cry out: Forgive us, Lord!

Holy Mother, amid the misery of our sinfulness, amid our struggles and weaknesses, amid the mystery of iniquity that is evil and war, you remind us that God never abandons us, but continues to look upon us with love, ever ready to forgive us and raise us up to new life. He has given you to us and made your Immaculate Heart a refuge for the Church and for all humanity. By God's gracious will, you are ever with us; even in the most troubled moments of our history, you are there to guide us with tender love.

We now turn to you and knock at the door of your heart. We are your beloved children. In every age you make yourself known to us, calling us to conversion. At this dark hour, help us and grant us your comfort. Say to us once more: "Am I not here, I who am your Mother?" You are able to untie the knots of our hearts and of our times. In you we place our trust. We are confident that, especially in moments of trial, you will not be deaf to our supplication and will come to our aid.

That is what you did at Cana in Galilee, when you interceded with Jesus and he worked the first of his signs. To preserve the joy of the wedding feast, you said to him: "They have no wine" (Jn 2:3). Now, O Mother, repeat those words and that prayer, for in our own day we have run out of the wine of hope, joy has fled, fraternity has faded. We have forgotten our humanity and squandered the gift of peace. We opened our hearts to violence and destructiveness. How greatly we need your maternal help!

Therefore, O Mother, hear our prayer.

Star of the Sea, do not let us be shipwrecked in the tempest of war.

Ark of the New Covenant, inspire projects and paths of reconciliation.

Queen of Heaven, restore God's peace to the world.

Eliminate hatred and the thirst for revenge, and teach us forgiveness.

Free us from war, protect our world from the menace of nuclear weapons.

Queen of the Rosary, make us realize our need to pray and to love.

Queen of the Human Family, show people the path of fraternity.
Queen of Peace, obtain peace for our world.

O Mother, may your sorrowful plea stir our hardened hearts. May the tears you shed for us make this valley parched by our hatred blossom anew. Amid the thunder of weapons, may your prayer turn our thoughts to peace. May your maternal touch soothe those who suffer and flee from the rain of bombs. May your motherly embrace comfort those forced to leave their homes and their native land. May your Sorrowful Heart move us to compassion and inspire us to open our doors and to care for our brothers and sisters who are injured and cast aside.

Holy Mother of God, as you stood beneath the cross, Jesus, seeing the disciple at your side, said: "Behold your son" (Jn 19:26). In this way he entrusted each of us to you. To the disciple, and to each of us, he said: "Behold, your Mother" (v. 27). Mother Mary, we now desire to welcome you into our lives and our history. At this hour, a weary and distraught humanity stands with you beneath the cross, needing to entrust itself to you and, through you, to consecrate itself to Christ. The people of Ukraine and Russia, who venerate you with great love, now turn to you, even as your heart beats with compassion for them and for all those peoples decimated by war, hunger, injustice and poverty.

Therefore, Mother of God and our Mother, to your Immaculate Heart we solemnly entrust and consecrate ourselves, the Church and all humanity, especially Russia and Ukraine. Accept this act that we carry out with confidence and love. Grant that war may end and peace spread throughout the world. The "Fiat" that arose from your heart opened the doors of history to the Prince of Peace. We trust that, through your heart, peace will dawn once more. To you we consecrate the future of the whole human family, the needs and expectations of every people, the anxieties and hopes of the world.

Through your intercession, may God's mercy be poured out on the earth and the gentle rhythm of peace return to mark our days. Our Lady of the "Fiat", on whom the Holy Spirit descended, restore among us the harmony that comes from God. May you, our "living fountain of hope", water the dryness of our hearts. In your womb Jesus took flesh; help us to foster the growth of communion. You once trod the streets of our world; lead us now on the paths of peace. Amen.

"At this hour, a weary and distraught humanity stands with you beneath the cross, needing to entrust itself to you and, through you, to consecrate itself to Christ."

March 27, 2022

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Jos 5:9a, 10-12 | 2 Cor 5:17-21 | Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Today we celebrate Laetare (which means “rejoice”) Sunday. As we mark the midpoint of Lent, we allow ourselves to look ahead with joyful anticipation of Jesus’ resurrection, even as we continue our practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Amidst these penitential practices of Lent, this day offers a reminder that we have reason for hope. The parable of the prodigal son shows us what hope looks like. When the father caught sight of his wayward son, he did not see the young man who made bad choices, wasted his inheritance, and disobeyed him. He looked at him with eyes of unconditional love, rejoicing that “he was lost and has been found.” That’s how Jesus viewed the sinners and tax collectors, and how the Father views us, his wayward sons and daughters, when we return to him in contrition and love. So as we continue our Lenten practices, let’s take time to give thanks for the goodness and mercy of God today, knowing that the Lord awaits us with open arms when we acknowledge our sinfulness and rely upon him for all that is good.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Is it me, or are some of the parables hard to figure out? The parable of the prodigal son is one we’ve heard over and over again, and resonates across ages and generations. Some of us may relate to the prodigal son and others to the dutiful brother. The parents and grandparents among us may have been in the father’s shoes at some point. What better time than Lent to reflect on what the story means to us at this point in our lives: Are we awaiting the return of a disaffected loved one? Are we in need of repenting for our own actions? The answer will be different for each of us, but we can rejoice in the fact that we are loved unconditionally by God wherever we are on our Lenten and life journeys. Our challenge is to open our hearts to that love; as we do so, we can’t help but be transformed and in turn share that love with others through friendship, service, and generosity. As St. Paul writes, “Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: The old things have passed away.”

ACT On Laetare Sunday, priests may wear rose-colored vestments as a symbol of joy. Carry this sense of joy into your day by placing roses at the table, bringing flowers to a friend, or calling someone with whom you’ve fallen out of touch.

**LAETARE
SUNDAY**

REJOICE!

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