

## Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Parish

411 Pioneer Seneca KS 66538

Rev. Arul Carasala, Pastor

[www.saintspeterandpaul-seneca.com](http://www.saintspeterandpaul-seneca.com)

Email: [sppchurch@carsoncomm.com](mailto:sppchurch@carsoncomm.com)

Parish Office: 785-336-2128 Fax: 785-336-2307 Rectory: 785-336-2208

Email: [sppsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:sppsecretary@gmail.com)

Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic School 409 Elk Seneca KS 66538

Mr. Todd Leonard, Principal - Email: [tleonard@spps.school.com](mailto:tleonard@spps.school.com)

Office: 785-336-2727 Fax: 785-336-3817

Director of Religious Education Mrs. Shannon Holthaus

Email: [sppchurchccd@gmail.com](mailto:sppchurchccd@gmail.com) 785-294-1328

Baptisms: By appointment

Reconciliation: Saturday 2:30-3:30 PM or by appointment

Weddings: Six months advance notice

### Mass Schedule:

Weekday Mass: Tues. 6:00 PM, Wed. & Fri.: 8:00 AM, Thurs. 7:00 AM

Saturday: 7:30 AM; Saturday Vigil: 4:00 PM

Sunday: 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM

## February 28, 2016

*Lent 2016 - Be merciful, as your Father is merciful.*



At the request of Archbishop Naumann, our Sts. Peter & Paul Church has been chosen to serve as the regional host church for the observance of "24 HOURS FOR THE LORD".

This is part of the observance of the Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy. We will have Solemn Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during these 24 hours of Adoration. All Adoration will be in Church during this time and not in the Chapel. Area parishes are involved and an area priest will be available for all these 24 hours for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please make it a point to take part in some portion of the "24 HOURS". The present schedule is as follows:

### "Twenty Four Hours for the Lord"

Friday March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2 pm to Saturday March 5<sup>th</sup> 2 pm

2:00 PM Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>: Stations of the Cross, Benediction, and Exposition of the Holy Eucharist.

7:00 PM Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>: Chaplet of Divine Mercy sung by our Parish vocalists.

7:30 AM Sat, March 5<sup>th</sup>: Mass at Sts. Peter & Paul.

2:00 PM Sat, March 5<sup>th</sup>: Closing.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There will be confessions available at all times during the "24 Hours for the Lord". There will NOT be Confessions from 2:30 - 3:30 Saturday afternoon.

In Memoriam - The Rite of Christian Burial was celebrated at Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church on Friday, February 26, 2016 for Margie Shiek. Let us remember her and her loved ones in our prayers.

## 3rd Sunday of Lent

### PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

SPPS is taking pre-registrations for the following 2016-2017 Preschool classes:

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 4-5 year old AM & PM sessions

Tuesday/Thursday 3-4 year old AM & PM sessions.

For more information or to register, please call the school office at 336-2727.

Scholarships are available.

*Sts Peter & Paul is committed to making Catholic Education available and affordable to all families.*

The "Scrutinies" begin at 9:00 AM Mass this Sunday for our new Candidate Anna Kohake, and Catechumens Thomas Scott, and John McGehee. The Scrutinies, which are a period of Spiritual preparation & interior reflection include the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent. If you would like to know more about "Scrutinies", please read the explanatory insert in today's Bulletin.



The Fifth Grade Class Pancake Breakfast is coming up soon! Where: SPPS Cafeteria.

When: Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 on. Why: To raise money for the Nemaha County Food Bank. Free Will Donation. Come and support their cause.

The SPPS PTO would like to extend their warmest gratitude to all the participants in this year's Trivia Night! Your fun-loving spirit and overwhelming generosity made the night truly one to remember. The evening profited \$11,286.00 for Sts. Peter & Paul School technology projects and new text books. We are extremely thankful in every way. May God bless you! The Trivia Committee - Jill Hammes & Katie Nordhus





## Masses for Feb 29 to Mar 6th 3rd Sunday of Lent

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Feb 29 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of Lent</b> 7:00 AM – Communion Service
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Mar 1 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of Lent</b> 6:00 PM – L/D Walt & Rita Burdick Family
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Mar 2 – 3rd Wednesday of Lent</b> 8:00 AM – Lillis Haverkamp (Anniv) 9:30 AM – Crestview – John Kuckelman
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Mar 3 – St Katharine Drexel</b> 7:00 AM – Bobbie Osterhaus (Anniv) & L/D Members of K of C
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Mar 4 – St Casimir</b> 8:00 AM –Members of Spiritual Society
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Mar 5 – 3rd Saturday of Lent</b> 7:30 AM – L/D Clarence & Eileen Olberding Family 4:00 PM – Jason Nolte
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Mar 6 – 4th Sunday of Lent</b> 7:00 AM - For our Parish 9:00 AM – Andrew Kohake 11:00 AM – Charles Gress (Anniv)



**Weekday Servers**      **Tues 6 PM, Thurs 7 AM, Sat 7:30 AM - Jackson & Leo Holthaus**  
                                  **Wed 8 AM & Fri 8 AM – SPPS Students**

<u><b>Sat 4:00 PM</b></u>	<u><b>Sun 7:00 AM</b></u>	<u><b>9:00 AM</b></u>	<u><b>11AM</b></u>
Allison Schmelzle	Sydney Schmelzle	Josh Hammes	Gavin Duryea
Shayla Hammes	Ben Feldkamp	Mathew Hammes	Taegan Duryea
Damon Koch	Jacob Hermes	Julie Rottinghaus	Lacie Young
Elliott Crabtree	Dalton Hermes	Sarah Haverkamp	Ea Schmelzle

### Assistants at The Eucharist for Saturday, March 5 & Sunday, March 6

	<u>Lector/*Commentator</u>	<u>Communion</u>	<u>Cup</u>	<u>Cantor</u>	<u>Organist</u>
<u><b>4:00 PM</b></u>	Jean Wassenberg *Jeanie Kramer	Lori Carlson Kirby Schmelzle	Mary Jane Hammes Gina Ronnebaum	Katie Nordhus	Terry Nordhus
<u><b>7:00 AM</b></u>	Angela Sudbeck *Steve Bennett	Randy Heinen Sheryl Heinen	Tyler Heinen Doug Schmelzle	Stacy Rethman	Jan Rottinghaus
<u><b>9:00 AM</b></u>	Maggie Hammes *Michelle Fangman	Marian Rottinghaus Aimee Rottinghaus	Ray Rottinghaus Dylan Schraad	Adult Choir	Owen Zinke
<u><b>11:00 AM</b></u>	Shannon Holthaus *Keegan Schmelzle	Aaron Duryea John Rottinghaus	Carrie Young Michael Love	Jake Reitz	Janet Kramer

**ROSARY LEADERS:**                      4:00 PM Eunice Winkler                      9:00 AM Dennis Henry



The Baileyville Benefit is this weekend, Feb 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> at Nemaha Central HS. Doors are open 8 AM to 9 PM. The auction will start at 6 PM on Sunday.



Children's Choir Practice will be Monday evening, Feb 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM. They will sing Sunday, March 13 at the 9:00 AM Mass.

Anyone wishing to donate a lily or mum for Easter, please call Seneca Florist at 336-6186 before Mar 15.

The movie, "Risen" will be at the Seneca Theater this Thursday. You are encouraged to attend this movie.

Call to Share Notes: Our SPP Parish target is \$29,377.00. Payments have amounted to \$19,225.00 (65% of the total). So far, 78 SPPC families have participated.

Catholic Heart Work Camp mandatory meeting for campers and parents is on Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM at the SPPS Parish Hall. Another payment will be due at this time. Please bring a front and back copy of your health insurance card. There is still room for students 8<sup>th</sup> grade thru college to go. Call 294-0927 for info.

Catholic Heart Work Camp Pork Chop Dinner will be on Sunday, April 3 from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. A 12 oz pork chop meal is \$14.00. Hot dog meal is \$3.00. Proceeds go to help our youth with transportation to CHWC. Advance tickets may be purchased at Heinen True Value and tickets may be purchased at the door.

CONTRIBUTIONS for week of 2/15/16 to 2/21/16 Weekly Budget is \$15,000.

Church	Plate	\$ 1,318.25
	Envelope	\$ 5,249.00
	EFT/ACH	\$ 11,812.00
School		\$ 510.00
	EFT/ACH	\$ 305.00
Leaven		\$ 102.00
Ash Wed		\$ 100.00
TOTAL	Thank You!!	\$ 19,396.25



The following couples are planning Marriage at Sts Peter & Paul Catholic Church: James Stallbaumer & Kelsey Smading (4-30), Taylor Jesse and Taylor Kuckelman (5-28), Jarrod Smith & Amy Stallbaumer (6-4), Derek Love & Melissa Nordhus (6-11), Stephen Hulsing & Kayla Stallbaumer (6-25), Mitchell McPherson & Kyla Heinen (7-9), Justin Black & Abbie Schmelzle (7-16), Jason Swart & Katelyn Deters (7-23), Moses Ulmer & Lindsay Peterson (7-30), Matthew Bruna & Rachel Feldkamp (8-6), John McGehee & Brynne Haverkamp (9-17), Shane Luebbe & Megan Kopp (9-24), Kirk Resseguie & Erica Rottinghaus (10-1). Please keep these couples in your prayers as they prepare for the Sacrament of Matrimony.



Welcome to the Christian Community:

Tessa Jean Olberding, daughter of Gerard and Megan (Niehues) Olberding. Godparents are Blake Niehues and Monica Countryman. Tessa was baptized Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.  
Brooklyn Ann Badertscher, daughter of Scott and Elizabeth (Haverkamp) Badertscher. Godparents are Matthew Haverkamp and Amanda Haverkamp. Brooklyn was baptized Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>.

#### UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS:

Fri Mar 4 - Beginning of "24 HOURS FOR THE LORD"  
2:00 PM Stations of the Cross; Benediction & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.  
Fri Mar 4 - 7:00 PM Chaplet of Divine Mercy  
Sat Mar 5 - 2:00 PM Closing of "24 HOURS"  
Sun Mar 13 - Daylight Savings Time Begins  
Sat Mar 19 - Saturday Vigil Mass changes to 5:00 PM  
Sun Mar 27 - Easter Sunday  
Sun Apr 3 - CHWC Pork Chop Dinner  
Sun Apr 24 - First Communion Sunday

#### SCHOOL NEWS: (see [spps.school.com](http://spps.school.com))

Fri Mar 4 - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade orientation 7:30-9:30am @ NVHS  
Mon Mar 7 - OTL Band Concert @ Wetmore 6 pm  
Tue Mar 8 - McTeacher Night 4:00 - 8:00 pm

#### CCD NEWS:

Wed. Mar 2nd Regular CCD classes, Grade School 6:45 pm in the Parish Hall; HS No classes. Monitors: Matthew & Jill Mady and Ryan & Sarah Henry



Become a member of the Knights of Columbus.

The K of C will be sponsoring a Major Degree Works at the K of C Hall in Seneca on Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. The First Degree ceremony will start at 11:00 AM followed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree at 1:00 PM. Take this opportunity, as a Catholic man, to experience and express the principles of charity, unity, and fraternity through this religious order of the Church. For more information, call Jim Reitz at 294-2654.

#### AREA EVENTS:

**\*\*Rediscover Catholicism**, a book by Matthew Kelly, is being presented as a book study at St. Bede's Parish House, Kelly, every Sunday at 8:45 AM and at 7:00 PM. This extends to Sunday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. Come to one or all.  
**\*\*Sacred Heart Parish, Sabetha**, invites everyone to a Lenten event on each Sunday evening 5:45 PM. Includes sharing a delicious dinner, praise & worship, dynamic teaching & group sharing. No reg fee. Call Gina at 284-0888, email [gina@nekansascatholics.org](mailto:gina@nekansascatholics.org)  
**\*\*St Patrick's Parish, Corning Pancake Breakfast** on Sunday, March 6 from 7 AM to 1 PM.  
**\*\*"Merciful Like the Father" - 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Catholic Family Conference at Wichita, KS**, Aug. 5-7. Outstanding speakers, live concert. Call 316-618-9787 or go to [www.catholicfamilyconcert.org](http://www.catholicfamilyconcert.org).



Third Sunday of Lent

# THE GOSPEL OF MERCY

Lenten Reflection for the Year of Mercy

## Called to Repentance

Luke 13:1-9

The beginning verses of today's Gospel mention two events that we know very little about — a disaster of a natural cause and one of a human cause. At the time, people believed that disaster was a sign of God's curse because of sin. The people were probably thinking: "Those people were sinners. Since I have not experienced these troubles, why do I need to repent?"

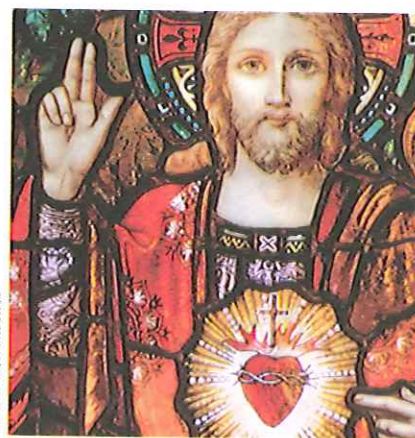
Jesus asserts emphatically that disasters are not the result of sin, that bad things *do* happen to good people. Jesus

offers no concrete answer about *why* these events happened. Instead he challenges the people to learn from the tragedies so that they might be prepared, so that they live a life worthy of the title "People of God."

In the parable of the fig tree, Jesus reminds us that our challenge (especially during Lent) is to allow Jesus to "cultivate" us and "fertilize" us so that we recognize the areas in our lives that need repentance and can begin bearing even more fruit.

### FOR REFLECTION

- › How has the support and care of others helped me to bear fruit?
- › When has God brought me through an unfruitful time in my life and made me fruitful again?
- › Do I get caught in speculation about the why of tragedies? Do I blame God for suffering? Do I thank God for blessings?



*"During this Lent, then, brothers and sisters, let us all ask the Lord: 'Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum': Make our hearts like yours (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent, or prey to the globalization of indifference."*

— POPE FRANCIS, LENTEN MESSAGE, 2015



# symbols of the season

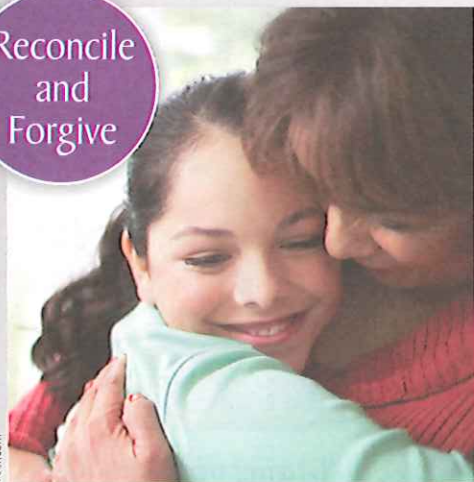
## Purple

The color purple abounds during Lent. As with all symbols, it has multiple meanings. Purple is often associated with grief and pain; thus it anticipates the suffering of the Crucifixion. At the same time, purple (historically an expensive dye for cloth) was used only by and for royalty; therefore, it celebrates the Kingship of Christ, his resurrection, and his sovereignty.

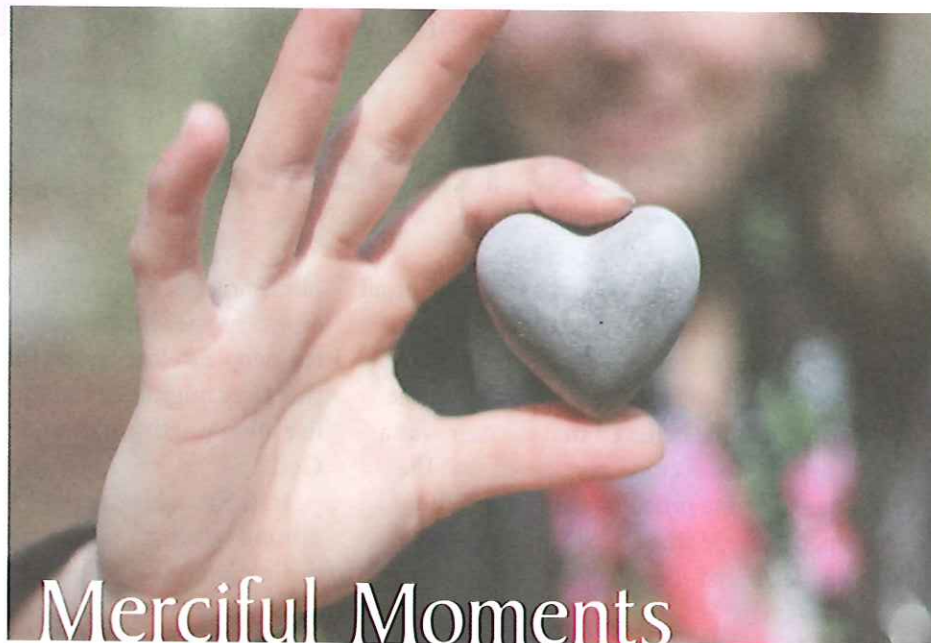
Additionally, purple is traditionally a symbol of penance and repentance. Its use during Lent is to evoke a mood of simplicity and austerity. We're reminded that it can be unnecessary and detracting to add other items and symbols — the color itself is the symbol.

## Faithful Family

Reconcile  
and  
Forgive



This week (and once a week from now on), take time for a family reconciliation. Share with each other a word or expression of sorrow for ways you've neglected or hurt other family members. Then invite each person to share something he or she will do in the coming week to work with Jesus as he cultivates and fertilizes your lives.

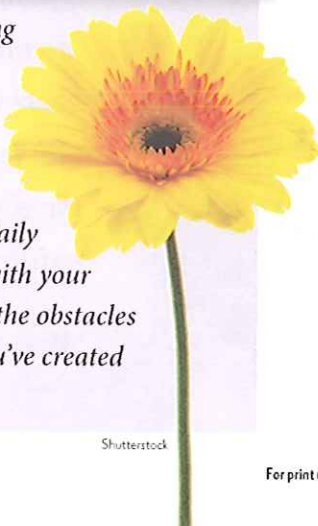


## Merciful Moments

- › Fast from jealousy or shame; feast on God's love.
- › Have you made a Lenten resolution to change something in your life? Carry a pebble in your pocket this week to remind you that, with God's help — God's cultivating and fertilizing — you can do it.
- › Pay attention to three tragedies reported in the media. Spend five minutes in prayer for the victims of the tragedies. Is there something you could do to reach out to them in mercy and care?

## Lenten Prayer

Generous and Forgiving God, you are like a creative gardener who invites me to grow, encouraging and supporting me in my daily efforts. Surround me with your strength as I weed out the obstacles and bloom to be all you've created me to be.



## Catechism CONNECTION

"Jesus calls to conversion. This call is an essential part of the proclamation of the kingdom: 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.'...

Christ's call to conversion continues to resound in the lives of Christians. This *second conversion* is an uninterrupted task for the whole Church who, 'clasping sinners to her bosom, [is] at once holy and always in need of purification, [and] follows constantly the path of penance and renewal.' This endeavor of conversion is not just a human work. It is the movement of a 'contrite heart,' drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first."

— Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1427-1428





## Mass Intentions for First Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### Sts. Peter & Paul Spiritual Society



Adams, Jason  
Allen, Vaden  
Bennett, Bob & Lou\*\*  
Bennett, Eugene  
Berkley, Dr. Norman  
Block, Francis & Marcella  
Boden, Nick  
Boeckman, Lawrence\*\*  
Boeding, Herman & Anna  
Boeding, Norbert & RoseZella  
Broderick, Gerald & Rita  
Buessing, Joe & Margaret  
Buessing, Vince & Tillie  
Burdiek, Gerald & Evelyn  
Callaghan, Everett  
Carasala, Balaswamy  
Carlson, Megan  
Cronin, Linda (Olberding)  
Cross, Raymond & Thelma  
Dalinghaus, Helene \*\*  
Dalsing, Mary  
Deters, David  
Deters, Ferdinand & Rose  
Deters, Sally  
Ehram, Charles  
Ehram, Willis "Willie"  
Eisenbarth, Daniel "Izzy"  
Engelken, John R  
Engelken, Leander  
Feldkamp, Annette  
Feldkamp, Ben & Katherine  
Feldkamp, Kevin  
Feldkamp, Leander & Esther  
Feldkamp, Lloyd  
Glissman, Julie  
Gress, Charlie  
Grollmes, Leona  
Grollmes, Louis  
Grothjan, Dorothy  
Grothjan, Ernestine  
Gudenkauf, Anthony H. & Celesta  
Gudenkauf, Ray & Florence  
Harland, Francis & Rosemary  
Haug, Omer & Lucille  
Haug, Ronald "George"  
Haug, Urban  
Haverkamp, Bob  
Haverkamp, George & Evelyn

Haverkamp, Lillis  
Haverkamp, Melvin H.  
Heideman, Raymond  
Heiman, Norbert & Theresa  
Heiman, Regis  
Heinen, Albert & Rita  
Heinen, Clem & Agatha  
Heinen, Jeanette  
Heinen, John & Anna  
Heinen, Joseph & Aurelia  
Heinen, Lawrence  
Heinen, Raymond & Aurelia  
Heintzelman, Charles  
Heintzelman, Jim & Pat  
Heintzelman, John & Frances  
Hermesch, Ben  
Hermesch, Fred  
Hermesch, Galen  
Hermesch, Jerry  
Hermesch, Raymond  
Hermesch, William & Helen  
Holthaus, Adolph & Esther  
Holthaus, Beryl Ann  
Holthaus, Carl & Rosemary  
Holthaus, Clifford  
Holthaus, Daniel  
Holthaus, Ed & Agnes  
Holthaus, Geraldine  
Holthaus, Henry & Vera  
Holthaus, Mary Ann  
Holthaus, Rita (Mrs. George)  
Hood, Carol  
Hulsing, Donna  
Hulsing, Tony & Florence  
Huninghake, Barb  
Huninghake, Ray  
Hunninghake, Lester  
Hutfles, Clarence  
Jeanneret, Wilbur  
Koch, Joseph & Carmelita  
Koelzer, Allie & Irene  
Koelzer, Elmer  
Koelzer, Jean  
Koelzer, Melvin  
Kohake, Albert  
Kohake, Andrew  
Kohake, Dan & Mary  
Kohake, Doris Grace

Kohake, Grace M.  
Kohake, Joe & Margaret  
Kohake, Timothy  
Kohake, Vincent & Eleanor  
Kokenge, Francis  
Kokenge, John & Annie  
Kokenge, John W.  
Kokenge, Shirley  
Korte, Ray & Theresa  
Korte, Ty\*  
Kramer, Daniel L.  
Kramer, Don F.  
Kramer, Eugene H.  
Kramer, Wilbur  
Kuckelman, Frank & Josephine  
Kuckelman, Thomas G.  
Kuckelman, William Bill  
Lackey, David  
Lackey, Galen  
Lackey, Hubert  
Lang, Paul  
Lauer, Chris  
Lauer, Cyril & Geneva  
Lauer, Dave  
Lehmkuhl, Kenny & Tiny  
Lierz, Matt & Mary  
Love, Joe & Edna "Eddy"  
Luckeroth, Amber  
Luckeroth, Donald  
Luckeroth, Donna  
Luckeroth, Jim  
Luckeroth, Josiah "Joe"  
Luckeroth, Norm  
Lueb, Jan  
Lueger, Alvin & Leona  
Lueger, Stephen  
Macke, Henry  
McGinty, Jim  
McGinty, Trish  
Mission Center - Deceased  
Workers  
Mohlman, Joseph & Charlene  
Muetting, John & Clara  
Muetting, Leo & Marie  
Niehues, Herbert & Regina  
Niehues, Loretta  
Nickamp, Cecilia  
Nolte, Jason





## Mass Intentions for First Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### Sts. Peter & Paul Spiritual Society



Nordhus, Jane  
Nordhus, Sylvester "Pat"  
Nordhus, Tim  
Olberding, Jackie  
Olberding, Lawrence & Martha  
Olberding, Leo & Dollie  
Olberding, Raymond F.  
Olberding, Ryan  
Olberding, Victor  
Osterhaus, Bobbi (Leon)  
Osterhaus, Leonard  
Osterhaus, Paul & Erma  
Osterhaus, Steven  
Peterson, Dorothy  
Pultz, Paul  
Quinlan, Wilfred  
Reinecke, Clarence "Mike"  
Renyer, Joe & Cecelia  
Rennenger, Jake & Minnie  
Rethman, Norman  
Robke, Erma  
Roeder, Dorothy  
Roeder, Melvin & Angela  
Ronnebaum, Albert & Ann  
Ronnebaum, Eleanor  
Ronnebaum, Joe & Emma  
Ronnebaum, Melvin "Butch"  
Ronnebaum, Werner & Lorena  
Rottinghaus, Frank & Emma  
Rottinghaus, Frank & Marie  
Runnebaum, Henry & Alma  
Sack, John & Edna  
Schiffbauer, Ralph  
Schmelzle, Eugene "Gene"  
Schmelzle, Geri  
Schmelzle, Gilbert  
Schmelzle, Mary  
Schmidt, Jim  
Schmidt, Lawrence & Adrianna  
Schmidt, Thomas  
Schmits, Alvin "Butch"  
Schmitz, Elaine  
Schulte, Jerry & Rita  
Schurman, Ethel  
Schurman, John & Rose  
Schurman, Lawrence & Nora  
Scraggs, Barrett  
Sedlacek, Bernadine

Siess, Jeremy  
Skoch, Sylvester  
Sperfslage, Don  
Stallbaumer, Cyril & Frances  
Stallbaumer, Gene & Aurelia  
Stallbaumer, Gilbert & Teresa  
Stallbaumer, Hubert  
Stallbaumer, Marcena  
Stallbaumer, Norbert & Marie  
Strathman, Keith  
Strathman, Sylvester  
Studer, Ralph & Margaret  
Suther, Elmer  
Tangeman, Julius & Bertha  
Tanking, Regis & Lucille  
Taylor, Kenneth "Butch"  
Teeter, Charles\*\*  
Tomlinson, Helen (Lang)  
Weber, Elizabeth  
Wempe, Christopher  
Wende, Ray & Rita  
Wessel, Frank  
White, Mary Jo  
Wichman, Charles & Grace  
Wichman, Henry & Anna  
Wiers, Vern  
Wilhelm, Steve  
Winkler, Don & Lucille  
Winkler, Linus & Lucille

#### Just a Note:

*\*\*Those members due to be renewed THIS coming month (March) are signified by \*\* behind their name. Please renew at the Parish Office, or send payment to Parish Office at 411 Pioneer, Seneca, KS 66538.*

*The cost of renewal is \$50.00 per person.*

#### Spiritual Society Benefits:

*Spiritual Society Members have a Mass said for them every First Friday of each month. The Rosary is also said for all Members before daily Mass from Monday through Saturday each week*

*We apologize if anyone has been inadvertently missed. If so, please call the parish office. (336-2128)*



Our St. Peter & Paul Parish has three Elect who are planning to become members of the Catholic Church at Holy Saturday Mass, on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Last Sunday our Parish celebrated the Rite of Sending with them, followed by the Rite of Election, where they were presented to the Archbishop and the Catholic Church. These next three Sundays, they will be celebrating the "Scrutinies". For those who would like to know more about these celebrations, please read the following:

### **What are The Scrutinies?**

The Scrutinies are celebrated on the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent, by those people who are preparing to be baptized at Easter, known as "The Elect". It is important that the children and youth in Faith Development have some knowledge of them, because they are important rites of the Church. Also, whenever they are celebrated they use the Scripture readings of Year A of the liturgical cycle, which we are reflecting on during the next few weeks, which makes another good reason to look at them now.

The Scrutinies are described by the Church as "rites for self-searching and repentance, which are meant to uncover, then heal, all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong and good. The Scrutinies are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life. These rites, therefore, should complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all."

The Gospels on the three Sundays on which the Scrutinies are celebrated teach the elect about the mystery of sin, and fill them with the Spirit of Christ. The first Gospel (the Samaritan Woman at the well) tells us that Christ is the Living Water, the second (healing of the man born blind), that he is the Light of the World, and the third, (the raising of Lazarus from the dead), that he is the Resurrection and the Life. What did Jesus say about why he came? "To give life in abundance" (John 10:10) Each of the Gospels proclaimed in the three Scrutinies illustrates this.

### **The First Scrutiny – Third Sunday of Lent – The Woman at the Well**

The primary symbol in the reading of this Sunday is water. Water is a symbol of life, and it indicates that God wishes to give us life, as shown in the stories of the Israelites in the desert and the woman from Samaria at the well. The symbol of water also indicates baptism, and looks forward to Easter when this is celebrated.

The Gospel of this day, the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well, tells us of a remarkable meeting. Jesus asks her for some water, but offers her living waters, promising eternal life. As the woman talks to Jesus, her life is revealed to her. This does not result in scorn or condemnation, but healing, forgiveness and new life. She sees the truth about herself and sees God face to face. Such a meeting, in sincerity and truth, is not to be feared but welcomed, because of the new life and freedom from the burdens of the past which it brings.

Note the expression of Jesus, "God is Spirit ..." The Hebrew word for 'spirit' means also 'breath' or 'life'. We can almost say therefore, "God is Life". God wishes to give life to all; this is why life is so valuable. Therefore for the Elect, those to be initiated at Easter, they have a desire for new life through Christ, and have already begun to experience it to some degree. But they desire to experience it in a greater fullness, which is the purpose of celebrating the Scrutiny. For those of us who are already Catholics, the scrutinies are an opportunity for us to experience again the same gift of renewal of life from God.

### **The Second Scrutiny – Fourth Sunday of Lent – The Man Born Blind**

The key idea in Gospel and the Second Reading is turning from darkness to light, as symbolised in the healing of the man born blind. For example, examination of conscience, especially in the light of God's Word, leads to enlightenment, and thus enables people to do as St. Paul says, "Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness."

The Gospel today tells the story of the healing of the man born blind. The story does not end with his healing, but rather it continues with the arguments about what really happened and who Jesus is, the one who healed him. We call Christ "The Light of the World" and look to him for the truth we need to really understand the world, ourselves and God. We need to confess our blindness and have some humility before God if we are to be enlightened by Jesus, and not to be like the Pharisees in the story who refuse to accept the truth.

The foundation of the story is two fold: a miracle story in which blindness is cured, and the saying, "I am the Light of the World". The miracle is a sign of the truth of the saying and the judging effect of the light is brought out. Jesus acts on his own initiative. When the man worships him it shows that he has received spiritual as well as physical sight.



This chapter expresses vividly John's conception of Jesus' work. On the one hand, he is the giver of unprecedented benefits to humanity. On the other hand, the people are not aware of their own need, and cling to the inadequate light of the Old Testament and are too proud to relinquish it. The effect of the true light is to blind them, since they close their eyes to it. Their sin abides precisely because they are so confident of their righteousness.

In the Gospel story there seem to be three groups of people unable to see. First the disciples: even though they have been in Jesus' company for a long time, they still shared the assumptions of their society about the causes of sickness and handicap – that it is punishment for sin, either their own or someone else's. Therefore people who were afflicted in such a way were often treated with contempt, because it was seen as their own fault.

Jesus says that it was nobody's sin, but so that God's glory could be seen in his cure. There is an important lesson even in the introduction to the story – a Christian's attitude to suffering is not to wonder where it comes from, but to take action to alleviate it.

Secondly, the man who is healed by Jesus. He becomes an unlikely ambassador for Jesus, as was the woman at the well from last week, but both are effective. Both are touched in their weakness and moved to strength; both are rejected by their society but welcomed by Jesus. There is a progressive cure of his spiritual blindness, as he says of Jesus,

1. The man called Jesus
2. He is a prophet
3. If this man were not from God
4. Lord I believe

Third group: in contrast to his enlightenment, there is a blindness in the Pharisees. They claimed to know God's Word and God's Law, so Jesus condemns their blindness as worse. They find every reason not to believe what their eyes are telling them: perhaps this wasn't the man, perhaps he wasn't born blind.

Therefore, in the Scrutiny: the Elect have already been enlightened to some degree; Lent is a time when this is intensified for them, and also for us who are already Catholics. We still need to be enlightened, and to grow in God's truth. Like the other Scrutinies, there is an important teaching about who Jesus is: "I am the light of the world." It also looks forward to the enlightenment celebrated in Easter and baptism.

### **The Third Scrutiny – Fifth Sunday of Lent – The Raising of Lazarus**

The Third Scrutiny emphasizes Christ as "the Resurrection and the Life" as we hear the Gospel of the raising to life of Lazarus. Jesus in his obedience to his Father has the authority to give life to whom he will. The raising of Lazarus is an anticipation of what is to take place on the last day. It means that the believer has eternal life; and has passed from death to life. It is also – again – an anticipation of what is celebrated at Easter and in Baptism, resurrection and eternal life.

The meaning for John is: Jesus in his obedience to and dependence upon the Father has the authority to give life to whom he will. The incident is a dramatic demonstration of the truth already declared in John 5.21 ("For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.") which is itself the best commentary on the incident. The raising of Lazarus is not a piece of magic, nor even the supreme achievement of a Saint; it is an anticipation of what is to take place on the last day. It means that the believer has eternal life; that he or she has passed from death to life.

Jesus prays, emphasizing his dependence upon the Father. Jesus can do nothing of himself but does what he sees the Father doing. The last enemy - death - is overthrown.

Note that the name Lazarus means "God helps". The presence of Jesus effects to anticipate 'eschatological' events (i.e. to do with the end of the world), especially to judge and to give life. Also, the movement from death to life is the pattern experienced by all Christians, who have died already to sin and risen again in Christ, but all to be fulfilled on the last day.

With Lazarus, the 'last day' is being anticipated for the purpose of the sign, which demonstrates who Jesus really is, "the resurrection and the life".

This Scrutiny celebrated on this day is primarily for the benefit of the Elect, but it reminds us all of the promises God has made through Jesus of eternal life.





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