

Second Sunday of Lent

MASSES & INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, March 11, 2017

5:30 P.M. MASS – Fran Meaux, Jeremy Rider, George & Clara Schneider, Martin Goodly, John C. Durio, Gradney Fly., J.C. & Bertha Smith, Hubert Bertrand, Emily Adams, Savannah & Curley Gradney, Sr., Nakia (Nick) Ware, Deceased members of Aguiard Fly., Keith LeJeune, Willie, Allie, Larry & Raymond Langhler, John Spears & Fly., Enola Bellard

SUNDAY, March 12, 2017

7:30 A.M. MASS – *Pro Populo* (For the People)

10:00 A.M. MASS – Edward Maddox, Dreau Granger, Weston Monceaux, Sr., Leonard Beaubouef & Sons, Joyce Fontenot, Roselyn Victorian

MONDAY, March 13, 2017

6:30 A.M. MASS – John Essie Victorian (1st Anniversary)

TUESDAY, March 14, 2017

5:30 P.M. MASS – Helin Lofton

WEDNESDAY, March 15, 2017

6:30 A.M. MASS – D.C. Reed, Jr.

THURSDAY, March 16, 2017

6:30 A.M. MASS – The Family of Tom & Sherry Germany

FRIDAY, March 17, 2017

5:30 P.M. MASS – John C. Durio

SATURDAY, March 18, 2017

5:30 P.M. MASS – Fran Meaux, Sox Gordon, Jeremy Rider, Savannah & Curley Gradney, Sr., Natalie Bertrand, Jack Johnson, Geri Garcille, Seth Chandler, Keith LeJeune, Emmitt Maggio

SUNDAY, March 12, 2017

7:30 A.M. MASS – *Pro Populo* (For the People)

10:00 A.M. MASS – Edward Maddox, Angelle L. Durio, Linda LeJeune, Roselyn Victorian, Living & Dec. Members of Ken & Wylene Taylor Family., Hosey Joseph & Mildred P. Guillory, Leonard Beaubouef & Sons, Joyce Fontenot

Last Week's Collection

\$5,616.00

2nd Collection - Black & Indian Missions

\$339.75

PRAYER LIST

Bernard Aguiard, Marvin Banks, Phil Beard, Charles Beaubouef, Quintan Bell, Joan Bertrand, Alvin & Sonja Billodeaux, Bruce & Diana Brakel, Corey Briscoe, Douglas Briscoe, Luke Burnham, Bernice Bushnell, Helen Bushnell, Kristin Carlton, Linda Beaubouef Cazes, David & Natalie Carrier, Ailene Chapman, Vivian Cole Fly., Florence Comeaux, Richard Cooper, Virginia Cottongin, Aiden Darbonne, Rynree Darbonne, Carol Deshotel, Jackie Deville, Cindy Doise, Jabe Doyle, Pochie Duplechain, David Fontenot, Donald Fontenot, Justin Fontenot, Mary Ophelia Fontenot, Steven Fontenot, Verlis Fontenot, Tim Germany, Elaine Giles, Freddy & Becky Gorman, Daniel Goodly & Fly., Jennifer Granger, Cathy Deshotel Guillory, Todd Guillory, Victoria Lynn Guillory, Harrison Harmon, Joseph Harmon, Mildred Harmon, Ester Harmon, Shirley Hebert, Jan Horton, Charlene Ireland, John, Shenita & Perella Jackson. Joey James, Brayden Johnson, Rudolph & Joyce Johnson, Paul LaFleur, Essie Langley, Grayce LaRacca, Dwain LeBleu, Tina Morgan Lantier, Keith LeJeune, Lou, Joseph, & Adam LeJeune, Mitch LeJeune, Willie Mae LeJeune, Brian Manuel, Chip Manuel, Kevin Manuel, LuLu Manuel & Fly., Shirley Manuel, Trista Marler, Reed McIver, Bonnie McNabb, Patsy Meaux, Patricia Mikas, Rita & Billy Miller, Charles & Joy Mancil, Ray Marcantel, Trista Marler, Brandy McCarty, Christina McNutt, Ronald Meaux, Russell Meaux, Clifford Montou, Glen Morgan, Carolyn Morgan, Nicholas Odum, Howard Patin, Devin Pelt, Sally Pitre, Linda & Don Potier, Jimmy Prudhomme, Ena Prudhomme Fly., Erin Ramos, Ronnie Ramos, Ashton Read, Reid Redlich, Ann Reed, Cheryl Reed, Sarah Reed & Fly., Lynda Reed, Ervin Reed, Will Reid, Leonard Richard, Donald Rider, Sharon, Richard, Jonathan, Hayley, Jayden, Ryleigh, Skylie, Jackson, Martha, Rusty, and Patsy Rider, Salis Rider, Michael Roger, Ann Rooney, Vera Ross, Rev. Fred Russi, Evelyn Sandell, Tina Sapienza, Quentin Savoie, Sister Ann Margaret Savant, Tucker Scimemi, Helen Shreeman, Remy Spring, Kolton Squier, Leah Squier, Margie Smith, Donald Paul Sonnier, Barbara Strickland, Kelly Strother, Lucille Strother, Carl Tarver, Celeman Thomas, Matthew Truman, Dollyanna Victorian, Zachary Villereal, Linda Voeller, JoAnn Welch, Robbie Willis, Odelia & Ernest Wilson, Nicole Young, Theresa Young

Divine Intimacy Reading Guide

Mar. 12 th – Mar. 19 th	Entry Number
Sunday	105
Monday	106
Tuesday	107
Wednesday	108
Thursday	109
Friday	110
Saturday	111
Sunday	112

Thank You

We wish to thank Fr. Conner, Deacon Soileau, the altar boys, and the choir for the beautiful memorial service provided for her. We also thank all the family and friends who gave so much support in this time of sorry.

The Family of Geraldine (Geri) Garcille

This Week @ SJoA

- ❖ Monday, March 13th – K.C. meeting at 6:30 P.M.
- ❖ Tuesday, March 14th – Lenten Religion Intensive at 6:00 P.M.
- ❖ **Wednesday, March 15th – ADORATION 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.; CCD and Youth Group**
- ❖ Thursday, March 16th – Holy League: Men's Prayer Group at 6:00 P.M.
- ❖ Friday, March 17th – Stations after 5:30 P.M. Mass
- ❖ Saturday, March 18th – St. Joseph's Work Day 8:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.; **Rosary for Traditional Marriages at St. Joseph's in Soileau at 12:00 noon.**

FROM FATHER CONNER

An Important Step for Becoming Catholic

This past Sunday, these folks went through the Rite of Election at the Bishop's Cathedral in Lake Charles: *Andy Pitts, Andrea Reed, Kashmyra Cart, Jaidyn Duplechain.*

The Rite of Election is a formal step in becoming Catholic for the unbaptized. At this ceremony, those aspiring to enter the Church affirm their intention to live a new life in Christ in the presence of the Diocesan Bishop. They also acknowledge that they have been receiving instruction in the Faith. I ask that you keep Andy, Andrea, Kashmyra, and Jaidyn in your prayers as they prepare to receive Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion at this year's Easter Vigil Mass.

First Lenten Religion Intensive Rescheduled

The inability to speak necessitated the postponement of the first Lenten Religion Intensive class that was scheduled for this past Monday evening. The class has been moved to this **Tuesday, March 14th**, at **6:00 pm** (immediately after 5:30 pm Mass). In order to be well prepared for the class, please read the notes I have provided, copies of which may be downloaded from www.sjoaoberlin.com or found at the main entrance of the church. I hope to see you there.

St. Joseph's Altar – Next Sunday

We will have the St. Joseph's Altar after 10 o'clock Mass next Sunday. (St. Joseph's feast day is March 19th.) I encourage parishioners to come to the Parish Hall after the 10:00 am Mass next Sunday to honor the foster father of the Lord and patron of the Universal Church ... and patron of our mission church in Soileau. The St. Joseph Altar will feature many treats and delectable items. It's worth mentioning: We need parishioners to bring food and drink items for the altar. A list of items is at the entrances of the church.

WHAT WE BELIEVE...WHY WE BELIEVE IT **YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER...**

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is also the High Priest of God. He passed that (Cf Hebrews 6:13-7:28) priesthood onto the apostles in the upper room on Holy Thursday Night at the Last Supper. This makes the priest a very special man. (Unless otherwise noted, we use the word priest here as a term that is inclusive of the office of bishop.) But what are the effects of Holy Orders for the man who receives this sacrament?

As with all the sacraments after Baptism, Holy Orders increases sanctifying grace, gives a sacramental grace particular to that sacrament enabling him to carry out the sacrament's purpose, and imprints an indelible character on the soul—the final of the three sacraments to impart a character.

The increase in sanctifying grace is necessary for all people, as this is how we strive to fulfill Christ's command that we are to "be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). This is important in a special way to the recipient of Holy Orders, as a priest must be a Christ-like example to the souls he shepherds, as well as save his own soul.

The sacramental grace of Holy Orders benefits not only the ordained, but also the lay faithful. This sacramental grace allows the priest or deacon to truthfully proclaim the Gospel, fulfill the ministry of the word of truth, and renew people by the "bath of rebirth" (Baptism). The priest also offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and reconciles sinners to God by way of the sacrament of Penance.

The sacramental grace of Holy Orders is especially evident in the confessional. When a penitent goes to the same confessor with regularity and frequency, the priest comes to know the penitent's soul intimately. The sacramental grace he received in Holy Orders helps the priest to lead that soul on a journey to perfection in God.

There are also benefits specific to bishops from the sacramental grace of Holy Orders. Thanks to this grace, bishops have the ability to govern their dioceses, as well as present Church teachings in a manner that benefits the souls of his flock.

Finally, the priest, by virtue of this sacrament, acts *in persona christi*. St. Thomas Aquinas says, "Christ is the source of all priesthood: the priest of the old law was a figure of Christ, and the priest of the new law acts in the person of Christ" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, III, 22, 4c) in the fulfillment of his liturgical-sacramental duties.

There are two chief *supernatural* powers of a priest. The first is the power to change ordinary bread and wine into the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. The second power is the ability to forgive our sins in the sacrament of Penance.

Under Church law, priests are not allowed to marry. "All the ordained ministers of the Latin Church... are normally chosen from among men of faith who live a celibate life and who intend to remain celibate 'for the sake of the kingdom of

heaven' [Mt 19:12]. Called to consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to 'the affairs of the Lord' [1 Cor 7:32] they give themselves entirely to God and to men. Celibacy is a sign of this new life to the service of which the Church's minister is consecrated; accepted with a joyous heart celibacy radiantly proclaims the Reign of God." (CCC, 1579)

Although deacons do not have the same supernatural powers of priests, they do have a great purpose in the Church. Deacons are helpers of bishops and priests, and are subject to their authority. Deacons may officiate at weddings, perform baptisms, and carry Communion to the sick, infirm, or confined, preside at graveside services at funerals, proclaim the Gospel at Mass, and serve in various other non-liturgical functions. Unlike priests, a deacon may be married. A man who is already married may become a deacon, but he cannot remarry if his wife dies, nor can a married deacon become a priest.

Non-Catholics who teach there is no such thing as a sacramental priesthood object to us calling our priests "Father", based on Jesus' statement in Matthew 23:9: "And call no man father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven." People who make an objection to Catholics calling our priests "Father" don't consider Our Lord's words in context, nor do they consider the totality of Sacred Scripture.

Christ tells us in Matthew to call no man father, yet God gives us the fourth commandment: "Honor your father and mother." Either there exists a contradiction between God the (Exodus 20:12) Father and God the Son, or debunkers of the priesthood wrongly interpret Christ's words.

Christ wasn't finding fault with the word father, but rather teaching us that God alone is the source of all authority. The rebuke Jesus gave wasn't the use of the word father, but of the pride of the Pharisees. If the rebuke was of the word father, no one would be right to call his male parent father.

The early Christians never interpreted these words literally. St. Paul refers to himself as Timothy's father in two of his epistles. He also refers to himself as the spiritual father of his converts in 1 Corinthians. In writing to other Christian leaders, St. John called them fathers in his first epistle. Are we to believe these two great apostles, who were promised to remember all Christ had taught them with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, would directly and blatantly disobey Christ? The objection made against our 2000 year old practice is without merit.

As we have previously seen in another article, the priesthood is worthy of our reverence, and those men of Holy Orders are very special men with supernatural powers, as we have seen in this article.

That is What We Believe...Why We Believe It.

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FROM FATHER CONNER

Return to the Lord: Lent, Conversion, & *Ad Orientem*

Lent is a season of conversion. During this time, it's common to encounter readings and orations from Mass and teachings from the saints that direct us to "**turn away**" from sin and error and "**turn to**" God. An example is found in **Joel 2:12-14**, which happens to be the Lesson of the Mass on Ash Wednesday:

"Now, therefore, saith the Lord. Be **converted to** Me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and mourning. And rend your hearts, and not your garments and **turn to** the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, patient and rich in mercy, and ready to repent of the evil. Who knoweth but He will return, and forgive, and leave a blessing behind Him, sacrifice and libation to the Lord your God?"

Another example comes from the (OF) Mass of this past Wednesday, the Book of **Jonah 3:8**, where the King of Nineveh, hoping to be spared from God's impending wrath, makes this decree to all the citizens of his city:

"Let every one **turn from** his evil way and from the violence which is in his hands."

Invariably, texts such as these affirm and respect the relationship of the outward, physical posture of the body and the inward, spiritual disposition of the soul (or heart). The purpose of this physical or bodily turning is to demonstrate the interior conversion happening within the soul. "Be **converted to** Me with all your **heart**." I was pleased to find these same sentiments in the Bishop's Lenten Pastoral Letter, read last Sunday at holy Mass. In case this aspect of His Excellency's letter escaped you, I highlight a few of them now:

1. "When we worship [God], we **turn towards** the object of our adoration—God. This **turning towards** God is both a **spiritual** and **physical** reality."
2. "Sacred Scripture permeates our Catholic worship. Not long ago (i.e. Wednesday of the Third Week of Advent) the first reading for Mass was taken from Isaiah 45. The passage struck me profoundly. The verse read, '**Turn to Me and be safe**' (Isaiah 45:22). The reading continued, 'To me every knee shall bend; by me every tongue shall swear' (Isaiah 45:23). Clearly a **physical orientation** was implied."
3. "Literally Isaiah meant, '**Face me and be safe,**' a fitting admonition for not only Advent but any moment we enter the Lord's presence."

The Bishop mentioned at the conclusion of his Pastoral Letter that this teaching was not new. When speaking about physically turning to God in prayer, he wasn't proposing some unheard of novelty. Though many Catholics know nothing (or very little) of *ad orientem*, the Catholic Church has always taught its importance and practiced it in prayer (both liturgically and devotionally) in order, *inter alia*, to respect the integrity of body and soul. An example that comes to mind immediately is that of **St. Augustine**. The practice at Mass during his time was for the Deacon to announce to all present just after the homily: *Conversi ad Dominum*. ("Turn towards the Lord.") Being the dutiful shepherd of souls that he was, St. Augustine explained the meaning of this admonition and gesture in a homily:

"Does not God say, 'Be converted to Me'? The scriptures are full of it: 'Be converted to Me, be converted to Me.' For what does this mean: 'Be converted to Me'? It does not just mean that you, who were looking toward the west, should now look toward the east – that is easily done. If only you did it inwardly, because that is not easily done. You **turn your body** around from one cardinal point to another; **turn your heart** around from one love to another."

As the body turns from one direction to another, so must the heart turn from sin and error to the true and living God. "Face Me and be safe," says the Lord. Agreed. Conversion and *ad orientem* are the kinds of "safe spaces" our world and the Church really need.

Ad orientem is now firmly established here at SJoA. I sincerely thank God for this blessing. Having several uninterrupted months of "turning to the Lord" at holy Mass has been one of the great blessings of my life. While still a very imperfect Priest, *ad orientem* is deepening my union with God and helping me to *pray* the Mass with more recollection and devotion. In this way, it is also a benefit to you, because your holiness and

mine are connected. Experiencing the effects of *ad orientem* personally has convinced me more than ever that there is something profoundly good and altogether reasonable about turning both the body and the soul to God when praying. For there is an integrity to the *ad orientem* celebration of Mass that is lacking when the Priest faces away from God and toward the people. Let me elaborate some.

In the early days of the Church there was a pernicious heresy known as **Gnosticism**. While more expansive, at its foundation Gnosticism denied the goodness of the physical order. It posited that physical realities were either evil or not important. While of ancient origin, this error continues in our day under many a subtle guise. It has been written by people much more credentialed than I that the celebration of Mass *ad orientem* acts as a safeguard, like a hedge that prevents us from succumbing to a soft form of Gnosticism. I have come to believe this without reservation. The reason why is quite simple: God has created not only the immortal soul. He also created the physical body. The body, furthermore, is not evil. It is good, and what we do with the body, especially at holy Mass, matters. To deny this, it seems to me, is to have somehow given way to Gnosticism.

In providing these thoughts, my hope is that our appreciation for the integrity of the body and soul, a relationship ordained by God Himself, will be strengthened and better appreciated. I am not in any way accusing Priests who offer Mass *versus populum* as being neo-heretics. Such an interpretation of what I have written would be ridiculous. Rather, drawing on the divine inspiration of Holy Writ and the wisdom of the saints, I want us to aspire for higher things. As the Bishop himself noted in his Lenten Pastoral: "God expects more of us." Given the context of his words, I do not think it's out of place to apply this to the celebration of holy Mass. We need to be serious and rationally consistent about divine worship. Lest we too fall into "old" errors, we must not pretend that the direction of liturgical prayer is of no consequence. The bodily postures we employ at Mass matter, and a universal **re-turning to the Lord** would be a tremendous blessing for the entire Catholic Church. As a Priest, I pray that all Bishops and Priests would turn to the Lord at Mass (not for Lent, but for life!), for our own good as Priests, and, in the words of a prayer we say each Mass, "for the good of **all** His holy Church." "Turn to Me and be safe," says the Lord. We ignore these words to our own peril.

Silence – A Profound Blessing

Today at Mass, I hope to offer some reflections on the fundamental importance of silence within the holy Mass. To assist this effort, I offer these three quotes for your consideration:

Wisdom 18:14-15

The Book of Wisdom provides us with a profound meditation on the Incarnation of the Eternal Word in the womb of the Blessed Virgin.

"For while all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course, Thy almighty word leapt down from heaven from thy royal throne, as a fierce conqueror into the midst of the land of destruction."

The Apocalypse of John 8:1-5 (Book of Revelation)

In the Apocalypse, a good portion of which is a mystical reflection on the holy Mass, we find that all of heaven is reduced to silence when the Lamb breaks open the seventh seal:

"When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake."

St. Ignatius of Antioch

This Apostolic Father taught that God accomplishes His greatest feats in silence. In his *Letter to the Ephesians*, he wrote:

"Mary's virginity and giving birth, and even the Lord's death escaped the notice of the prince of this world: these three mysteries worthy of proclamation were accomplished in God's silence."