

GOD'S WORD IS POWERFUL!

Nehemiah 8: 2-6, 8-10; Psalm 19: 8-10, 15; 1 Cor. 12:12-30; Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

"Words are pale shadows of forgotten names. As names have power, words have power. Words can light fires in the minds of men. Words can wring tears from the hardest hearts."

— Patrick Rothfuss, *The Name of the Wind*

The central theme of today's liturgy is God's word! The context of our first reading today is what took place after the fall of Babylon to the Persians. Cyrus, the king of Persia, in his benevolence had shown justice to the Israelites and had released the captives from Babylon. Cyrus sent Nehemiah, one of his officials, as governor to Jerusalem to help in rebuilding the fallen city. In efforts to rebuild the nation, Nehemiah had to start with what was most important - reminding the people that God had to take first place in their lives. He realized how damaged the relationship between God and His people was while in exile, because they had abandoned the true God and followed alien gods. Thus, in order to rebuild their physical as well as their spiritual lives, he needed the help of the priest, Ezra. It was the priest's task to proclaim God's words to His people; hence, in today's reading, Ezra opens the *Torah*, "Book of the Law," and explains God's words to them.

The Bible tells us "all the people (were saddened and) were weeping as they heard the words of the law." It's possible they were saddened and weeping because they recognized how they had failed to live up to God's words. But Nehemiah and Ezra, the priests, exhorted them to forget the past and rededicate themselves to the Lord, "Today is holy to the Lord your God. Do not be sad, and do not weep." They explained to the people what the Lord demanded of them, after which, the people raised their hands high and answered, "Amen, amen! Then they bowed down and prostrated themselves before the Lord, their faces to the ground." In this very act, the people were saying "so be it" to the word of God presented to them by Ezra, the priest.

The lesson you and I must learn here is simple! God did not send His Son to bring us punishment - sadness and pain. He came so that we all might have eternal life. Unfortunately, like the Israelites, sometimes we make choices that bring about pain and sadness to us and/or to our loved ones. God's word is powerful, and when we read it and meditate on it, we will always find joy. We must believe and act on what the Word tells us, so that we might have life. "Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life. Your word is a lamp to my feet!" In the gospel, Jesus tells His listeners, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." This tells us that God speaks to us whenever we read or hear the Scripture read to us.

The gospel also relates that Jesus "went according to His custom into the synagogue (place of worship) on the Sabbath day." He was just as busy as you and I are, but He still found time to join the fellow members of His community for worship. This shows that like different parts of the body, we all have an indispensable role to play in our faith community. We do this when we gather together to listen to God's word and celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays. Like the Israelites, you and I must gather together to listen to God's word, and thus, receive strength, comfort and power that come from Him alone. Our gathering together would bring joy and happiness to others in times of sorrow and desolation. In order to simplify this message, St. Paul compares our community to the different parts of the human body. We are one and are responsible for one another.

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP

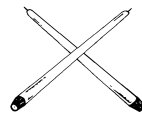

PARISH NEWS



HOLY HOUR: This Friday, February 1st, is First Friday. We will have our monthly Holy Hour at 1 p.m. On Saturday, February 2nd, the Divine Mercy Holy Hour will begin at 3 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these wonderful devotions.

FEAST OF PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

This Saturday, February 2nd is the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. There will be a candle procession at the beginning of the 9 a.m. Mass.



ST. BLAISE'S FEAST DAY: Next Sunday, February 3rd, is the feast day of St. Blaise. We will have the Blessing of Throats at all the Sunday Masses.

OUR FAMILY MASS: Next Sunday, February 3rd, we will celebrate our Family Mass at 10 a.m. All children and their families are encouraged to attend. Mass will be followed by "Family Breakfast" at the McManus Parish Center. All are welcome.



The members of the Rosary Altar Society will attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, February 3rd.

Next Sunday, February 3rd, is Scout Sunday. Cub Scout Pack 338 of St. Bartholomew's Parish will attend the 11:30 a.m. Mass. As a way to show their appreciation to our Parish for the use of our McManus Parish Center and the support we provide them, the scouts are inviting all parishioners back to the McManus Center for light refreshments following the Mass.

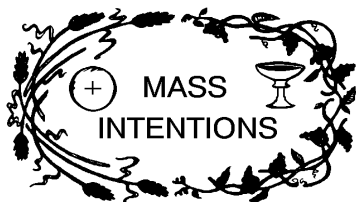


FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS CAMPAIGN
 January 27th – February 3rd

Catholic Charities is once again running its *Feeding Our Neighbors Campaign* to restock the food pantries and soup kitchens of the Archdiocese of New York. We are asked to make a special effort to feed our hungry neighbors.

Please drop off your food donations in the church sometime this week or next weekend. Our donations will support our Food Pantry and that of St. Peter's Church in Yonkers; and once again our Social Ministry Committee will organize, tally, and report our donations to Catholic Charities. Thank you for doing your part to make this Campaign a success!

OPENING OF THE 2014 MASS BOOK



The Mass Book for 2014 will open on Ash Wednesday, February 13th. You may come to the Rectory Office immediately following the 9 a.m., the 12 noon, or the 7:30 p.m. Masses to have Masses offered for yourself and for your loved ones, whether living or dead.

You will have the added opportunity to book Masses on Saturday evening, March 2nd, and Sunday, March 3rd, following the Masses for Sunday obligation.

REMEMBER YOUR LOVED ONES, LIVING AND DEAD

Consider giving a loved one the graces associated with having a Mass offered on their behalf. Also, you may consider offering the Altar flowers, Altar bread and wine, Altar candles, or lighting the Sanctuary lamp for a week for your intention. Come to the Rectory Office, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. to make arrangements or to inquire about the availability of a particular date.

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER: “... for rejoicing in the Lord must be your strength ...” Worldwide Marriage Encounter can help you strengthen your marriage/holy orders. The next Weekends are February 9/10 & March 1-3. For more information call (877) 697-9963 or visit www.wwme.org.

WORLD MARRIAGE DAY – FEBRUARY 10, 2013
Longest Married Couple Search

The search begins for the longest married couple in the Archdiocese of New York! To enter couples must be sacramentally married for a minimum of 65 years and reside in the Archdiocese of NY. The longest married couple(s) will be honored on Sunday, February 10th, at St. Patrick’s Cathedral at the 10:15 a.m. Mass with a reception to follow.

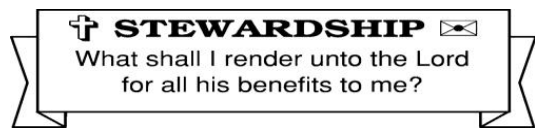
For further information or to make reservations contact Izabella Nagle on 646 794-3190 or at izabella.nagle@archny.org. Mail entries to: Family Life + Respect Life Office, 1011 First Avenue, New York, NY 10022, Attention: Izabella Nagle. The deadline for entries is January 30, 2013.

This week marks the beginning of the 2013 Cardinal’s Appeal in our parish. You will be receiving a letter from Cardinal Dolan asking for your support of the vital ministries, programs & services provided through the Appeal each year. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

The first Sunday evening of each month immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass, our Youth Group meets in the McManus Parish Center. All youths age 13 and up are invited.



MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA: Held after the 9 a.m. Mass on Mondays.



TITHING - GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

January 22, 2012

Adults’ Contribution	\$4422.60
Children’s Contribution	\$136.15
Last Year’s Total	\$ 4558.75

January 20, 2013

Adults’ Contribution	\$6495.35
Children’s Contribution	\$112.85
This Year’s Total	\$ 6608.20

Our Snow Removal Collection totaled \$1430.05.

ENVELOPES CONFUSION: Next week there will be a second collection for the maintenance of our buildings and grounds. The canary yellow envelopes for this purpose and the red snow removal envelopes were inadvertently excluded in the recent envelope packet. If you haven’t already done so, you will be receiving them soon. We apologize for the inconveniences this might cause you.



“WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR OURSELVES ALONE DIES WITH US; WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR OTHERS AND THE WORLD REMAINS AND IS IMMORTAL.”
~ Albert Pike

REMEMBER YOUR BELOVED PARISH


Remember, “We make a living by what we earn. We make a life by what we share.” Please remember our Parish in your Will as a lasting and loving gift to your parish family. Thank you!



Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Andy DeFabritis, Maria Marte, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, Frank Marra, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Gene DelBene, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petrulo, Cynthia Swiatkowicz, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Steve Oddo, Roseann Mercandetti, Louis Brusco, Josephine Daniele, Jennifer Dorsey, Valerie Riccardi, Fatima Panik, Joanne Moscarello, Marian Fletcher, Anna Bonacci, Minerva Hernandez, Paula Parente, Barbara Olivieri, Carol Swetz, Bridget O’Malley, Anna Brucculeri, Peggy Clevenberg, Gerald Mazzerese, Jr., Patricia Keane, Louis Milone, Joey Bastardi, Carol Stola, Amada Ortiz, Karen Aprea, Stephen Sarich, and Neil Cawley.

RECITATION OF THE ROSARY: Join your fellow parishioners in praying the Rosary after the 9 a.m. Mass on weekdays and Saturdays.

JANUARY 27, 2013

Mass  for the
Intentions Week

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, January 26 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Geri Maselli +

Sunday, January 27

8:30 AM Elizabeth Laredo +

10:00 AM Mary & Nicholas Maccia +

11:30 AM Clement Giuriceo +

5:00 PM For All the People of Our Parish

Monday, January 28

Saint Thomas Aquinas, Priest & Doctor of the Church

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Anne Marie S. & Francis X. Byrnes +

Tuesday, January 29

Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Marie Caloia +

Wednesday, January 30

Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Angelo Cicalo +

Thursday, January 31

Saint John Bosco, Priest

7:00 AM Special Intention

9:00 AM Stephanie Hrivnak +

Friday, February 1

Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Bridget Haugh +

Saturday, February 2

Presentation of the Lord

9:00 AM Remedios Guintu Usi +

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, February 2 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Rose & Daniel Pape, Sr. +

Sunday, February 3

8:30 AM Carmine Nicholas Maccia +

10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish

11:30 AM Anna & Anthony Faracco +

5:00 PM Sophie Frischman +

JANUARY 27, 2013

YEAR OF FAITH

CONVICTED BY GOD'S WORDS, HEALED BY HIS SACRAMENTS



Hundreds of books have been written in an attempt to describe the ministry of those who have been called to ordination. Recently, the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, published an informational flyer on the Sacrament of Holy Orders. It used four terms that are useful for a fruitful reflection. The recipients of the sacrament are called to serve. This rich concept is not be limited to one's parish or diocese or even church. It can involve spending time listening to the still present hope of a long time believer who is experiencing illness or walking in protest with neighbors decrying the lack of affordable housing. It might take the form of encouraging young people to hone their skills on the basketball court or visiting one who has run afoul of the law.

He is called to gather. In today's society so many men and women have isolated themselves from one another. Neighbors fail to know one another. As Christ gathered His disciples so the deacon, priest, and bishop are called to break down the walls of indifference which divide communities. Most of all, they are to be conveners of the Eucharist in which the gathering of the Church is the most real. It is the source and summit of the Christian community's life. If we need an example of one who was able to unite his community in a time of crisis we need to look no further than Msgr. Robert Weiss of Newtown, CT. With wisdom from above and compassion he led his parish and community through the most horrendous of circumstances.

Transformation means not merely the changing of one's behavior. The sacred minister must be willing, first, to be convicted by the Word of God and healed by the sacramental graces which flow from the celebrations he leads for the faith community. He must serve, then, as an instrument by which the Church reforms herself and each believer is able to draw nearer to the Trinity of Persons. He must, as well, seek to transform the human society into a more compassionate culture of life which mirrors the values of its Creator. Though advancements in science and technology are admirable true progress only comes when "justice and peace shall kiss."

As Jesus sent His disciples forth, so the ordained realizing the charisms of his brothers and sisters and their Baptismal commitment prepares them with the teachings of the Church in Scripture and Tradition and sends them forth into the arenas of education, government, and business to inform the world of human rights and responsibilities.

Let us pray that our faith community will be led by those who hear the call of the Holy Spirit and respond generously.

