

## CHOICES HAVE CONSEQUENCES!

(Sirach 15:15-20; Psalm 119: 1-5, 17-18, 33-34; 1 Cor. 2:6-10; Matt. 5:17-37)



During one of his Sunday homilies, Father Davis stated from the pulpit that he was "pro choice." When he noticed some discontented and a few smiling faces in the congregation, he boldly announced, "Yes, I am for choice!" His announcement did not sit well with the chairperson of the parish *Pro-Life Group*, who, a day later, hurriedly called a meeting of the *Pro-Life Group*, and decided to have Father Davis, removed from the parish. The group brought their case before the Pastor and demanded that he send Father Davis away for his "anti pro life stance." In his defense, Father Davis explained that there was a big misunderstanding and misuse of the term, *Pro Choice*. He further asserted that from creation God has given man the free will to choose: "The Lord, your God, says, these commandments that I give you today are neither too high nor too far for you...See, I set before you on this day life and good, evil and death...life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore, choose life that you...may live" (Deut. 30:11, 19). Father Davis argued that his promotion of the concept of choice does not in any way conflict with his belief in pro life, but rather it affirms what the Bible teaches about God's design for human beings to make choices and be ready to bear the consequences of their choices. He was mystified that the *Pro Life Group* labeled him as a supporter of abortion.

Today's first reading from the Book of Sirach further lays emphasize on the freedom of choice you and I have. It teaches that the choices that we make have consequences. It challenges us to make choices that are safe – "If you choose you can keep the commandments, they will save you; if you trust in God, you too shall live...He has set before you fire and water; life and death, good and evil, whichever you choose shall be given to you." Surely, God has given you and me the freedom to choose, but He urges us to always choose good over evil if we want to live and have a happy life. "No one does the Lord command to act unjustly, to none does He give license to sin." In other words, should we act unjustly or should we commit any act that is considered sinful, we are doing so on our own volition – using irresponsibly the freedom God has given to us. Thus, we risk losing the happiness and the life we have been promised.

In one of our recent weekly Bible Study sessions, we discovered that although the Lord God gave us the Ten Commandments to guide us in making choices that will win us life and bring us true happiness, the Scribes and the Pharisees multiplied them and offered various types of interpretations. The Commandments which were meant to free people and give them genuine happiness, became a burden and oppressive. They were interested in the *letter of the law*, but Jesus was concern with the *spirit of the law*. He interpreted the Law in the light of His commandment of love. Thus, in today's gospel, He reminded the Scribes and the Pharisees, who accused Him of breaking the Law, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill."

The purpose of the Ten Commandments is to teach you and me how to relate to God and to each other. They offer us the opportunity to make the right choices that will bring us life. Absolutely, these Commandments are "God's wisdom – mysterious – hidden, which (He) predetermined before all ages for our glory." Therefore, it does not matter whether you and I are *pro life* or *pro choice* – Your choice must never lead you to sin! Choose life over death, good over evil, heaven over an unquenchable fire of hell, and you will live!

**Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP**

## PARISH NEWS



HOLY NAME SOCIETY

**MEETING:** This Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, the Holy Name Society will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the McManus Parish Center. All men of the Parish are welcome.

The **FINANCE COMMITTEE** will meet this Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. in the Rectory. All members are asked to attend.

### St. Bartholomew's Parents Association Hosts a BBQ Square Dance

Friday, February 18<sup>th</sup>



Come and join us for a BBQ Square Dance. Bring your appetite and your dancing shoes as we chase away those mid-winter blues. Reservations required via e-mail to [smor958@aol.com](mailto:smor958@aol.com) or by calling the school office (476-7949) - adults \$10, children \$5. See the flyer in today's bulletin for more details.

**CHILDREN'S MASS:** Please make it a point to bring your child to our Children's Mass for the remaining two Sundays in February. The 10 a.m. Mass will focus on our children. The Parish Children's Choir will sing the Mass. The children are encouraged to sit with other children at a designated place during the Mass.



### OUR PARISH R.C.I.A. PROGRAM



If you or someone you know needs information on the Catholic Faith or have not been confirmed, please call the Religious Education Office listed on the cover for information on the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (R.C.I.A.) in our parish.

The **SANCTUARY LAMP** for this week will be lit in loving memory of Vito Traversa.



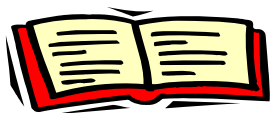
Our next **Family Faith Festival** for parents and their children will be held on **Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, from 12 – 2:30 p.m.** Families with children in grades 1 through 8 are invited, regardless of what school they attend. **Reservations must be made by Tuesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>**, by calling the Religious Education Office at 476-6676.

*A time of crisis is not just a time of anxiety and worry. It gives a chance, an opportunity, to choose well or to choose badly.*

~ Most Reverend Desmond Tutu, Former Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town

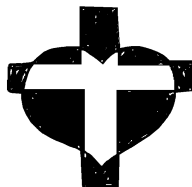
## SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

### Bible Study



Join Father Anthony and your fellow parishioners in discovering more about the Bible this Friday and every Friday at 7:30 p.m. in the School. Bring a friend! Come and have fun exploring both the Old and New Testaments.

**SOCIAL MINISTRY:** Our Food Pantry needs some restocking, especially with rice, peanut butter, jelly, soup/broth, tuna fish, canned fruits & vegetables, pasta sauces, boxed mashed potatoes & juices. **Please keep this in mind on your next trip to the supermarket.** Thank you for your continuing support!



### LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

- The **budgeted** Collection for last Sunday was \$6620.00.
- The **actual** Collection for last Sunday was \$4736.30.
- Collection in support of our School totaled \$1521.20.

We thank everyone for their generosity to St. Bartholomew's Church. May God bless and reward all your sacrifices for the Parish!



Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Alejandra Santander, Amadeu Amorim, Gloria Flanagan, Grace Raguso, Andy DeFabritis, Maryann Tolli, Maria Marte, Julieann Moroch, Ed Carpenter, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Dolores Santamarena, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Francis Farrell, Mark Baum, Christine Bellino, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Mildred Moscarello, Edith Dugan, John & Gary Roth, Lena Castaldo, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Frank Marra, Josephine Somma, Carmela Massaroni, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Carmella DelBene, Frank Umbrino, and Ann Ceriale.



Please pray for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed, especially Leona K. Bear, Rose O'Brien, and George Goresen.



"For the Spirit scrutinizes everything ..." The Holy Spirit invites you to take a good look at your marriage. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is February 25 – 27. For more information, call (877) 697-9963, ext. 3.

Couples celebrating their **50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary** anytime during 2011 are invited to attend the **Annual Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass** with Archbishop Dolan at St. Patrick Cathedral, **Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>**, at 2 p.m. Pre-registration is required. Please contact our Rectory Office for more information. The deadline for registrations for the Mass is Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. This event is sponsored by the Family Life/Respect Life Office of the Archdiocese of New York.

**BEGINNING EXPERIENCE** is offering a healing weekend from March 25-27, at the St. Lawrence Retreat Center in Beacon, NY. This invitation is open to men and women of all ages and faiths who have suffered the loss of a spouse through death, divorce, or separation. It is a time to heal and a time to begin anew. Reservations are required. For information or registration please call Ida on 845 235-5800 or Linda on 845 551-9035.

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

**EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTION:** Held the First Friday of every month at 1 p.m. Please join us when you are able.

**DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION:** Held the First Saturday of every month at 3 p.m. All are encouraged to participate.

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

### 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, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.** to make arrangements or to inquire about the availability of a particular date.

**CATHOLIC SINGLES:** The New York Catholic Alumni Club offers a varied program of social, spiritual, cultural, sports and community service activities to single Catholics (no age restrictions). To receive a free copy of our March newsletter and a brochure about the club, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: NYCAC c/o Voekel, 327 East 238<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10470.

### FRANCISCAN RETREAT CENTER

**Mondays from 6:30 to 8 p.m.**

**Bereavement Support Group**

**Feb 28, Mar 7, 14 & 28**

For those who have lost a loved one within the past two years Call (914) 478-3696 for details and registration. The Franciscan Retreat Center is located at Immaculate Conception Convent on Jackson Ave (between Rte 9A & Sprain Rd), Hastings-on-Hudson

**LECTURE:** *Rising in Wreckage: Theory, Research, and Clinical Implications of the Relationship between Spirituality and Post-Traumatic Growth*

**Tuesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 7 p.m. Open to the Public**

Fordham Westchester, 400 Westchester Ave, West Harrison  
Sponsored by Fordham's Graduate School of Religion & Religious Education – for information call (718) 817-4800, e-mail [holt@fordham.edu](mailto:holt@fordham.edu) or visit [www.fordham.edu/gre](http://www.fordham.edu/gre).

**FEBRUARY 13, 2011**

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*Mass  for the Intentions  for the Week*

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**Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Saturday, February 12 (Vigil Mass)

5:00 PM Vito Traversa +

Sunday, February 13

8:30 AM Magzag Families

10:00 AM For All the People of our Parish

11:30 AM Sister Maria Cira +

5:00 PM Felix Vazquez & Jose Romero +

Monday, February 14

**Saint Cyril, monk & Saint Methodius, bishop**

7:00 AM Richard Gmitter +

9:00 AM Elizabeth Lynch +

Tuesday, February 15

**Weekday**

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Peter Clare +

Wednesday, February 16

**Weekday**

7:00 AM Luigi Lucchetti +

9:00 AM Thomas & Ita Keane +

Thursday, February 17

**Weekday**

7:00 AM Ida Greco +

9:00 AM No Intention

Friday, February 18

**Weekday**

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Pauline Makarczuk +

Saturday, February 19

**Weekday**

9:00 AM Costanza & Umberto Stangarone +

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Saturday, February 19 (Vigil Mass)

5:00 PM For All the People of Our Parish

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Sunday, February 20  
**Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

8:30 AM Leonore Erb +

10:00 AM Carmine Nicholas Maccia +

11:30 AM Caroline Longobardi +

5:00 PM Angelina Merola +

