

Journey of Faith

When Bad Things Happen To Good People

Ann Wolf

In the Israelite tradition, Yahweh was a God of justice. Those who were faithful to the covenant could expect blessings and rewards: those who were disloyal experienced the other side of justice – destruction. In early Judaism there was no belief in resurrection or afterlife; rewards and punishments were received in this life. This idea carried over into the New Testament world, and we see an example in the story of the man born blind. Jesus' disciples asked him if the blindness was a result of the man's sin or the sin of his parents. Illness, birth defects, and demonic



possession were commonly perceived as punishment for sin.

The Book of Job was a contradiction to the image of Yahweh's justice, for Job appeared to be a holy man.

Why would Yahweh allow his destruction? Would not Yahweh bless him for his faithfulness? In today's reading we witness one of Job's laments. He calls his life a drudgery. He is like a slave laboring in the scorching sun, looking for a moment of rest in the shade. Taking to his bed, overcome with bone-wrenching tiredness, Job is unable to rest. He tosses and turns all night, waiting for the dawn. But he knows that the sunrise will not bring him relief from his distress; it will only herald the beginning of another day of suffering. Although here is no relief, at least the days pass swiftly. Their passing reminds Job that his life, too, passes like the wind.

Job has lost his family and his possessions; his body is covered with boils and open wounds. Job laments his predicament; he tries to reason with God; he pleads for mercy. Job searches his life for signs of unfaithfulness, yet he has been an upright man. He has tried to serve Yahweh. Why has he not been blessed? Why has he been cursed? Is this story perhaps not one of blessings and curses, but rather one of faithfulness?

Why do good people suffer? Why are the poor exploited and people of color discriminated against? Why are babies killed and innocent people killed by terrorists? Why? Why? Why?

The problem of evil is inherent in our world, and with evil comes suffering. But with suffering can come growth and with growth can come faithfulness and with faithfulness can come faith and meaning. Ultimately, as Viktor Frankl said, "suffering ceases to be when one finds a meaning for it."

When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. - Mk 1:32-34



Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday February 4

4:00 PM Evelyn Coughlin, 3rd Ann., Req. by family
Mass assisted by Mrs. Pitney's 6th grade class

Sunday February 5 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 AM Royal Forssen, 10th Ann., Req. by Bob & Deb Hill, Mass assisted by Mr Telicki's 6th grade class
11:00 AM Mass for the intentions of the Parishioners
Mass assisted by Mrs. Gauthier's 6th grade class

Monday February 6

8:00 AM Alfred Richard, Req. by Gil & Anna Richard

Tuesday February 7

8:00 AM David Plamondon, Req. by Mom & Dad

Wednesday....February 8

8:00 AM No Morning Mass

Saturday....February 11

4:00 PM Pete Chaume, 17th Ann., Req. by his sisters
Jeannette & Yvonne

Sunday....February 12 Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:00 AM Mercy Sutela, Req. by Bob & Deb Hill
Ronald Lison, 1st Ann., Req. by family
11:00 AM Mass for the intentions of the Parishioners
Mass assisted by the Confirmation Candidates
6:15 PM Youth Mass assisted by Ms. LaFortune's class

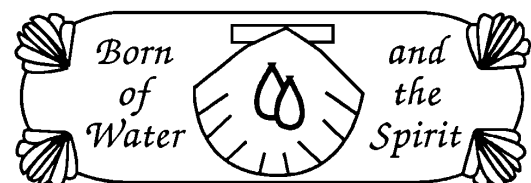


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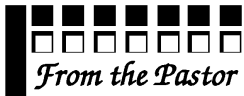
Giving is an act of the heart....You may give without loving...but you cannot love without giving.

Last Week's Offering \$ 4,233.50

Thank you for your generous support of the Parish. Your weekly financial support enables Saint Edward's to provide for the needs of our Parish.



The Baptismal Workshop and instruction for parents wishing to have children Baptized is held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM. Pre-registration for the session is required. Please call the rectory at 978-874-2362 to register for the session. The next workshop will be held on March 1, 2012.



My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Last weekend a member of our parish achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Congratulations to John Cameron MacKinnon, son of John and Theresa MacKinnon, on this great honor. This weekend we remember the contributions that scouting makes to our community as we celebrate Scout Sunday at the 9:00 A.M. Mass. Let us continue to support Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and the wonderful work they do with young people!

Have a great week!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Bill

Praying the Roman Missal

We have been singing the new version of the Gloria for several weeks now. The particular version of the Gloria that we are currently singing employs a verse and refrain format. At first, Anna and the cantors invited us to sing the refrain, while the cantor sang the verses. Now that we have heard the entire Gloria a number of times, I invite you to sing the entire Gloria along with the cantor. You can use the worship aid for the words of the Gloria!

“Westminster Food Pantry”

Just a reminder that the Westminster Food Pantry is available to families or individuals finding it hard to make ends meet. The pantry, located in the basement of the Congregational Church, is open Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30. All that is required is proof of residency (driver’s license, utility bill) in Westminster. Please call 978-874-1793 with any questions.

“Food Pantry Bin”

The food pantry bins are in the foyer of the church and the religious education center. Thank you for your generosity. This is an especially needy time for our food pantry. Please be as generous as possible.

Readings for the Week of February 5, 2012
 Sunday: Jb 7:1-4, 6-7/1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23/Mk 1:29-39
 Monday: 1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13/Mk 6:53-56
 Tuesday: 1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30/Mk 7:1-13
 Wednesday: 1 Kgs 10:1-10/Mk 7:14-23
 Thursday: 1 Kgs 11:4-13/Mk 7:24-30
 Friday: 1 Kgs 11:29-32; 12:19/Mk 7:31-37
 Saturday: 1 Kgs 12:26-32; 13:33-34/Mk 8:1-10
 Next Sunday: Lv 13:1-2, 44-46/1 Cor 10:31--11:1/Mk 1:40-45



The first Parent/Child Meeting for this year’s First Eucharist class will be held in the church hall on Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 6:30pm. This is a mandatory meeting for First Eucharist candidates and their parents.

“Souper Bowl Collection”

The Confirmation Candidates will have a collection for the Food Pantry after all masses this weekend. All donations will go to the Westminster Food Pantry to help those in need in our town. Please be as generous as possible and ‘GO PATRIOTS’

“Annual Priestly Vocation Retreat”

On Palm Sunday weekend, the Diocese’s annual Vocations Retreat will be held at Immaculate Conception Retreat Center in Putnam, CT from Friday, March 30, 6pm to Saturday, March 31, 6pm. This retreat center is only 30 minutes from Worcester. Men who are high school age, college age, and post-college age are invited to attend. This retreat is directed by Bishop McManus and the cost is free. Transportation is also provided to and from the retreat center. Contact Father Jim Mazzone, Director of Vocations, at 508-340-5788, by email at jmazzone@charter.net, or go to worcestervocations.com for more information or to sign up for this retreat.

“Knights of Columbus”

The Otter River Council of the Knights of Columbus will be in the foyer of church after all Masses on the weekend of February 25 and 26. Men eligible for membership within our parish who are interested in having their family’s join the Knights are asked to complete the prospect card that will be distributed at all masses. Just complete the card and hand it to one of the Knights as you leave. We welcome your interest and invite your participation. Thank you, Raymond Rathier, Grand Knight Otter River Council #2536

“Eddy’s Chowder House”

Eddy’s Chowder House will begin on February 24th and will continue on all the Fridays of Lent: March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30th in the Church Hall from 4-7pm. Menu is Clam Chowder, Corn Chowder and Fish Chowder. Cost is \$ 3.60 per 12 oz. bowl, \$ 4.80 per pint and \$ 8.80 per quart. Eat in or takeout available. For more information, please call Louise at 978-874-0639.

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EDITOR/ CONTACT: **Kathie**

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