

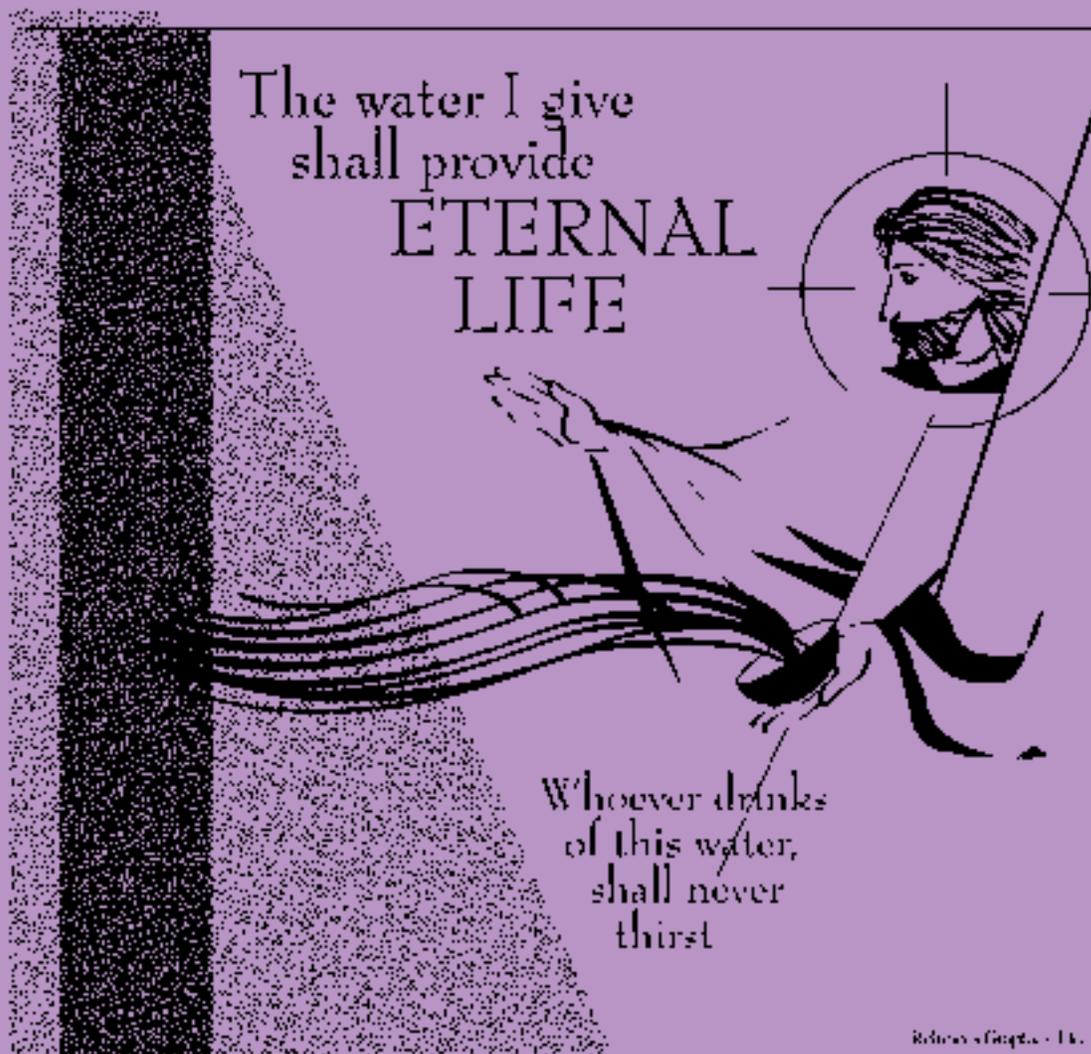
ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PARISH



CONVENT STATION, NEW JERSEY · 973-267-5330 · WWW.STMNJ.ORG

MARCH 19, 2017

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



Mail: P.O. Box 286
Convent Station, NJ 07961

GPS: 4 Convent Rd.
Morristown, NJ 07960

973-267-5330

Weekly Eucharists
Saturday 5 pm
Sunday, 9 am, 11 am, 7 pm
Monday – Saturday: 8:15 am
Reconciliation
Saturday 3:30 pm or by appt.
Holy Days
8:15 am, 12:10 pm, 7 pm

Parish Office Hours
Mon. - Wed, 9:30–2 pm

*Other times & days,
call to see if office
is open.*

www.stmnj.org

What's Happening?

Sunday
Religious Ed

Wednesday
ALPHA, 7 pm

Friday
Stations of the Cross, 7 pm

Next Sunday
Religious Ed.

Parish Retreat - March 27-30
Penance Service, March 27, 7 pm

Every Sunday
Pound A Week



Stewardship of Treasure

Last Week's Collection: \$ 6595
Online Contribution for month: \$ 2716
Please sign up for electronic giving at stthommore.weshareonline.org



Increased Offering Program

We hope to celebrate our success and send out a summary report soon. If you have not yet participated please turn in your commitment card by March 26th that we may include your information and our great results. Thank you again for your continued support and we encourage you to continue using our Online Giving...

Women's Guild

The Women's Guild will hold its meeting March 28 at 1pm. Our speaker will be Cara Bradshaw from family promise. Everyone is welcome.

Benefit Concert for Pediatric Cancer

Various music groups of Drew University are running a benefit concert on April 1 at Drew's Concert Hall. Tickets: www.f4mmc.org/benefitconcert
Proceeds benefit Goryeb Children's Hospital at Morristown Medical Center.



WELCOME

To all our visitors this weekend

As a faith community, we keep in mind who have asked us to pray for them, that they may experience the healing power of our gracious God.

Special requests for prayers at liturgy and donations made in honor of loved ones. These intentions and names of our sick are noted on the Gifts Table in the Remembrance Book and on the Weekly Sheet.



Ministry to the Homebound

If you know a homebound person who would like communion and/or on a regular basis, if you are ministering in that way OR if you can visit and/or bring communion to a homebound person, please fill out the form on the info rack in the vestibule.

Living the Eucharist

This is a weekly insert in the bulletin during Lent. You can receive daily Lenten devotionals by downloading *Living the Eucharist Mobile App* and begin praying *From Exodus to Easter: My Daily Journey Through Lent*. Get it on Google Play or Apples AppStore.

Rice Bowl



This week we encounter Fernando who encounters Opportunity in El Salvador where, despite a lack of economic opportunity, youth are pursuing their dreams of building businesses to better the lives of their families. How have you worked to better the lives of others this Lent? Visit crsricebowl.org for more.

Reflections on the Stations of the Cross

Reflections written by Blessed Miriam Teresa. \$1.00 per copy. Contact Sister Rita O'Farrell, 973-290-5465, rofarrell@scnj.org

PLAN NOW!!!! Parish Retreat, Week of March 27: Spirituality of Imperfection

This parish retreat will be led by Fr. Lou Bihr. Fr. Lou is a retired priest of our diocese who began his ministry in Paterson. As a young priest and CYO Director he founded Fr. English Community Center for he realized that hungry kids can't eat basketballs. He also established Youth Haven, the first runaway house for teens in New Jersey. His last ministry in the diocese before retirement was still in Paterson as chaplain at Straight & Narrow, ministering to adults living with addictions. Fr. Lou is a powerful preacher and witness who has been at St. Thomas More with Straight & Narrow Gospel Choir a number of times.

The Parish Retreat will begin with the Parish Lenten Penance Service on Monday, March 27 at 7 pm

Holy Hour for Peace

The Sisters of Charity invite all to a monthly Holy Hour of Quiet Prayer at their Chapel, 6:30 - 7:30 pm, the third Tuesday of every month beginning March 21. Info: Sr. Maryanne Tracey, mtracey@scnj.org.

Lenten Fast

Fasting from food. Voluntary fasting from food strengthens our skill of self denial. Difficult and uncomfortable, it reminds us of Jesus' suffering. Plus, fasting leaves an open space we can fill with God's spirit.

Prayerful fasting can increase our hunger and thirst for God.

Fasting from bad habits. We all have things we need to change. Too much TV, shopping, eating or drinking. Too much of anything is an unhealthy distraction from our relationship with God and throws our lives out of balance. By fasting, we deny our own wants and open up space for what God wants.

Fasting from luxury. For many of us, putting food on the table or buying new clothes is not a huge concern. See what people poor eat in a typical day. Then spend a day eating the same foods in the same quantities.

This Week's Question

For Adults:

Where have you found a source of "living water" for your own journey of faith?

For Children:

Name some times when your belief in Jesus helped make you stronger.

Third Second Sunday



Our Hearts Are Ready

God our Father and Creator,
 of Abraham and Jacob,
 and all of our ancestors of faith;
 bless us in our daily lives of work and prayer,
 as we find you in Word and bread and water;
Harden not our hearts
 when we are confronted with Truth,
 nor when we are lost in confusion or despair;
 For we know you are with us,
 as you were with Moses and the people of Israel,
 and as you were with the Samaritan woman.
 May our hearts be open to accept your Word,
 and our spirits be ready to proclaim your Truth.
 May our work reflect your grace
 and the fruits of our work be shared with all.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Daily scripture reflections are on our website under "Faith Formation" and in the vestibule.

ALPHA

Alpha program believes everyone should have the chance to explore the Christian faith, ask questions and share their point of view; wherever they are in the world.

Alpha is...

Real. Alpha presents the reality of who Jesus is. Those that run Alpha are open and authentic, and this allows guests to be real themselves.

Relational. Alpha is based on real friendships that are built over a few weeks, and often last for years afterwards.

Reliant. We rely on the Holy Spirit for it is only God who changes people's lives – we just introduce him.

Wednesdays, beginning at 6:45 week with supper.

If you will be attending for the first time or know someone who is, please let us know so that we can prepare food.

Wednesdays at 6:45 pm

Prayer for Lent

"God of all mercy and steadfast love, we do not always live the way you want us to. Forgive us. Help us during this season of Lent to examine how we can be more faithful followers of Jesus

Christ, your son. Guide us in our pilgrimage of discipleship. May our words and actions truly reflect your will for us. Amen."



ONLINE GIVING

Stewardship is easier than ever with our online giving system, WeShare. Visit <stthommore.weshareonline.org> for one-time or ongoing giving.

PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK'S LITURGY

Fourth Sunday of Lent

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16.1-13

It is about 1000 B.C., 250 years after Moses brought God's people from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land. It took a long time for these people from different tribes to unify as a nation. The turning point came when David became their king. The story of how he was chosen is told in today's reading. Samuel was a venerable old prophet. Jesse was a resident of Bethlehem and had eight sons, the youngest of whom was David..

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

'The ancient city of Ephesus was located on the western coast of what is today Turkey. The Christians there existed in a society dominated by pagan values, which today's reading equates with darkness.



Parish on a Journey

PARISH LENTEN RETREAT SPIRITUALITY OF IMPERFECTION WITH FR. LOU BIHR

WEEK OF MARCH 27

MONDAY THRU THURSDAY, 7 PM
PENANCE SERVICE ON MONDAY
EUCHARIST TUES. & WED.
CLOSING ON THURSDAY
WITH RECEPTION



God's Grace is Young Enough

For the Young and Young At Heart

Readings for this Sunday
Exodus 17:3-7; Romans 5:1-8; John 4:5-42

Thirsting for God

Suggested Reflection Questions

- The Second Reading spells out explicitly what the "gift of God" is: "the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." The Holy Spirit empowers us to recognize Jesus for who he is and be changed by him.
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- Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water. What he offered her was the gift of his very Self: the living water that would lead her from chance meeting to divine encounter. True encounters with Jesus never leave anyone the same..

Easter Every Sunday

"What wonderful times we shared." "Hurry up, you're late!"

"Time stood still." "I'm counting the days 'til the kids come home."

"Will tomorrow never come?" "I know my days are numbered."

"She's watching the clock." "Relax—we have all the time in the world."



Human life exists in time. Each person's life unfolds over time, made up of a finite number of days, weeks, months, and years. Yet all time is not the same. There are moments when we are impatient and eager for time to pass. On other occasions time seems to "stand still": the moment is full of serenity, complete and whole. In daily life we may struggle to manage time, organize time, keep up with the passage of time, and use time wisely. Yet there are also occasions when time seems to be pure gift. Time is the subject of some of our deepest anxieties and regrets, but also the vessel of our joys, promises, and hopes.

ETERNITY, CREATION, AND TIME

To be human is to live in time, but also to long for eternity. Built into our very nature is the capacity to know that our contingent, time-bound life is not all there is. God is eternal; he exists outside of time. To be in relationship with God is therefore to touch eternity. Faith changes the landscape of our imagination, allowing us to discover time in new ways—not as a mere procession of days, but as a gift of our Creator.

In the story of creation, from the Book of Genesis, we read that day and night take shape under God's guiding hand. When the biblical account says, "Evening came, and morning followed," this refrain is not simply a statement of fact. It stands as witness to the beauty and order that God has ordained for our world. As day after day unfolds, and the world comes into being, "God saw that it was good."

It is not surprising, therefore, that believers understand and perceive time in light of faith. The patterns by which we organize and live out our time are not merely functional or practical, but express a faith-filled perspective on the meaning of life.

THE ORIGINS OF SUNDAY

Christians inherited from their Jewish forebears a seven-day week, corresponding to the seven days described in the creation story in the Bible (Genesis 1:1–2:1). What the early Church brought to this experience of time, however, was a striking new element: the resurrection of Jesus. Christ was raised from the dead on "the first day of the week"—Sunday. So, whereas the Jewish people centered their week on Saturday, the day on which God rested, in the Christian week Sunday became the high point, because of the Resurrection. Sunday was—and remains—our weekly celebration of Easter.

For the Fathers of the Church, Sunday also had a mystical significance. It was "the eighth day," pointing to the future fulfillment of all God's promises at the end of time. Knowing that God created light on the first day of creation, they noted the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead on the "day of light." On Sunday, in this mystical view, creation and redemption met. Hope of future glory filled the hearts of the faithful. They touched eternity.

A RENEWAL OF SUNDAY

Blessed John Paul II explored the rich theological meaning of Sunday in his apostolic letter *On Keeping the Lord's Day Holy* (1998). He offered pastoral guidance to strengthen our experience of Sunday—with the celebration of Eucharist at its heart. In this letter, he called for Sunday to be renewed in the lives of the faithful as a “day of joy, rest, and solidarity.”

Sunday is the day the whole Church comes together for the eucharistic assembly. It is a day of joy, when we are more than ever aware that the Risen Lord is in our midst. “The festive character of Sunday Eucharist expresses the joy that Christ communicates to his Church through the gift of the Spirit,” John Paul wrote, “Joy is precisely one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit (cf. Romans 14:17; Galatians 5:22)” (56).

In the rhythm of work and rest, Sunday also plays an essential role. “Rest is something sacred, because it is a way for men and women to withdraw from the sometimes excessively demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to renew an awareness that everything is the work of God” (65).

Finally, Sunday is a day for works of mercy, love, and service. Sharing what we have with the very poor has been part of Christianity from the beginning, as John Paul explained: “Far from trying to create a narrow ‘gift’ mentality, [St.] Paul calls rather for a demanding culture of sharing, to be lived not only among the members of the community itself, but also in society as a whole” (70).

To keep the Lord's Day holy is to honor basic Christian values: worship of God is central, while care for ourselves and solidarity with others complete the picture.

SUNDAY MASS

Eucharist may be celebrated on other days too, of course. Yet the unique qualities of Sunday make it the premier setting for celebrating the Eucharist (Saturday evening

Mass is included as part of Sunday, in the Church's calendar). Eucharist, in turn, imparts to Sunday its deepest significance. Christ is risen. He is in our midst.

For people today who lead busy and often stress-filled lives, Sunday can be a true gift. Participation in Sunday Mass, to celebrate the Lord's Day, calls us back to an awareness of God, of salvation in Christ, and of the eternal horizon of our faith.

REFLECT

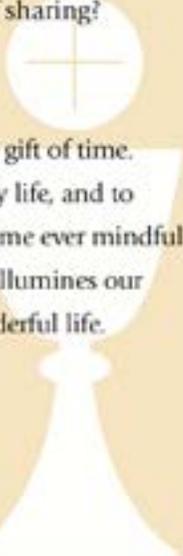
Take an inventory of things you typically do on Sunday. What are the high points? Low points? What could make this day more truly a “day of light” for you?

ACT

Put more joy into your Sunday. Choose one action that brings you joy and treat yourself to it on Sunday. Could that action be one of sharing?

PRAY

O God of Creation, thank you for the gift of time. Help me to cherish the rhythms of my life, and to honor you through all of them. Keep me ever mindful of the resurrection of your Son, who illumines our days and draws us into his own, wonderful life.



AUTHOR ■ Rita Ferrone is an award-winning writer and speaker in the areas of liturgy, catechesis, and renewal in the Roman Catholic Church.

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