



The Gentiles Ask to See Jesus
James Tissot (1836-1902)

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Freedom is one of those words that carries with it a variety of understandings and meanings; some good and some less than good. In a very broad and general sense, freedom is often understood as emancipation from some authority that prevents us from doing what we want; i.e., government, parents and even the Church. Then we have the sense of freedom that is more political and tends to revolve around personal rights and civil liberties. Both of these understandings of the word *freedom*, while not necessarily bad, nonetheless fail to capture the true essence of what it means to be free. Sure, emancipation from a dictatorship is a good thing, and so is the right to defend oneself with arms and to worship God on Sunday mornings. But what is freedom really?

To answer this question we turn to the 17th paragraph of *Gaudium et Spes*. There we read, *Only in freedom can man direct himself toward goodness. Our contemporaries make much of this freedom and pursue it eagerly; and rightly to be sure. Often however they foster it perversely as a license for doing whatever pleases them, even if it is evil. For its part, authentic freedom is an exceptional sign of the divine image within man. For God has willed that man remain "under the control of his own decisions," so that he can seek his Creator spontaneously, and come freely to utter and blissful perfection through loyalty to Him. Hence man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within, not under blind internal impulse nor by mere external pressure. Man achieves such dignity when, emancipating himself from all captivity to passion, he pursues his goal in a spontaneous choice of what is good, and procures for himself through effective and skilful action, apt helps to that end. Since man's freedom has been damaged by sin, only by the aid of God's grace can he bring such a relationship with God into full flower. Before the judgement seat of God each man must render an account of his own life, whether he has done good or evil.*

What is striking about the Church's teaching on freedom is that it clearly does involve a form of emancipation, but not in the sense that the world would have it. We are talking about emancipation from our passions, inclinations to sin, and yes, it does include coercive political authority. Freedom, as we can clearly see, has to do with a spontaneous movement toward the good and requires on our part an informed and well-formed conscience.

In order to try to state this as clearly and simply as possible, we can summarize the Church's teaching in the following way; knowing that we are created by God and sustained in our existence by His love, we enter into the truth of things by our communion with God, and there we converse with Him. Sustained by our communion/conversation with God, we take daily practical steps towards Him by freely choosing that which

Passiontide Begins

Fifth Sunday of Lent
21 March 2021

Sacred Heart, Ronan
Immaculate Conception, Polson
St. Joseph Mission, Charlo

Parish Office

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MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday

Immaculate Conception at 6:00 pm
Confessions are available at 5:00 pm

Sunday

Sacred Heart at 8:30 am
Immaculate Conception at 10:30 am

Wednesday-Thursday-Friday

Immaculate Conception at 12:10 pm
Confessions are heard on each of these days at 11:30 am and again after the 12:10 pm Mass on Wednesday during a period of Eucharistic Adoration.

NOTICE:

No Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, March 27. Weekend Masses will be celebrated on Palm Sunday, March 28 at 8:30AM at Sacred Heart and 10:30AM at Immaculate Conception.

is good, ordering all things towards God who is our supreme good and our final end.

As I mentioned last weekend in my homily, things such as lies and distortions, not to mention the coercive power of fear, conformity and disordered authority do great violence to our dignity as human persons. At times, and I understand this, we *feel* like we are making our own choices, but more often than not, we are doing what others expect of us. The only standard of measure that we can use to tell the difference comes down to the truth. This always begs the question then, that if those in authority truly have our best interests at heart and if they truly respect our freedom, then why not tell the truth? Why the deception? This goes for all authority, within the Church and outside of Her.

This is enough for now. Please continue to go back to the first chapter of *Gaudium et Spes* and really strive to peg in your mind and deeply interiorize the principles related to our human dignity. Next week we will wrap things up and then move on to other topics of interest.

God bless,
Fr. Kevin Christofferson

A Lenten Tradition: Veiling the Cross for Passiontide

by Laura Jean Rabiipour

Towards the end of Lent you may notice purple cloths draped over the crucifixes, statues, and saint images at your parish. In some churches, these items may be removed from the sanctuary altogether.

This old custom of veiling religious images is a way of focusing on the penitential aspect of this liturgical season. It reminds us in a visual way that our faith in all its glory is made possible only through the work of Christ in his suffering and death on the cross. When we cover or remove these holy and sacred images that we are so accustomed to, we are starkly confronted and reminded in a poignant way of all that Christ has won for us.

The tradition is often practiced during the last two weeks before Easter, starting on Passion Sunday (now called the fifth Sunday of Lent) and ending on Good Friday. This time period is known on the old liturgical calendar as *Passiontide*. Even though this period is no longer officially called by this name, the tradition is still practiced in many places.

Then, as in a dramatic unveiling, the holy images are again revealed for the Easter Vigil to mark the end of the penitential season. The joy of the Easter season and the hope of the Resurrection then comes to the forefront.

Temporarily veiling the crosses and religious images in the penitential color of Lent is a beautiful custom that helps us to reflect on the deeper theological meaning of the liturgical season.

- **CRUCIFIXES & IMAGES VEILED:** Passion Sunday (5th Sunday of Lent)
- **CRUCIFIXES REVEALED:** Good Friday (to emphasize Jesus' death on the Cross on that day)
- **IMAGES & STATUES REVEALED:** Easter Vigil (the early evening of Holy Saturday)

WHY: In covering the religious images during the height of Lent, all attention is centered on the Passion and death of Christ. This is why the only images NOT to be covered are the Stations of the Cross.

Just as the Church simplifies the sanctuary in these last weeks of Lent in order to focus on the penitential aspect of the season, we can also simplify our homes in creative ways by draping purple clothes over our crucifixes and other holy images.

(A Lenten Tradition, continued)

It reminds us that Jesus hid his glory during his Passion, so too we hide away our religious items in order to prepare ourselves to focus on and honor his Passion.

This tradition can be used as a learning tool for children. As a child, during Lent I would see the crosses covered and always wonder why, too afraid to ask an adult. Explain this custom to your children and encourage your family to engage in this Lenten practice. It is easy for children to become distracted by the *things* we receive at Easter. But Lent is an important time of preparation for the celebration for the Resurrection of Christ that deserves just as much attention.

What do we have in our home that distracts us from focusing on Lent?

Do I have crosses and other images that could be covered and unveiled for Easter?

This article has been updated and was originally published in April 2014. © The Catholic Company. All rights reserved.



Liturgy Calendar & Mass Intentions

Saturday, March 20th

Vigil Mass; Fifth Sunday of Lent

Mike Lies, r.b. Elinor Collins

Sunday, March 21st

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Rest of Merry Roberts r.b. The Days/The Intentions of the Parish Faithful

Tuesday, March 23rd—No mass scheduled

Lenten Weekday

Wednesday, March 24th

Lenten Weekday

Art Robinson r.b. Elinor Collins

Thursday, March 25th

Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Veronica Marquardt, r.b. Margaret Clay

Friday, March 26th

Lenten Weekday

George Collins, r.b. Elinor Collins

Humbly asking for your prayers

Marcy Bishop, Mary Oulette, Maryalice Rouselle, The Clay Family, Virginia Rubel, Liz Hipp, Michael Conrad, Ellen Holland, Kevin Normandeau, Kaylee Martin, Dave Evertz, Steve Ducharme, Leonard & Gail Piedalue, Kate Shrider Olsen, Don Herbst, Bill Nash, Donna Jacobs, Derrie Edge, Madge Vert, Bob Mahon, Joe Wolfekuhle, John Miller.

Please help to keep the list current by contacting the Parish Office. Also, out of respect for a person's privacy, please make sure that all individuals wish to be publicly identified.

Grace be to you and peace. We give thanks to God always for you all; Making a remembrance of you in our prayers without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 1:2

The Holy Father's prayer intention for March

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

Please pray for our seminarians!

Dillon Armstrong, Tyler Frohlich, Matthew Christians, Kyle Tannehill and Kaleb Mitchell, Riley Helgoe, Brett Rotz, John Cooney



PARISH ACTIVITIES

Knights of Columbus Annual Lenten Fish Fry

This year the Polson Council of the Knights of Columbus will be preparing their annual fish fry for Lent; but with a few modifications. *This year orders will be for take-out and your fish dinner can be brought out to the curb. When you arrive, call the parish office (883-2506), and your order will be brought out to you.* Indoor dining is available, but seating will be limited. All meals will be prepared using safe food handling protocols, as always, and the dinners will be served with side dishes (mac 'n cheese and colslaw) offered in separated covered containers (not buffet or serving line style). The cost is \$10 per individual, \$15 for a couple or \$25 for the whole family. **The fish fry's are Friday at 6:30 pm.**



Stations of the Cross Immaculate Conception & St. Joseph Mission

Stations of the Cross will be prayed each Friday during Lent at 6:00 pm beginning on February 19th.



Endow study group for women on Thursdays at 10:30 am. Please call Sheila LeBrun for more information at 406-208-5788.

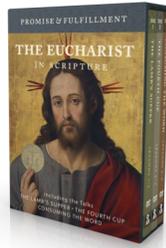
That Man Is You!

Thursdays at 6:00 am. Meetings start with hot premium roast coffee and breakfast.



Young Adult Bible Study The Eucharist in Scripture

Sundays, 6:00-7:30 pm through March 28. If you have any questions, please call Katie Devlin at 406-207-8186.



The Polson Council of the Knights of Columbus has resumed their monthly meetings. The next meeting of the Polson Council will be **Thursday, March 18th at 7:00 pm.**

"Come to Me"
~ Matt 11:28



Catholic Women's CONFERENCE

SPA DAY FOR THE SOUL
Join women from Montana and beyond for prayer, speakers, music, fellowship, and more!
Our "Spa Day" includes Mass.

SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY, APRIL 16 - 5:30 PM
ROSARY & MASS OFFERED FOR FAMILIES
FOR ALL MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN
CATHEDRAL OF ST. HELENA

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 2021
CIVIC CENTER - HELENA, MONTANA

helenacwc.com
Check out Group Registration Rate

Knitting Group

Knitters and Crocheters meet in the parish hall of Immaculate Conception on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Please contact Julie Hille at 715-882-2716 for more information. All are welcome!



All Sunday homilies are available on YouTube and can be found by searching the full name *Fr. Kevin Christofferson*.

ROSARY GROUP

St. Joseph Hospital Chapel

Monday at 6:00 pm
Friday at 9:00 am



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PO Box 568
Polson, MT 59860

Parish Offertory Progress Report

Fiscal Year beginning July 1st

Immaculate Conception
\$126,607 of \$170,000 (74%)
Sacred Heart/St. Joseph
\$27,230 of \$44,500 (61%)



Thank you for your generosity!