

Pastor's Note

March 21, Fifth Sunday of Lent

"Let's Eliminate Negative Thinking"

This weekend we celebrate the Fifth Sunday of Lent. All the readings focus on making a covenant with the Lord. The readings prepare us for a turning point in the Lenten journey as we prepare to celebrate the Paschal Triduum in two weeks. We are called to be followers of Christ, obedient to him, and act upon his word. When we serve Christ, we serve the Father.

In the first reading from the Prophet Jeremiah, we read how a prophet looks forward to a new covenant between God and the people. This reading highlights the link between knowing God and being forgiven by God. God affirms unconditional commitment to his special relationship with Israel. God promises to forgive and forget. We know and experience God precisely in forgiveness. In the Gospel of John, Jesus declares that his hour has come wherein he reflects on his coming death as in fact his glorification. Jesus claims victory over death. He once again predicts his coming death but promises it will produce a harvest of life for all who trust and believe in him.

As we come closer towards Holy Week, God is calling us into his mercy, compassion, and steadfast love that cannot be shaken. We serve Jesus voluntarily and joyfully. When we are willing to let go of our mortal lives, to lay down our lives to bear fruit, and to serve without counting the cost, the Father will be well pleased, and on the last day, we, too, will be lifted with Jesus in glory.

Parish Improvements

Ocean Breeze Home Improvements of Monroeville replaced the front Glass Block window in the St. James Rectory basement.

S & N Roofing of Slippery Rock repaired a leak on top of the St. Bede Rectory Roof.

Parish Share 2021

The Annual Parish Share Campaign has begun for 2021 and our goal is **\$178,677**. No funds collected via the program go towards lawsuits or legal affairs, rather they support the day- to- day operations at the Pastoral Center and Seminary in Green Tree, the Hospital Chaplaincy programs in our area hospitals and nursing homes, tuition scholarships and grants for our Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, and the Campus Ministry programs at our local colleges and universities. Parish Share also helps the individual parishes with assistance from the Diocesan Insurance and Benefits Office for our parish and school employees, Property and Planning Office to assist with buildings and grounds issues and the Parish Services Office assists Pastors and Business Managers with the day-to-day operations of the parish. We appreciate your support.

Sponsor Letters/Pastor Verification Forms

Any person who needs a Sponsor Letter to be a Godparent for Baptism or Sponsor for Confirmation, or a family that has a child in a Catholic Elementary or Secondary School needing the Pastor's signature for the Pastor Verification Form, needs to be sure they are "Active" in the parish database. Active parishioners include participating in last fall's Census campaign, participating at Mass either in person or on- line streaming, using the parish envelopes or the online giving program Faith Direct, and/or being active with the various parish ministries.

Looking Ahead

Palm Sunday - March 28

Palms will be blessed during each of the three Masses and available after Mass. Extra palms will be available on the front porch at the Parish Office during Holy Week.

Holy Thursday - April 1

7 pm Mass of the Lord's Supper - St. Bede

Church will remain open until 10 pm for private prayer and adoration.

Good Friday - April 2

1 pm- Liturgy of the Word Service- Mother of Good Counsel

Holy Saturday - April 3

7 pm- Easter Vigil - St. James

Easter Sunday - April 4

9 am - Mother of Good Counsel

10:30 am - St. James

Noon - St. Bede

The Parish Office will close at Noon on Wednesday, March 31, and reopen on Tuesday, April 6, at 9 am.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Mary Poknwa** and **Lawrence Nyamekeye** who are validating their marriage this weekend.

Congratulations to our 51 Second Graders who received their First Sacrament of Reconciliation last week! They are now preparing for their First Holy Communion which will be held April 17, 18, and 25. Special thanks to **Melissa Viator, Sister Daniela Bronka, Teresa Maynor, Stephanie Michael, and Bridget Kelly** for their leadership!

Something to Think About...

*No matter how small your lot
may be in life, there is always room
for a service station.*

With God All Things Are Possible!

Fr. Tom Burke, Pastor

tburke@diopitt.org