

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord: forty days after Christmas. Also, as a nation we observe that day that is referred to as Groundhog Day. I would not like to speculate which one is foremost on peoples' minds. However, this is not a bad thing since the two days are somewhat connected.

It seems that the first reference for Groundhog Day in the USA is dated February 4, 1841. There was an entry in a diary of a Morgantown, Pennsylvania storekeeper named James Morris. He entered... "*Last Tuesday, the 2nd, was Candlemas Day, the day on which according to the Germans the Groundhog peeps out of his winter quarters and if he sees his shadow he pops back for another six weeks nap, but if the day be cloudy he remains out, as the weather is to be moderate.*" There was an early connection between Groundhog Day and Candlemas Day (a.k.a. the day we presently refer to as the feast of the Presentation) at least in German folklore.

Then there is evidence from Scotland. A Scottish poem reads... "*If Candlemas Day is bright and clear, there'll be two winters in the year.*" Then there is an English poem... "*If Candlemas Day be fair and bright, winter has another flight. If Candlemas Day brings clouds and rain, winter will not come again.*" So, for all those who desire a shorter winter, clouds and rain is in order. The only question that remains to be asked is where is the location for this event to take place? I didn't detect the location of Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania.

Historically looking at these two days it is apparent that the feast of Candlemas is by far older. In fact, the observance goes back to the 4th century. On this feast of Candlemas, or what we refer to as the Presentation of the Lord, we read from the Gospel of St. Luke. Today the Gospel tells the story of Joseph and Mary bringing the baby Jesus to the temple fulfilling their religious duty after the birth of their first-born male child. At the temple they encountered Simeon and Anna, both filled with the Spirit, spoke prophecies about the Child. Simeon proclaims that Jesus is a "...*light for the revelation to the Gentiles and for the glory to your people Israel.*" Jesus is the light of revelation. He is the revelation of God as well as the one who reveals the glory of Israel and the heart of humanity. Or in the light of the words of Blessed John Paul II; Christ is the human face of God and the Divine face of Man. Again, Jesus is the light that perfectly reveals God to man as well as fully revealing the truth of man to himself. Simeon continues to say that this child will be the cause of the rise and fall of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed and that he will reveal the inner thoughts of many. He does this because he is the true light.

Simeon also speaks a word to Mary, that her heart will be pierced. In essence she will suffer because of her role as the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of God.

Nevertheless, I don't know if there are other connections between the two observances. The play on light/darkness is a natural phenomenon that is easy to follow. It is also a cause for our reflections on our faith life. If anything, I suspect that Groundhog Day was more of a tongue-in-cheek play on the devout observance of Candlemas Day. After the doldrums of a dark rainy winter we have hope for warmth and light that comes with spring.

Since this year the Gospel reading for today's liturgy is taken from St. Luke, we will be missing a passage from St. Matthew. Ordinarily today's passage would have been from the

beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount starts with Matthew chapter 5 and continues through chapter 7. In this first major discourse Jesus explains what it means to live under God's reign: The Kingdom of Heaven. The sermon is addressed to his disciples and illustrates the fundamental attitudes of a disciple. These attitudes reveal a relationship with God as their Father, to Jesus who is their Lord, to one another who are brothers and sisters and even to their enemies.

The Sermon on the Mount begins with the Beatitudes, which would have been the passage read today if not for the Feast Day. Following the Beatitudes there are three distinct sections that treat the *law, religious practices* and *material possessions and human relationships* concluding with the Golden Rule. These will be touched upon over the next few weeks.

We find the Beatitudes appealing. The attractive aspect of the Beatitudes is rooted in the genuine goodness reflected in these verses. Sometimes the appeal is sentimental. In a world that is troubled with so many problems, the Beatitudes appear to be wishful thinking. The reality is that they are very difficult to live. Jesus places a profound challenge on his disciples.

Jesus goes up the mountain and sits. He is taking the posture of a teacher. Going up the mountain echoes Moses going up the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments. Long story short, in this gesture Matthew is telling us that Jesus is assuming the role of a teacher who is presenting a new law. Jesus is the New Moses. This law goes beyond mere physical observances. It is a law that goes to the heart of the matter; the Christian Spirit of the law. It is a law that addresses the attitude of the disciple. It is the attitude that permeates the very lives of the disciples. The Beatitudes speak to the deep recesses of the heart where faith and love reside. If the heart is right the Beatitudes flow naturally. If the heart is not right, the Beatitudes are difficult or written off as wishful thinking.

It is a curious thing that today we celebrate the Presentation of the Lord; Candlemas Day, a feast that uses the imagery of light. At the end of the Beatitudes we hear the words... "*You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world.*" Christians are called to be light to the world. The world will be impacted for better or for worse by the way we live our lives. The world suffers when we fail to be light, when we fail to live the beatitudes. Jesus Christ perfectly lived the Beatitudes. In doing so Jesus reveals to us how we are to live as his disciples. However, we know when we also fail in living the Beatitudes. We know when we fail because Jesus reveals the hidden thoughts of our hearts. Nevertheless, the good news is that when we fail to be salt and light, he helps us in our failures that we may try again. The only way we can make sense of it all is that we love him and continue to put our faith in him. Without faith and love the Beatitudes make little more sense than sentimental jargon.

There are numerous reflections that can be found on the Beatitudes. It is a good thing to spend some time reading, rereading and praying with the Sermon on the Mount. With the grace of God, we can benefit well and truly be a light for the world as Jesus is the Light of the World.

Have a great week.
Father Ralko



This week we pray Week IV of the Liturgy of the hours.

Church Support

January 26, 2020	
OFFERTORY	\$9,313.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$5,424.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly deficit	\$(1,436.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

PARISH DINNER



February 8th following the 5:15 p.m. Mass in the Church Social Hall. All are invited to join us for some comfort food and wonderful fellowship. On the menu is: Old Fashioned Beef Stew, bread and cheesecake for dessert. Donations are appreciated to continue future dinners.

All are invited to join us for breakfast Sunday, February 9th following the 8:15 and 10:45 a.m. Masses.

The Parish Office Chapel is open on Wednesdays for private prayer from 12:00 p.m. through 7:00 p.m. The Rosary will be recited at 6:15 p.m.

Grief by definition is deep sorrow caused by loss. Grief can appear as sadness, pain, it can even make us physically ill. Grief can be indescribable. The St. Nicholas Grief Support Program provides monthly meetings which are offered twice in one day to afford the maximum number of participants. Meetings are held at 1:00 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish Office Meeting Room. **Join us on Thursday, February 13. This month's topic: Anger.** All are welcome.



Christmas poinsettias have been removed to the Church basement. Please feel free to take any of them you want home with you.

Register Now at www.columbuscatholicwomen.com for \$45 per person for the **Columbus Catholic Women's Conference** on **Sat., Feb. 15**, from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Ohio Expo Center. Ticket includes breakfast and lunch. Need help registering? Call the parish office! Scholarships are available. A bus will be leaving for the conference from St. Nicholas Church Parking Lot at 6:15 a.m. on Saturday, February 15th. Call the 453-0597, ext. 14 to reserve your seat. The bus has been sponsored and is free. However, you must purchase a conference ticket.

CALLING ALL MEN!!!! Attend the Catholic Men's Conference on February 22, 2020 at the Columbus Expo Center – Kasich Hall. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. The event begins at 8:00 a.m. Speakers include Bishop Robert Brennan, Jason Evert Founder of the Global Ministry, "Chastity Project"; and Head Football Coach at University of Cincinnati, Luke Fickell. Contact Mike Musselman for more information 452-9806 or 297-0154 or register online at CatholicMensMinistry.com. We will be sharing a bus with St. Thomas this Year. The bus leaves from Saint Thomas Parish at 6:15 a.m.

The Daughters of Isabella seek to promote the welfare of the community in accordance with the teachings and rules of the Catholic Church through unity, friendship and charity. The next meeting is **Tuesday, February 11** at 6:00 p.m. at the St. Nicholas Parish Office.

Men of The East - Traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration with Reflection

St. Luke's Catholic Church at 307 N. Market St., Danville, OH will host the Men of The East for a traveling Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration with Reflection on **Thursday, February 13th at 7:00 p.m.** All men of our parish are invited and encouraged to participate in these once a month Holy Hour's. For more information about Men of The East contact Mike Musselman at 452-9806.

Not sure if you are registered at St. Nicholas?

- You may have moved from your parental home.
- You grew up here but are newly married and starting your own family.
- You are living with your parents but are over 23 years of age.
- You are not receiving contribution envelopes.

If you are not sure call the parish office. Registration forms are at the entrances to the church and on our website: stnickparish.org.

- A few of the reasons to actually register in a parish are:**
- ❖ The number of registered parishioners helps the diocese determine the growth and sustainability of a parish.
 - ❖ Often if you were asked to be a godparent or sponsor for Confirmation you will be asked to provide a letter from your parish priest stating that you are a parishioner in good standing, while that is simply a form letter it cannot be issued if you are not in fact a registered member.
 - ❖ When the hospital calls it is difficult to determine exactly who we need to visit if we do not have your name in our census.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

Attention All Liturgical Ministers, Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and Servers

All liturgical ministers are asked to pick up the new schedule this weekend. If you have any questions concerning the schedule, please call Patty Boggs at 740- 453-0597. Please submit Mass preferences for April & May by **March 15**.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

It is your responsibility to find a substitute if needed.

February 9, 2020 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Saturday, February 8 @ 5:15 p.m.

Cantor: Laura DeCoy
Lectors: Sylvia Norris, Nancy Susa
Servers: Rex Hankinson, Charles Peterson
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Charlotte Snider
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Scott Peterson,
Paula Peterson
Eucharistic Ministers: Dan Snider

Sunday, February 9 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Janet Moses
Lector: Patti Logan, Maggie Wright
Servers: David Eppley, J.D. Wilson
Eucharistic Minister- Coord: Jennifer Bernett
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Susan Swackhammer,
Joshua Wright
Eucharistic Ministers: Mary Mirgon

Sunday, February 9 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Kevin McCarthy
Lectors: Stephanie Bridwell, Sam Palleschi
Servers: Nicholas Bernath, Will Bernath
Eucharistic Minister - Coord: John Haswell
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Brenda Lepi, Claire Tiberio
Eucharistic Ministers: Larry Taylor

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Praying the Rosary will resume in the St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. sometime in February. The exact date will be published in the bulletin.

Desire to spend time with Christ every day? The Church is open for private prayer and adoration of Christ in the Tabernacle; weekdays, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. until noon and Saturdays from noon until after the 5:15 p.m. Mass.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, February 3, St. Blaise

8:00 a.m., Mass: Langdon Thomas, Church

TUESDAY, February 4

8:00 a.m., Mass: Ray Andrews, Church

9:30 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, February 5, St. Agatha

4:15 a.m., School Mass: Sally A. Fleeer, birthday, Church

7:00 p.m., R.C.I.A., Parish Office

THURSDAY, February 6, St. Paul Miki

NO MASS

FRIDAY, February 7

8:00 a.m., Mass: Rita Petho, Church

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION ALL DAY UNTIL 2:00 P.M.

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

SATURDAY, February 8, St. Jerome Emillani

4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church

5:15 p.m., Mass: Florence Schoeppner, birthday, Church

SUNDAY, February 9

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

9:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m., Religious Education, Bishop Fenwick

10:45 a.m., Mass: Fern Cherrington, anniversary, Church

Readings for Week of February 3

Mon.	2 Sm 15:13-14, 30	Mk 5:1-20
Tues.	2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3	Mk 5:21-43
Wed	2 Sm 24:2, 9-17	Mk 6:1-6
Thurs.	1 Kgs 2:1-4, 10-12	Mk 28:16-20
Fri.	Sir 47:2-11	Mk 6:14-29
Sat.	1 Kgs 3:4-13	Mk 6:30-34
Sun	Is 58:7-10	Mt 5:13-16

INCOME TAX

If you would like to have a record of your donations to the Church for tax purposes, please fill in your envelope number, name and address or email and place it in the collection basket. A statement will be sent to you.

Envelope No. _____

Name _____

Address _____ or

Email address _____