

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

February 23, 2020

In the last 2 weeks we've read about the 1858 Apparitions of The Blessed Mother to St. Bernadette in Lourdes. Now let's look at something more current: A fairly recent healing there. Here is the account:

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SCIENCE SURRENDERS TO THE INEXPLICABLE

Jean-Pierre Bely Instantly Cured of Multiple Sclerosis



Jean-Pierre Bely: Healed at Lourdes in 1999

LOURDES 11 FEB 99 (ZENIT). Lourdes witnessed once again another miracle. At 10 a.m. in the underground basilica, during the solemn celebration of the World Day of the Sick, Bishop Jacques Perrier of Lourdes and Tarbes, officially proclaimed the ecclesiastical approval of a miracle which took place two years ago in the grotto and was meticulously verified by the Office of Medical Verification.

Jean-Pierre Bely, then 51, married, and the father of 2 children, was suffering severely from multiple sclerosis. He was cured instantly, completely, and lastingly during a pilgrimage to Lourdes. This is his story as recounted in the 'Lourdes Magazine'. Born on August 24, 1936. Bely was an intensive-care nurse, who was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1972. By 1984 he was walking with a cane, and in 1985 he required a wheelchair. Two years later, he was in a devastating state: bedridden, with a 100% invalidity pension.

In October, 1987, Bely went on pilgrimage to Lourdes. After celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the sick room on October 8, he received the Sacrament of the Sick the next day during Mass in Rosary Square. During the French

Rosary Pilgrimage, he was all of a sudden, overcome by a powerful sense of interior liberation and peace, something he had never experienced before.

October 9 at midday, while lying in the sick room he experienced a sense of cold which grew strong and painful only to give way to a feeling of warmth which grew in intensity. Bely sat on his bed and was able to move his arms. The next night, though in a deep sleep, he woke up suddenly and discovered he could walk - for the first time, since 1984. At the end of the pilgrimage, Bely went to the station in his wheelchair, so as not to appear different from his "companions in sickness." But by the time he returned to his home town of Angouleme, he had regained the complete use of his physical faculties, and the medical reports showed no trace of illness.

Jean-Pierre Bely came to declare his cure to the Medical Bureau of Lourdes the following year, on October 6. Since then, he has been seen annually by the doctors and, by his neurologist and the head of Neurology at the University Hospital of Poitiers.

On June 17, 1992 a first consultation was carried out at the request of the International Medical Committee of Lourdes (CMIL), the second level of examination. It concluded the "cure is not just unusual but inexplicable." In November, 1992, the Committee called for a further two-year delay to respect the criteria of a definitive cure.

After additional examinations and consultations, on November 14, 1998, the following statement was issued. *"It is possible to conclude, with a good margin of probability, that Mr. Bely suffered an organic infection of the multiple sclerosis type in a severe and advanced stage of which the sudden cure during a pilgrimage to Lourdes corresponds with an unusual and inexplicable fact to all the knowledge of science. It is impossible for medical science to say anything more today. It is for the religious authorities, however, to make a pronouncement on the other dimensions of this cure."*

Later, Bishop of Angouleme, Claude Dagens, wrote: "In the name of the Church, I publicly recognize the authentic character of the cure that Mr. Jean-Pierre Nely received in Lourdes on October 9, 1987. This immediate and complete cure is a personal gift of God to this person and an effective sign of Christ the Savior through the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes.



MASS READINGS & INTENTIONS

MONDAY, February 24

Jas 3:13-18/Mk 9:14-29

- 7:00 AM Todd Carlin
- 12:00 PM Jane Ventrella

TUESDAY, February 25

Jas 4:1-10/Mk 9:30-37

- 7:00 AM Angelina Santini
- 12:00 PM Judy Thompson

WEDNESDAY, February 26

Jl 2:12-18/2 Cor 5:20—6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

- 7:00 AM Parishioners of the Parish
- 9:00 AM Intentions of Markus Gmelin
- 12:00 PM Krystian Pielasz
- 7:30 PM Krystian Pielasz

THURSDAY, February 27

Dt 30:15-20/Lk 9:22-25

- 7:00 AM Vincent J. Lewis
- 12:00 PM The Intentions of James M. Brown

FRIDAY, February 28

Is 58:1-9a/Mt 9:14-15

- 7:00 AM Intentions of the Haitsch Family
- 12:00 PM Elsie Bartolucci

SATURDAY, February 29

Is 58:9b-14/Lk 5:27-32

- 8:00 AM Deceased Members of the Regan Family
- 4:30 PM Peter Seagriff

SUNDAY, March 1

Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7/Rom 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19/Mt 4:1-11

CHURCH

- 7:30 AM Conrad and Mary Sponberg
- 9:15 AM Rose Beagan
- 11:15 AM William Murray

HALL

- 10:30 AM Ralph A. Cipriani
- 12:00 PM Marion Freer
- 5:00 PM Parishioners of the Parish

Prayers for the Sick

Please remember our sick in your prayers, especially



Bill Brown, Thomas Castellani, Carol Dalessio, Bea Hushak, Roula Lee, Scott McCaughey, Fabiola Rincon and Stephen Smith and for those who care for them.

Only immediate family members may add someone to our prayer list. **Individuals will be removed monthly unless we are otherwise notified.**



GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

Offertory numbers were not available at the time of printing due to holiday schedules. The latest numbers will be reported in next week's Bulletin.

*Candle Intentions
Two Church Altar Candles
are Burning for the
Intentions of Mrs. John Casey*



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be prayed in our Church every Friday at 12:30pm as well as 7:30pm during Lent. (Good Friday at 12pm)

CONFESSIONS

Mondays at 7PM, starting March 2
Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12:30PM
Saturdays at 3:30PM in our Church
April 6, Holy Monday, 3:00-9:00PM

MEATLESS LENTEN FRIDAYS

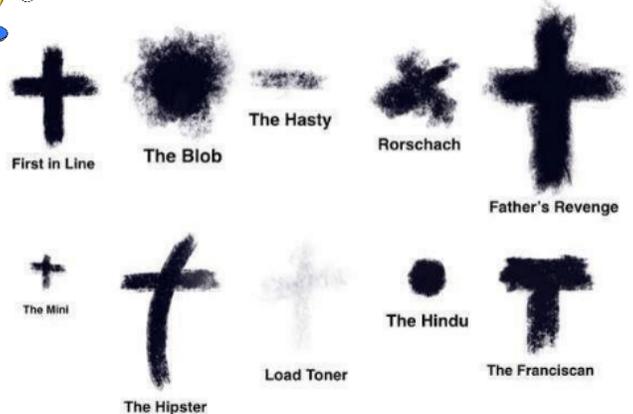
All Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat for all those who are 14 and over.

LOAVES AND FISHES

"Loaves and Fishes" is a Lenten Campaign to help feed the hungry of Fairfield County. We encourage you to put aside the cost of one meal per week and enclose it in the "Loaves and Fishes" envelope for the poor in our area. Envelopes are available at the Church and Parish Hall entrances and at our Parish Office.



A Catholic Guide to Ashes





Saint Mary School
RIDGEFIELD

Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee

Students in Grades 4-6 competed in the Saint Mary Spelling Bee, sponsored by the CT State Council of the Knights of Columbus. Winners go on to compete in Regional Competition in March. Congratulations to Lyla Wolf, Grade 4, Owen Dunleavy, Grade 5, and Abigail Ransley, Grade 6 for winning their grade level and moving on to the Regionals. Winners from the four regional competitions will go on to the State competition at the end of March. Best of luck! *Saint Mary School is currently accepting applications for the 2020-2021 school year. For more information, or to set up a tour, please contact Anna O'Rourke at (203) 438-7288, or visit www.smsridgefield.org.*



Reminder: Please utilize our new crosswalk in front of our Church. It is for the safety of all.

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?
POPE FRANCIS' FASTING IDEAS

Fast from hurting words	...and say kind words
Fast from sadness	...and be filled with gratitude
Fast from anger	...and be filled with patience
Fast from pessimism	...and be filled with hope
Fast from worries	...and have trust in God
Fast from complaints	...and contemplate simplicity
Fast from pressures	...and be prayerful
Fast from bitterness	...and fill your hearts with joy
Fast from selfishness	...and be compassionate to others
Fast from grudges	...and be reconciled
Fast from words	...and be silent so you can listen

You are invited to...
Immaculate High School's
Gala in Wonderland

Saturday, March 21, 2020
Amber Room Colonnade
1 Stacey Road
Danbury, CT
6:00pm-11:00pm

Gala Honorees
Ralph A. McIntosh '68
Nancy K. Dolan Leadership Award Recipient
Marie Proverb
Distinguished Service Award Recipient

RSVP by March 1, 2020 at immaculatehs.org/gala



"And your Father who sees in secret will repay you." Matt 6:4

This Wednesday, Lent begins. 40 days to pray, fast and grow in charity. We need this time each year to step back and reexamine our lives, to turn

away from our sins and to grow in the virtues God so deeply desires to bestow upon us. The 40 days of Lent are to be an imitation of Jesus' 40 days in the desert. In fact, we are called not only to "imitate" Jesus' time in the desert, we are called to live this time with Him, in Him and through Him.

The "desert" we are called to enter is one that is hidden from the eyes of those around us but is visible to the Father in Heaven. It's "hidden" in that our growth in virtue is not done for vainglory, for selfish recognition, or to obtain worldly praise. The 40 day desert we must enter is one that transforms us by drawing us to deeper prayer, detachment from anything not of God, and fills us with love of those we encounter every day.

www.my.catholiclife.com

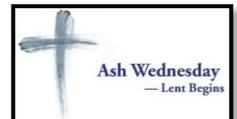
The blessing of the ashes and the significance of the day:

The priest dipping his thumb into ashes (collected from burnt palms of the previous year's Palm Sunday), marks the forehead of each with the sign of the cross, saying the words, *"Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return"* or *"Repent and believe in the Gospel."* By marking the sign of the cross with ashes on the foreheads of her children, the Church gives us:

- 1- a firm conviction that a) we are mortal beings, b) our bodies will become dust when buried and ashes if cremated, and c) our life-span is very brief and unpredictable;
- 2- a strong warning that we will be eternally punished if we do not repent of our sins and do penance; and
- 3- a loving invitation to realize and acknowledge our sinful condition and return to our loving and forgiving God with true repentance as the prodigal son did.

Ash Wednesday message: We are invited to effect a real conversion and renewal of life during the period of Lent by fasting, penance, and reconciliation.

www.vaticannews.va



**CATHOLIC ACTION
DONATE: FOOD PANTRY**

Food collected in February goes to the Dorothy Day Hospitality House. Collection bins are in the Church and Hall. Thank you for your generosity!



Two or three **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** to serve lunch. Commitment is appx 2x/month, weekdays of your choosing, Mon-Fri. Hours: 11:45am-1:00pm. Where: Congregate Housing, 51 Prospect Ridge. For more info or

questions, contact Suzanne MacAvoy, 203 438-7056, sdmacavoy@hotmail.com.



**ST. MARY PARISH MEN'S MINISTRY
40-DAY LENTEN CHALLENGE**

Challenge yourself to get up early and attend 6 Saturday-morning meetings over the 40 days of Lent. Meet other men who are thinking about and facing the same life issues you are. Topics are interesting and we learn from each other's experiences as well as build some good friendships. Hope to see you in the Parish Hall. All are welcome. Yes, it's early (6:30am), but it's only 6 weeks and you'll love it!



**MARQUETTE COUNCIL OF THE
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**

We offer Catholic men and their families an opportunity to explore their faith and share God's love through service to our priests, parish and community. Join 2 million Knights around the world as you share your time & talents. Learn more at www.KOFC.org or contact Phil Del Giudice, Grand Knight, at Compass_grp@yahoo.com.

PILGRIM VIRGIN

Our Lady's message to the world: Do penance, amend your life, offend God no more and pray the Rosary daily for world peace and the conversion of sinners. Invite the Pilgrim Virgin of Fatima Statue into your home. To schedule a visit call Elma Stoveken at 203-894-1341 or email at jstoveken@comcast.net.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Cover a weekly hour at our Adoration Chapel and enjoy many blessings! Sign up @ www.smcr.org. No computer access? Contact Monica at 914-533-2832.

Open Adoration Hours:

- Monday 9 am, and 2 pm
- Wednesday 11 pm
- Thursday 1 am, 12pm
- Friday 7 am and 4 pm
- Saturday 3 pm and 10 pm
- Sunday 5 pm

MASS SCHEDULE

- Saturday**
8:00 AM, 4:30 PM Vigil Mass (Church)
- Sunday**
7:30 AM, 9:15 AM, 11:15 AM (Church)
10:30 AM Family Mass, 12:00 Noon and 5:00 PM Youth Mass (Hall)
- Monday - Friday**
7:00 AM and 12:00 noon (Church)

Holy Days of Obligation
Vigil Mass 5:30 PM

- 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM, 12:00 Noon 7:30 PM (Church)
- *Easter and Christmas have special schedules

Our Mission:
LIVE the gift of our faith, ENRICH our understanding of that gift, and PRACTICE our faith in compassionate service.

OTHER SACRAMENTS

Reconciliation
Every Tuesday & Thursday from 12:30-1PM and every Saturday from 3:30-4:30PM (Church)

Baptism
Celebrated each Sunday at 12:30 PM
New parents must attend a pre-baptism class. Call Parish office to schedule both

Marriage
Call Parish Office at least 9 months prior to wedding
Anointing of Sick
Call Parish Office to make arrangements
In case of serious illness or death in the family, call Parish Office immediately.

CEMETERY
203-438-3606
ADORATION
Monica & Bill Brown
914-533-2832

Pastor: Msgr. Kevin T. Royal
MsgrRoyal@smcr.org

- Parochial Vicar: Rev. Damian K. Pielez, frdamian@smcr.org
- Parochial Vicar: Rev. Lourduraj P., O. Praem., frraj@smcr.org
- Deacon: Rick Lawlor, dnlawlor@diobpt.org
- Deacon: Robert Salvestrini, salvo95@aol.com

Parish Office Hours:
Monday-Friday 10AM-4PM
203-438-6538

- Parish Receptionist: Kim Macko, kmacko@smcr.org
- Parish Administrative Assistant: Joanne Brown, jbrown@smcr.org
- Communications Manager: Carolyn Haitsch, chaittsch@smcr.org
- Office Manager: Deborah Korniewicz, dkorniewicz@smcr.org
- Facilities Scheduling: Jbrown@smcr.org & kmacko@smcr.org
- Youth Minister: Brenner LeCompte, 203-438-2394, blecompte@smcr.org
- Director of Music: Darren Motise, 203-438-6539, ext. 300, darren@smcr.org
- Religious Ed: Josephine Bove & Megan McCaughey 203-438-7335, religioused@smcr.org
- St. Mary School: Anna O'Rourke, Principal, ourourkea@smsridgefield.org

- Director of Faith Formation: Patricia Postiglione,** ppostiglione@smcr.org
- Finance Council Chair: John Spera,** johnspera57@gmail.com

Find us on FACEBOOK & TWITTER @ SMCRIDGEFIELD