



**FEBRUARY 21, 2020 | 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

## HOLY FAMILY PARISH

312 Tazewell Avenue, Tazewell, VA 24651

(276) 988-4626 | email: [theword1875@verizon.net](mailto:theword1875@verizon.net) | facebook: search Holy Family SWVA

### **ST. THERESA'S**

312 Tazewell Ave.  
Tazewell, VA 24651

### **ST. ELIZABETH'S**

160 Merrick Lane  
Pocahontas, VA 24635

### **ST. MARY'S**

1122 Farmer Street  
Richlands, VA 24641

### **ST. JOSEPH'S**

1007 Independence Rd.  
Grundy, VA 24614

## FACING OUR FORTY DAYS WILDERNESS TRIAL

Often we undertake some ventures and enter into a lot of things without thinking about them first. This also applies to the Lenten period we have entered. How many of us gave it a thought or did we launch into it thinking that when we get there we shall survive it. The season is a spiritual one and calls for spiritual preparation before making the encounter.

Today in the Gospel Reading (Mark 1:12-15) we are told that our Lord Jesus Christ was led (driven) by the Spirit into the wilderness and he was there for forty days, tempted by Satan. There in the wilderness he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him. Later on, after John's arrest, he came to Galilee preaching the gospel of repentance.

Our Lord was driven (or moved) into the desert by the Spirit—the Holy Spirit (Matt.4:1). At every point in time that there is a movement, something is always responsible for that movement. Put another way and using the idea Thomas Aquinas got from Aristotle, whatever moves is moved by another (*quid quid movetur ab alio movetur*). From the passage, we understand that the movement of our Lord into the wilderness was a response to the action of the Holy Spirit. A personal question can be formulated at this point: “what is it that really moves you?”

In retrospect, we need to ask where our Lord was coming from. The answer is easy; he was coming from the river Jordan where he was baptized by John. We can also recall

that during his baptism, the heavens opened and the Spirit of God descended upon him in form of a dove. It is that same Holy Spirit that drove him into the desert where he stayed for forty days and forty nights.

Now let us look at the place where he was driven: the wilderness. In the Bible, wilderness is often described as a wasteland, an arid region without water (Psalm 63:1; 107:4). In fact, this particular place is also called desert in some translations. The two are one and the same place (Isaiah 35:1). A desert is a barren and unprotected area of land. Survival in the desert is indeed difficult both for plants and animals. It was into this area that the Spirit moved our Lord Jesus Christ and he did not go there for pleasure or tourism. He was there to fast and to pray for a definite period of forty days.

One could also ask why *forty* days. Put in another way: “what is the significance of the number forty in this context?” A careful search in the Bible would reveal that the number forty was mentioned frequently and is indicative of a long time as well as a period of divine testing, trial, probation and judgement. Some instances:

- During Noah's time the rains came down for a period of forty days and forty nights (Genesis 7:4).
- Moses was with God on the mountain for forty days and forty nights when he received the commandments (Exodus 24:18; 34:28).
- The spies searched the land of Canaan for forty days (Numbers

13:25).

- The Israelites were in the wilderness for forty years before they reached the Promised Land (Numbers 14:33-34).
- God allowed the land to rest for forty years (Judges 3:11; 8:28).
- Israel did evil; God gave them to an enemy for forty years (Judges 13:1).
- David reigned over Israel for forty years (2 Samuel 5:4, 1 Kings 2:11).
- Solomon reigned for forty years (1 Kings 11:42).
- Elijah took one meal that gave him strength for forty days (1 Kings 19:8).
- God gave Nineveh forty days to repent (Jonah 3:4).
- Jesus remained on earth forty days after resurrection (Acts 1:3).

From what we have seen above, the period of forty days which we are going through this season of Lent is not strange. It is rather a divine prescription that we need to reckon with.

Within the period of forty day, our Lord Jesus Christ was with the wild beasts. We will notice here that Mark did not go into details about the contents of the temptations like Matthew and Luke. However the mention of wild beasts in contrast to angels that ministered to him is an indication of the presence of the devil.

The representation of the devil in form of a beast is rife in the Bible. In the Garden of Eden the devil came to tempt Eve in the form of a serpent (Gen.3:1). In some other places the

devil is referred to as the beast and serpent called Leviathan (Isaiah 27:1; Psalm 74:14). The book of Revelation is filled with numerous denotations about the beast. For instance there is the mention of the mark of the beast (Rev.13:16; 14:9). Archangel Michael fought against the dragon in the war the broke up in heaven; here it is called the Devil and Satan (Rev. 12:7-9). There is also the mention of the destruction of the beast with his false prophets in the lake of fire (Rev.19:20). There is a final victory over the ancient serpent or dragon called Devil and Satan (Rev. 20:1-3).

It is clear that our Lord was not having a jolly time with the wild beasts; rather he went through trials in their hands. But one thing was significant—he was triumphant after the trials. That was the moment the angels came to minister to him.

After the victory over Satan, our Lord came to preach the message of repentance. He went through temptations and won. His preaching was thus a testimony that as he won over the beasts and their trials, we also can have victory if we first receive the good news and repent from our sins.

The ashes we received on Ash Wednesday and which launched us into the Lenten season could be likened to the baptism our Lord received before he was moved by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. Like our Lord Jesus Christ, we are faced with a period of forty days filled with trials. It is rather unfortunate that some of us are moved by every other thing this season but the Holy Spirit. The truth is that without the Holy Spirit we are helpless because He is the one that helps us in our weakness (Romans 8:26). Without the Holy Spirit the Lenten season would be a

mere religious routine.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not enter the wilderness for the fun of it. He went to pray, fast and abstain. And he did all in total charity. We are in for a serious business this season. Like our Lord Jesus Christ we must necessarily face some trials because we are in the region of the wild beasts. In the words of St. Peter, we should be calm but vigilant for our enemy the devil is going round like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat (1 Pet. 5:8).

The success of our Lenten observance has a lot to do with our alignment with the Holy Spirit, our only source of strength in the face of our temptation and trials. St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:9) made us understand that the Holy Spirit gives us the identity as members of Christ. So, anyone who does not have the Holy Spirit does not belong to Christ.

We need to reflect a bit more on the trials and temptations we could face this season. It is important to note that we can only be tempted by what is of great importance to us. A rat can be tempted effectively with a fish not with a bunch of bananas; that is the concern of the monkeys.

The best safeguard to temptation is to watch our desires and appetites. In his temptation, our Lord was presented with material needs, power and fame. There is no guarantee that we may not face similar challenges as we pass through these forty days. Let us also be assured of God's presence in all our trials as His angels will be with us to support us and guard us (Exo.23:20; Psalm 91:11-12).

Do have a fruitful First Sunday of Lent and may your blessings continue to enlarge. Have a grace-filled week.

## PASTOR

Fr. Eric Anokye  
eanokye@richmonddiocese.org  
(276) 385-7312

## OFFICE MANAGER/ BOOKKEEPER

Lydia St. Peter

## OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Fri 9:30AM – 2:30PM

Please call the parish office to make arrangements for the **Sacraments of Baptism, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony** as well as funerals. **Reconciliation** is available from 30 minutes before a scheduled Mass.

## MASS TIMES

### SATURDAY

4PM – St. Joseph's

6PM – St. Mary's

### SUNDAY

9AM – St. Elizabeth's

11:30AM – St. Theresa's

### MON | WED | FRI

10AM – St. Theresa's

Cover image:

*Angels Ministering to Christ* by  
Sir George Hayter, 1849

# IMAGINE SCRIPTURE TO REFRESH YOUR PRAYER

ELIZABETH SCALIA, *Word on Fire*



**T**HE STORY goes that St. Ignatius of Loyola, while recovering from a severe wartime injury, filled a three-hundred-page notebook with what some might call “daydreams of Scripture”—a way of passing the heavy hours on his hands that actually developed into an important practice of prayer within what has become known as Ignatian spirituality.

Anyone who has made an Ignatian retreat, whether extended or brief, has likely at some point been advised to concentrate on some scene within the Gospels and “imagine yourself there, as part of the crowd, or one of the Apostles or main players; place yourself within the scene.”

The idea is to make Scripture come alive within your mind and senses, and see what you learn—what new insight or perspective adds to your prayerful contemplation. A retreat master might say something like, “Imagine the dust, the dirt, the look of frayed robes around you, the scents within the hot air,” and for many that prompt alone is enough to activate

the imagination. Perhaps suddenly we are part of a confused mob, wondering at being encouraged to shout “Crucify!” toward a battered man for whom, just a week earlier, we had been laying down palms and shouting “Hosanna!” We find ourselves looking at those around us—some clearly troubled, others so easily swayed—and then asking ourselves important questions about how easily our own passions can become roused beyond our better instincts, how easily we are carried along in a crowd.

Or perhaps our imagination draws us to the bleeding, hunched form of the man, Jesus of Nazareth, and we are observing a trickle of blood falling spattering onto the stone of the portico, and this sparks us to remembering the last time we drank of the Precious Blood during Mass, believing, knowing, that within a mere drop of that Blood is the fullness of Christ, entire. That thought may remind us of the sacrifice of the lambs at Passover—how within the experience of Jews in the first century it was common to see blood flowing down from the altar and onto the

temple steps as lamb after lamb was slain, their carcasses raised upon wooden stands that looked very much like crosses, until all the blood was drained from their bodies.

The lambs, the sacrifices (so many of them!), the blood that cleanses.

Perhaps we've read about the Passover many times before, and heard dozens of sermons about Christ, the Paschal Lamb. But suddenly, having placed ourselves within just a few lines of Scripture, we have managed—through some combination of the Holy Spirit and our own subconscious attractions working together—to deeply grasp and internalize what before was a vague idea for us: that Christ Jesus is the Lamb slain, the Cleansing Sacrifice, the Blood pouring down, in time and transcending time, on Calvary and re-presented on our own altars, the once-for-all sacrifice.

The experience of scriptural prayer, dredged through our imagination, helps to broaden our insight into the Good News, and forever deepen our understanding of the sacraments and teachings of Christ and his Church.

Such prayer can move us in surprising ways. In contemplating Herod's horrific order to slay all of the masculine children born throughout Bethlehem and Judea, for example, we might find ourselves wincing at the piercing sound of mothers in grief—of hoofbeats and shrieks and the gleeful growls of soldiers grown hard and uncaring about human life, especially about people on the peripheries, already devalued. All of that might direct our thoughts to the marginalized among us, to our own cruelties or indifferences to the oppressed of our time, and thereby ignite an examination of conscience.

Or it might draw us to imagining Herod, waiting for a scribe to write out his order, contemplating the ring with which he will seal it, and the ways of power.

That might bring us to ponder how earthly authority that is understood as a charge from the Lord might excite mercy, while that same power, when matched with human fear and brokenness, can warp the soul.

All of that might bring insight into how we address a situation at work, or indeed, with our own children at home.

Especially in Lent, this Ignatian way of contemplative prayer can help Christians to tap deeply into Scripture in a way that can refresh the roots of our faith and renew our understanding. And it is much easier to put into practice than we might think, because we all live within our imagination more than we realize, and can access it more readily than we know. For those who practice *lectio divina* or keep a prayer journal, such contemplation might come much more naturally than expected; all one needs is a bit of attention to the Holy Spirit. What line of Scripture is jumping out for you, feeling urged upon your attention? And, conjuring the spirit of St. Ignatius, how near is a pen and pad of paper to record your daydreams of Scripture?

How willing are you to take a dive into the Sea of Galilee with Peter as he rushes toward Christ, or to walk behind James and John, those "Sons of Thunder," as they debate questions both large and picaresque, or to stand beneath the cross and feel the last drop of a Savior's blood fall upon your own hand?

There is powerful intimacy and personal insight to be gained in these prayers of the imagination. Do not be afraid to smell the smells, or hear the sounds, or to catch the eye of the Christ, and then discover that he knows you to your depths and will meet you there, if you permit him.

Write it down and put it away. When you read it over a bit later, you may be very surprised at how much you have come to discover about heaven and earth, and the state of your own soul.

*mass intentions*

**Date Intention**

**2/20 SATURDAY**

4PM

6PM

**2/21 SUNDAY**

9AM

11:30AM Bob Nassif ☩ by Randy & Cathy Bolling

*council members*

**PARISH COUNCIL:**

Tonya Hylton, Frannie Minton, Ralph Shawver, Cindy Deskins, Barbara Jones, Donna Lambert

**FINANCE COUNCIL:**

Kathy & Bob Buchanan, Randy Bolling, Doug Vance, Anne Danko, Jim Talbert, Jackie Shawver, Janet McDonagh

*please pray for*

Louise Serreno\*  
Margie Stutso \*  
Margaret Shawver  
Billy Akers  
Scotty McBride  
Gerry Hankins  
Eric Pellerin  
Clarence Moore  
Lexi Cox  
Sarah Wall  
Paris Whisher  
Tammy Bennett  
Margaret Wasilewski  
Nic Ulate  
Elizabeth Gregory  
Frannie Minton  
Sue Bailey  
Christian Lambert  
Shane Neal  
Tiffany Hladek  
Tom & Sandra Bost  
Archbishop John Kwofie  
Carolyn Wade  
Stacy Hall  
Pete Belcher  
Willie Hylton  
Bryan Gunter

Michael Beavers  
Lillian Lewis  
Rick Hall  
Lucas Boyd  
Doug Tabor  
Ralph Heldreth  
Elizabeth Managan  
Chris Jessie  
Katie Hackworth  
Leo Brown  
May Anne Rynne  
Carolina Ferrare  
Junior Aiken  
Mary Spencer  
Shirley Hylton  
Anne St. Peter  
Rayburn Minton  
Jeanne Hash  
Philip & Pat Imel  
Lara Marshall  
Virginia Shumate  
Jim Shumate  
Doug Vance  
Andrew Satmary  
Frank Mauceri

*stewardship of treasure*

**Donations Received as of February 14 (Week 33)**

CHURCH	ATTENDANCE	RECEIVED
St. Joseph's	9	\$125
St. Elizabeth's	18	\$1,395
St. Mary's	12	\$215
St. Theresa's	20	\$1,335
Total Offertory	59	\$3,070
Outside Donations		
Year to Date Received		\$77,662
Goal		\$72,980
Ahead/Behind Goal		+\$4,682

**BUILDING FUND:**

St. Joseph's: \$97  
St. Mary's: \$125  
St. Theresa's: \$252

Mass continues to be livestreamed Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10AM from St. Theresa's and the church will be open for anyone who wishes to attend in person. **Masks are mandatory!** The 11:30AM Sunday Mass at St. Theresa's will also continue to be livestreamed for those who are not yet able to join us in person.

Every Wednesday evening at 7PM, Fr. Eric leads us in a study of Sacred Scripture. This will be an ongoing series, with occasional breaks. We are currently studying the Gospel of Matthew. Why not start a new relationship with the Word! Come in person or join us on Facebook. Questions and comments will always be welcome!

Join us every Friday in Lent at St. Theresa's at 10AM for Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Divine Mercy chaplet, and Stations of the Cross. Daily Mass will begin at 11AM following Benediction.

### **ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL**

Here we are. Another Lenten season is upon us. This is the year I'm going to make it all 6 weeks. I'm going to give up Coke and candy bars. I'm going to fast on Fridays, and I'm going to pray in the morning before work/school. I'm committed. (By the way, how are your New Year's resolutions going?)

Don't worry! We've all been there. Every year. All you have to do is try. All you have to do is try each day. Then, when you forget and eat something you shouldn't have, or didn't pray in the morning, just start over the next day. The biggest thing is to **NOT GIVE UP.**

Ask God for help this Lent. Ask him to walk with you, to guide you, to strengthen you. Then do your part - One. Day. At. A. Time. — and be sure to **pray, fast and give.** (Have you made your pledge to the Annual Diocesan Appeal?)

---

*birthdays & anniversaries:*

---

FEBRUARY

---

**BIRTHDAYS**—27: Lisa French

## Dudley Memorial Mortuary

Serving the community for over 60 years

729 Virginia Avenue  
Bluefield, VA 24605  
(276) 326-1141 | fax: (276) 326-2736  
dudleymemorial@outlook.com

## Appalachian Family Care LLC



18765 Riverside Dr.  
Vansant, VA 24656  
Tel. (276) 935-2880  
Fax (276) 935-2889

Located in Food City  
Owner: Frannie Minton

## DOMINION DRIVEWAY & PARKING LOT PAVING, INC.

- Paving
- Concrete
- Grading
- Landscaping
- Demolition
- Gravel
- Topsoil
- Patio Paver
- Retaining Walls



2927 Adria Road  
North Tazewell, VA 24630  
**Phone: 276-979-8504**  
Email: [pave4u@roadrunner.com](mailto:pave4u@roadrunner.com)

Amanda Hankins-Shrader – 276-701-5840

Scott Shrader – 276-970-3004

[www.DominionDriveway.com](http://www.DominionDriveway.com)

## Craven-Shires Funeral Home, Inc.



3431 COAL HERITAGE ROAD  
BLUEFIELD, WV 24701  
PH: (304) 589-3860  
FAX: (304) 441-5299  
[INFO@CRAVEN-SHIRE.COM](mailto:INFO@CRAVEN-SHIRE.COM)

JIMMIE L. SHIRES – FUNERAL DIRECTOR, L.I.C.

## Benjamin Farley Agency, Inc.



Nationwide

3144 E Cumberland Rd.  
Bluefield, WV 24701

Mike Romeo, Agent

(304) 325-9357  
Bluefield

(304) 425-3678  
Princeton



232 BEN BOLT AVE  
TAZEWELL, VA 24651  
(276) 988-4190



3224 CUMBERLAND ROAD  
BLUEFIELD, WV 24701



PRO SHOP - SNACK BAR - BILLIARDS

CARL MARIOTTI, JR.  
LORETTA HAMMOND

304-325-7037