



"I feel sorry for him. I forgive him and hope that he can find peace and purpose in his life... My simple understanding is that God has asked me to be a witness to do His will in this world. And I think that's my life." When Officer Steven McDonald died on January 10, at the North Shore University Hospital in Long Island after a heart attack, this heroic man of 59 was able to teach us a whole lot about life and forgiveness through his story and the brief words cited above. When he was shot during a robbery in 1986, in Central Park, his life flashed across his eternal soul in a matter of seconds.

The July 12 tragedy involved a teenage boy at the age of fifteen, named Shavod Jones. Left for dead, the officer was rushed to Metropolitan Hospital and heard doctors discussing his impending death. As he was slipping into unconsciousness, he had a vision of his pregnant wife Patty with a brief prayer in his heart. "God, don't let me die." The story dramatically grew, much like the one in 1981 when Pope John Paul II forgave his would-be assassin Ali Agca, when McDonald publically forgave Jones on March 1 in 1987 when his son Conor was baptized at Saint Patrick's Cathedral by the late Cardinal John O'Connor (who would ordain me to the priesthood on May 15, 1993).

O'Connor challenged McDonald to see the story of Christ in his suffering, in these spiritual words: "He (Jesus) didn't save the world through teaching and preaching and miracles. He made it possible when he was lying motionless on the cross." Hence was born a story of mercy and forgiveness, that even prompted the heroic officer to say these words about Jones (who after his prison term was completed died in a motorcycle crash on September 10, 1995): "Shavod is with me wherever my story is told. We have helped many people, the two of us." The drama of the story built when Jones called McDonald to express remorse. His mother Sharon reflected: "They became friends. They talked it out, and I'm glad they got to do that. He wanted to apologize and set things straight. If Shavod had lived, he probably would have been an aide to Detective McDonald. In the end, Shavod had a good heart."

I met Steven McDonald roughly fifteen years ago, while stationed at Annunciation Church in the Crestwood section of Yonkers. He came to the parochial school of nearly 500 students, whose principal at that time was a Sister Anne Mansell (whose Presentation community lives at our parish convent, five in number currently, and a wonderful spiritual presence in the heart of the City of Newburgh on Benkard Avenue). The message of living God's plan in our brief life, asking for forgiveness when we offend Him, and offering it to others when they hurt us through gossip and slander, pulled the entire student and faculty body into one of wholeness and perspective. The children received the rare opportunity to meet both a hero and someone for whom God was the center of his existence. I had a personal verbal exchange with him afterwards. Our picture was taken together. I so wanted to receive his autograph, but his permanent paralysis prevented that (much like that of blind singer Jose Feliciano, who simply marks his photographs with an insignia of hope). I touched him with the school program that marked the student visitation event, and that to me was how this saintly man consecrated that piece of paper. I still have the picture and program.

In a wider message, this brave man's recent death reminds us of the beauty that can arise from our life tragedies and even sinfulness. They can and should provide transformation of the soul and heart, reminding us of the essence of God in our temporal existences. He is a saint for our age, as I felt Roberto Clemente was in 1972 dying while bringing earthquake relief to Nicaragua. We grow likewise.

# MASS INTENTIONS

**Mon. Mar. 20**

7:00am Ann & Anthony Farkas  
By Mary Ann & Tony Farkas  
Noon Olga Deagostino-Meehan  
By Daughters

**Tues. Mar. 21**

7:00am Ed & Ann Denniston  
(90<sup>th</sup> Birthdays)  
By Patty & Brian  
Noon Anne McGuire  
Health & Blessings  
By Henry Sawoska  
William H. Foster Jr.  
(13<sup>th</sup> Anniv)  
By Family

**Wed. Mar. 22**

7:00am Susan Randall  
Health & Blessings  
By Mary Randall  
Joseph DiPalma  
By Paula & John O'Connell  
Connor Laverty  
By Mom

**Thur. Mar. 23**

7:00am Susan Randall  
Health & Blessings  
By Mary Randall  
Noon Maddalena Ponttilo  
By Guiseppa

**Fri. Mar. 24**

7:00am Marion Miller  
By Helen Miller  
Noon In honor of Our Lord and  
His Blessed Mother  
By Electra Orzechowski

**Sat. Mar. 25**

Noon Pope Francis  
4:30pm Joan Murphy  
Health & Blessings  
Patrick DeLuca  
By The DeLuca Family

**Sun. Mar. 26**

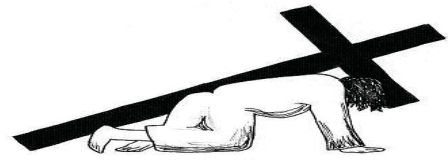
8:00am Albert Pushman Sr.  
By Bill & Marion Pushman  
11:00am Marion Randall  
By Mary Randall  
William Hurley  
By Asane Family



**WEEKLY COLLECTON**

**MARCH 11-12, 2017**

1<sup>st</sup> Collection \$5,703.00  
2<sup>nd</sup> Collection \$1,598.00  
TOTAL \$7,301.00



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

**Fridays at 7:00pm**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> collection this weekend is for  
**PARISH RESTORATION & ENDOWMENT**

**MASS ATTENDANCE**

**MARCH 11-12, 2017**

4:30pm 225  
8:00am 120  
11:00am 203  
1:30pm 73  
Total 621

STATIONS OF THE CROSS 18



Our Holy Hour with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday from 5:00pm to 6:00pm will be for the intention of **OUR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES WHO WILL MAKE THEIR RETREAT THIS WEEKEND.**

**FINDING PEACE IN A TURBULENT WORLD,  
WITH THE GUIDANCE OF  
ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

Experience a week long special connection through the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi at the **Mariandale Retreat** and Conference Center in Ossising, NY. The retreat will run from **Sunday, July 16** at 5:00pm thru **Friday, July 21** at 1:00pm. Our Pastor, Fr. Bill Damroth will be the facilitator. Enjoy a week of reflection, exploration, talks, films, nature hikes, swimming, prayer, mass and confession.

Enjoy organic foods and an exceptional dining experience and leave Mariandale with a sense of peace well-being and a connection with nature. Cost \$475. per person. For reservations call 914-941-4455 ext 106 or e-mail [Knoreika@ophope.org](mailto:Knoreika@ophope.org) Visit their website at [www.mariandale.org](http://www.mariandale.org).

**TODAY**  
**THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT**

**First Reading:** Exodus 17:3-7

This story from Exodus reveals that the Israelites, after their escape from Egypt, cast all blame for their sufferings on Moses. In this instance, they were dying of thirst. When Moses appealed to the Lord, the Lord directed Moses to strike a rock and water would gush forth.

**Second Reading:** Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

Paul reminds the Romans that because Christ died for all people, they are acceptable in God's sight.

**Gospel:** John 4:5-42

Jesus converses with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well. When Jesus indicates that whoever drinks from the water He gives will never be thirsty again, the woman immediately answers, "Give me this water, sir...". Jesus then reveals that she has had five husbands and tells her that He is the Messiah. The woman believes Jesus and proclaims this news to all the townspeople, who believe her and come to see Jesus.

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK**

Monday

Dn 9:4b-10; Lk 6:36-38

Tuesday

Is 1:10, 16-20; Mt 23:1-12

Wednesday

Jer 18:18-20; Mt 20:17-28

Thursday

Jer 17:5-10; Lk 16:19-31

Friday

Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a; Mt 21:33-43, 45-46

Saturday

Mi 7:14-15, 18-20; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32



**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK**

Vincenza Secor, Aaron Stagliano, Marie Wiejak, Ashley Barco, Agnes Casey, Rose Marie Michalowski, Elaine Pietrzak, George Vecchio, Jr, Carol Brown, Luzia Araujo, Celio Thomaz, Rosalie Nogay, Richard and Rina Bozzone, Frank Pietrzak, Rose Jurik, Robert & Helen Osborn, Manuel DiNapoli, Rachael Neugebauer, Maureen Kelly, James R. Purpura, Jane Pustola, Joann Quicksell, Frances Dolan, Daniel D'Elicio, Fr. Fred Kempferi, Carmen De Crosta, Parker, Jane Holloway, Donna Delconte, Joan Ponesse, Jim Taylor, Marilyn Lennox, Bruno Marchatta, Anne McClellan, Louis Arbia, Dottie Rodriguez, Michael Rosenberg, Maureen Sullivan, Frank D'amario, Amanda Keane, Tom (Manay) Conroy, Gertrude Poland, Rita Froehlich, Brian Scott Monahan, Chelsea Dunderdale, Bill Mowry, Susan Randall, Mary Hollenbeck, Donnie Ruckdeschel, Patrick Comyns, John Marullo, Carol Brown, Geroge Vechio Jr, Jaddon Johnson, Rina & Richard Bozzone, Rebecca Pacella and Rose DiDonato.

*"We all have the duty to do good."*  
Pope Francis



**Food Pantry Hours:**  
**Friday 9:00am to 12noon**  
**Saturday 9:00am to 12noon**

In your goodness please bring **PERSONAL CARE ITEMS such as toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo, etc.** to Church next weekend to be distributed to the less fortunate in our area thru our Food Pantry.

If you are involved in a church and/or Newburgh School program and your child needs **volunteer hours**, the food pantry will coordinate service hours through Curt Bourdage at **845-863-6504**. **All students need to pre-register with Curt Bourdage before showing up at the pantry, please.**

**ST FRANCIS UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Mar. 19<sup>th</sup>** - Spanish Mass 1:30pm

**Mar. 22<sup>nd</sup>** - Eucharistic Adoration 5:00pm to 6:00pm

**Mar. 24<sup>th</sup>** - Stations of the Cross

**Mar. 25<sup>th</sup>** - Movie Night 6:00pm O'Connor Hall

**Mar. 26<sup>th</sup>** - Bagel Hour

**Mar. 26<sup>th</sup>** - Spanish Mass



**PALM WEAVING**

Palm weaving has started in O'Connor Hall. Come and learn how to weave the beautiful palm crosses or just come to help decorate, bag, count and sort.

**Mondays-Fridays 10am to 2pm**

**Tuesday & Thursday evenings 6:30 to 9pm**

Contact person for days Racheal 565-2246 or for evenings Patricia [pgrimm@hvc.rr.com](mailto:pgrimm@hvc.rr.com) or 845-527-4374.



The Knights of Columbus, Council No. 444 is hosting a Communion Breakfast on **Sunday, April 2, 2017**. Mass will be celebrated at **10:00am** at Sacred Heart Church, Robinson Avenue in Newburgh followed by breakfast at **11:30am** at the Powelton Club, 29 Balmville Road, Newburgh. The Cost is **\$25 per person** for adults, children 6-10 are \$10 and children 5 and under free. **Prepaid reservations only due by March 24<sup>th</sup>**. Guest speaker is George Marlin who will talk on Christian genocide in the Middle East. Contact Chairman Joe Dennis by March 24<sup>th</sup> at 845-728-1214. **POWELTON CLUB DRESS CODE – NO JEANS**





### JEWELRY SALE

Sr. Virginia along with the ladies of “The Women’s Craft Project”, sponsored by Newburgh Ministry will again be selling their handcrafted, one of a kind necklaces and bracelets after all the Masses on Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> and Sunday, April 2.



### GOD BLESS OUR WONDERFUL ANIMAL LOVERS

Thank you to everyone who has been faithfully supporting our “Little Furry Friends Ministry”. Our semi-annual drive has been a great success. Fr. Bill recently presented the Hudson Valley SPCA with many bags of food and a \$523 donation. ALL from your continued generosity.

Still thinking about doing something special for Lent? How about considering donating to our “Little Furry Friends Ministry”. Donation boxes are in the back of the church – look for the “paw prints”.



### + BREAKFAST EVENT WITH AN IRISH FLAIR

New Windsor American Legion Post 1796, at 29 Walnut Street in New Windsor is hosting a breakfast today, March 19<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 to 11:30am at their legion hall. Enjoy scrambled eggs, pancakes, bacon and sausage, Irish soda bread, corned beef hash, hash browns and juice, coffee and tea.



### COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES AND LUNCHEON

Grace United Methodist Church is hosting a Lenten Lunch series on Wednesdays during Lent. The one half hour service begins at noon and will feature a different guest speaker each week (Fr. Bill will preach on March 22<sup>nd</sup>). Following the service a simple lunch of sandwiches, beverages and dessert will be provided for a nominal fee of \$4.00. The dates are March 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and April 5<sup>th</sup>. All are invited and welcome to attend.

### Beginning Experience of the Hudson Valley

is offering a healing weekend from **March 31 to April 2** at the St. Lawrence Retreat Center in Beacon, NY. This invitation is open to men and women of all ages who have suffered the loss of a spouse through death, divorce or separation. It is a time to heal and a time to begin anew. For more info or to register please call Mary Ann home/914-962-1112 or cell/914-260-5087, or e-mail at [ny.hudsonvalley@beginningexperience.org](mailto:ny.hudsonvalley@beginningexperience.org).



### MOVIE NIGHT

On **Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm** in O’Connor Hall we will be showing “**Field of Dreams**” starring Kevin Costner, Amy Madigan, Burt Lancaster, James Earl Jones and Ray Liotta. This is a great movie that takes an ordinary corn field and turns it into a place where dreams come true.

For pizza and refreshment ordering purposes, please RSVP by Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup> to Jeannine McCauley at [jeanse50@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanse50@yahoo.com) or 914-263-0572.

### BEREAVEMENT PROGRAM

The Tri-Parish Bereavement Program for the Newburgh area will begin an **8 week program on April 18, 2017** for members of our faith community who have suffered, and are working through, a significant loss in their lives. There is no time limit on the grieving process. Our program follows the guidelines of the Archdiocese of New York’s outreach with a faith-based approach to connect us with the ones we have loved and lost.

If you or someone you know would like more information, please contact Beverly Austin at 914-805-5803 or [bevaustin09@gmail.com](mailto:bevaustin09@gmail.com) or Deacon Tom Neppel at 845-562-1341 or 845-541-0421 or [tneppel@verizon.net](mailto:tneppel@verizon.net).

### **BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR PARISH TODAY** **\_YES! I want to register as a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish and receive offertory envelopes.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_


City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Fill out and drop in the Offertory Collection or mail to St. Francis of Assisi Church, 145 Benkard Avenue, Newburgh, NY 12550.....and Welcome!**





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