

3rd Sunday of Lent

February 28, 2016

Saturday, February 27

4:30PM Stephen Bussell

Sunday, February 28

7:30AM Marie Leonetti
9:30AM Carol A. Tinneny
11:30AM Florence Zapien

Monday, February 29

8:15AM Bernard J. Murray, III

Tuesday, March 1

8:15AM Patricia Dallas

Wednesday, March 2

8:15AM Kathleen Hughes

Thursday, March 3

8:15AM Molly Coelho

Friday, March 4

8:15AM John Plower Sr.

Saturday, March 5

4:30PM Mary & James Lapera

Sunday, March 6

7:30AM Joseph R. Kelly
9:30AM Carol A. Tinneny
11:30AM In Thanksgiving for the Women of Walking with Purpose

Miracles OF LENT Tom Tone, David Talone, JoAnn LaSorsa, Marie Carney, Greg Atkinson, Sophie Grabowski, Msgr. Robert Grudowski, Anthony Bonanno, Joanne Toth, Theresa Lenczewski, Luke Birkhead, Erik Kozlowski, Marlene Salkowski, Roselie Partenheimer, John Walski, Carl Reiff, Joseph Blaszczak, Patrick Kelly, Sean McGonagle, Mary Pierce, Brian Dunlevy, Sr. Jean Streibig, Stephanie Hathaway, Charles Streibig, Theresa McGrath, Kylie Reiff, Nikki Dolan, Joseph Rozecki, Betty DiCola, Brother James Riley, Shawn Gallen, Eduardo Gloria, Molly Glick, Deb Smith, Ann Campbell, Francina Capolingua, Cathy Pierlott, Lynn Bowman, James Sousa, James Gauger, Emilia Bello Jones, Rita Van Buskirk, Joan Nasielski, Caroline Smerecki, Joan Pierce, Kevin Miller, Mike Ancin, Rylan Borys, Susan Minnick, Ann Greco, Jessica Jara, Leanne Purcell, Joe Lotito, Matt McNamee, Kendall Soltys, Concezio Lelii, William McGrath, Carl Pierce, Ursula Kozlowski, Benedetto McDaniels, Carolyn Hogan, Kevin Kelly, Emily Armstrong, Charles Lare, Rita Borkowski, Joanne Kalacinski, Marie Golas.



Alfred Payne, Daniel Vuotto



Staff Sgt Daniel Furtak, Lt. Michelle R. McNally, SSKC Terence J. McNally Jr., Sgt. Robert Bonneau, Andrew Midgett, Jonathan Staats, Col. Shawn McGinley, Lt. Col Evah McGinley, The 108th Wing

McGuire AFB, Matthew Horning, 1st Lt. Stanley J. Reimer III, SR Brett Pellicciotti, LCPL Thomas Mazzochetti, Staff Sgt. Michael Alfonse, Robert Catapano U.S. Army 101st Airborne, Paul Brown, Marines, Corporal Andrew Teitjen, Michael Bondra.

CELEBRANTS MASS SCHEDULE

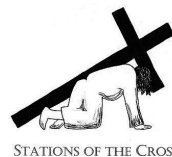
2/27 4:30 Fr. Genovese
2/28 7:30 Fr. Ryan 9:30 Fr.Heron 11:30 Msgr. Owens
3/5 4:30 Fr. Ryan
3/6 7:30 Fr. Ryan 9:30 Msgr. Owens 11:30 Fr. Heron
3/12 4:30 Msgr. Owens
3/13 7:30 Fr. Heron 9:30 Fr. Ryan 11:30 Msgr. Owens
3/19 4:30 Fr. Ryan
3/20 7:30 Msgr. Owens 9:30 Fr. Heron 11:30 Fr. Ryan
3/26 7PM Easter Vigil Msgr. Owens
3/27 7:30 Fr. Ryan 9:30 Fr.Heron 11:30 Msgr. Owens

Prepare for Next Sunday

4th Sunday of Lent – March 6, 2016

Joshua 5:9, 10 – 12 - 2nd Corinthians 5:17 – 21 Luke 15:1 – 3, 11 – 32
St. Paul makes plain today's point: "God has reconciled us to himself through Christ ... We implore for you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God ... Whoever is in Christ is a new creation." What is it that finally moves the prodigal son to return home? His hunger. In the experience of being without, he becomes aware of the "something more" that can save him: his father's house. Certain that his father will feed him just as he feeds any of his household servants, the son sets out to be saved. He goes hoping for scraps of manna, yet he is received like the Israelites into the Promised Land where he is set before a feast. The "hunger" of what remains unreconciled in us is what leads us back to the Father. Dressed in the effects of the Father's authority; we "become the righteousness of God."

Every Friday during Lent at 7PM.



Monday, March 21 – 7PM Penance Service

Holy Thursday, March 24 – 7PM Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday, March 25 – 8:15AM Prayer Svc

Good Friday, March 25 – 3PM

Holy Saturday, March 26 – 8:15AM Prayer Svc

Holy Saturday, March 26 – 7PM Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday, March 27 – 7:30 – 9:30 - 11:30 AM

Religious Education

PREP

Should inclement weather approach we will notify KYW and send out an email blast. Closing number is 1395, also posted on website.

Parents of children receiving First Penance and First Holy Communion:

SACRAMENT MEETING IS FEBRUARY 29TH AT 6:45PM IN SS COSMAS & DAMIAN CHURCH.

ST. MATTHEW STUDENTS EXCEL:

Our parish recently received notification of the performance of our high school students. We are particularly proud of those who demonstrated academic excellence.

Roman Catholic High School:

Second Honors: **Cole Francis Wittman**
Stephen Walter Zakrzewski

Devon Prep:

Distinguished Honors: **Anthony L. Lambricht**

Malvern Prep:

Distinguished Honors: **Sean Suketu Upadhyay**
First Honors: **Ryan Suketu Upadhyay**

Congratulations to all of our students!

Pre-Jordan Instructions: The Sacrament of Baptism is administered in church on the first three Sundays of each month following the 11:30 A.M. Mass. In preparation for having a child Baptized, parents are required to attend "Pre-Jordan Instructions." Classes are the 1st Tuesday of each month. **The next class will be Tuesday, March 1 at 7PM in church.** You will be required to attend a class if this is the Baptism of your first child. To schedule your Baptism go to www.stmatthewparish.com or call the rectory 610-828-0424 press 4 for the office to register.



The Mustard Seeds is having its next event on Friday **March 18th**. Please join us for Stations of the Cross in the church at 7pm and then we will have a potluck dinner together in the convent afterwards. Please bring a dish to share and remember make it meat free since its Friday! We hope to see you there! Join our Face Book group The Mustard Seeds for updates.



Many thanks to our wonderful group of young adults, who call themselves the Mustard Seeds. Many came on a bright Saturday morning to help move memories, furniture and items from St.

Gertrude's to be eventually used in the St. Matthew Parish Center. They are indeed "the seeds" who will grow into the future of our parish.



SS COSMAS & DAMIAN

March 13, 2016

MASS AT 3 PM

Fr. Genuardi will preside.

All are invited to attend.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL FOOD CUPBOARD:

We are in need of cereal, cans of fruit – peaches, pears, fruit cocktail, chunky soups, peanut butter & jelly. Donations can be left in the vestibules of the church. Thank you for your generosity. The food cupboard is open every Friday at 1PM it is located between the church and the convent the second door in the driveway.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society: visits Towne Manor East & West, Brandywine Senior Suites, Regina Nursing Home, Powerback Rehabilitation and Suburban Woods every week -- if someone in your family or a friend is in one of these facilities and you would like the St. Vincent Group to stop in and say "hello" please contact Alice O'Connor at 610-828-5992 or acaoc@verizon.net. If you would like to volunteer to help us visit the sick please contact Alice.

Blessing of Easter Food



Please call the rectory at 610-828-0424 press 4 or email Helene at hclegg100@aol.com if you would like to have your Easter Food blessed by the priests or deacons of the parish.

Book Club—Fiction with a Christian twist:



Our next gathering is **March 23** in the meeting room off of the Rectory parking area at 7 PM. Stories are selected for themes regarding religious faith and moral issues. They are good stories and worth the time it takes to read them. We need roughly one a month. Books on our wish list are The Children Act, The anchoress, Lying Awake, The Painter of Silence, The Red Tent, Poisonwood Bible, and Stones across the River. Next week's bulletin will feature the names of the three novels for March, April and May. Now is a good time to join the group. Contact Monsignor Owens to register your interest on line at stmatt2014@gmail.com or by phone (610-828-0424 extension 112). The discussions are lively and the stories thought-provoking.

The following forms and schedules can be found on our website at www.stmatthewparish.com



Parish Registration
Prep/CCD Registration
Schedule a Baptism
Schedule a Wedding
Eucharistic Minister Schedules
Lector Schedules
Altar Servers Schedules
Youth Ministry Registration

God's Plan for Giving

February 21, 2016

WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR
YOUR OFFERTORY

GIFTS LAST WEEKEND:

\$12,300.00

Electronic giving \$1,325.00 + \$10,975.00 = \$12,300.00

As followers of Jesus, our Lord and Savior, we are reminded that all things including life itself are a gift from the Blessed Trinity. What matters to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is not the gift, but the giver. Giving is a divine invitation to a way of life. It helps us to overcome our selfishness and love of things. What we do with what we have been given is a sign to the Blessed Trinity and to the world of the depth and meaning of our commitment. By recalling that all is a gift, we therefore must strive to be generous with the financial gifts, both great and small, that our Heavenly Father has bestowed on us. Thank you for your support and your generosity to God and to St. Matthew Parish.



ELECTRONIC GIVING: Parish Giving is convenient for you and there is **NO COST** for you to participate. Contact Deacon Mike

Kubiak at deacon.mike.kubiak@comcast.net to register www.parishgiving.org or www.stmatthewparish.com

ST MATTHEW'S SENIORS will meet every third Wednesday of the month.

March meeting will take place on **March 16**, in the convent at 12:30pm. Also, Membership dues (\$10) will be collected for 2016. ALL ARE WELCOME!

ST. MARY'S GOLDEN AGE CLUB: Meets every Thursday at St. Mary's Church Hall. Three dollar fee. Play Cards 9:00 AM Snacks 10 AM Lunch 11 AM Play Bingo 12 – 2:30 PM. Dues for members due 2016 is \$10.00 for the year.

Casino Trips: are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month: **March 8 & April 12**. Bus leaves 9:00 AM from 11th & Fayette, 9:15 AM from 3rd & Fayette, and at 9:30 AM from St. Mary's. Call Joe (610-825-4596).



St. Matthew Prayer Shawl Ministry: We most 'warmly' invite you to be a part of this Ministry by meeting with us in the St. Vincent DePaul room **Tuesday, March 8 at 7PM**. If you know of someone who might like to receive a shawl, please let us know-or make one yourself for someone special to you. Contact Alice O'Connor acaoc@verizon.net



A group of volunteers keep our church in good order. If anyone has some free time on Tuesday mornings, after the 8:15AM Mass for about two hours once a month to help clean the church please call the rectory at 610-828-0424.

Reflections from my rocking chair:

Dear Friends,

Sin.



In 1995 I was giving a retreat at St. Joseph in the Hills, in Malvern, Pennsylvania (a wonderful retreat center). In an opening talk I said that God's love for us is unconditional: No matter what we do God loves us. God never walks away. Afterwards a gentleman came up to me and said, "Father, you preach warm and fuzzies too much". It reminded me of the closing scene in the movie, *The Name of the Rose*, in which the pious old monk who ran the monastery library leaps to his death in a fire that is destroying the library. He dies holding an essay by Aristotle on humor being a divine quality. He's been poisoning monks who are reading the text. He tells Sean Connery, the Franciscan Sherlock Holmes, that if there is no fear of God, there would be no obedience to him and if there was no obedience there would be no religion.

Could one preach the love of God too much? No! God never walks away. He has only one desire, to save us. However, I'm left with a quandary: Should we ever be afraid of God? The Scripture says, "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". Are we obedient out of fear? Do we come to church on Sunday because we are afraid not to? The "fear of the Lord", identified in the New Testament as a gift of the Holy Spirit is not an admonition to be afraid of God, it is to be afraid to be without God. And that can happen only as a result of our sins. There is a place for fear in religion but it is not to be a fear of God. What we need to be afraid of is sin. It kills. To be afraid of God is counterproductive. God is the solution, not a part of the problem.

Jesus commissioned his apostles to go forth and forgive sin in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. More insidious than the physical evils that befall men and women is the damage done to our humanity by our sins. Jesus is the remedy for our inclination to sin. He is generous with his love and mercy, most especially in the Sacrament of Penance where in the presence of the priest and after a heartfelt confession of sins, God's grace pours down upon the penance and the power to overcome their sins – all this in the absolution prayed by the priest who stands in the person of Jesus Christ. This sacrament and its place in the spiritual life Catholics, is under siege. Paul Wilkes, in his book *The Art of Confession*, writes, "In 1965, as the Second Vatican Council was ending, nearly 40% Catholics went to confession once a month; today the number is 2%. And, even more telling, today 75% of Catholics either never go or do so less than once a year. Sadly, then, many are deprived of the beauty of the sacrament: they absent themselves from the outward sign of Jesus's forgiveness. One 20th century theologian wrote, "The sense of sin is the measure of the soul's awareness of God." Saint Augustine, "Even your sins are useful", he writes in *The Confessions*. They can create the humility needed to confess one's weaknesses and grab hold of the new life the Sacrament offers. Make plans as Easter approaches to go to Confession, keeping in mind that "it is the Saints that have a sense of sin."

May he Easter in you.

Monsignor Tom Owens stmatt2014@gmail.com

Fr. Tom Heron's Weekly Reflection

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord Jesus, Welcome!

I rejoice in your presence with the Saint Matthew faith worshipping community as we participate in the Liturgy for the 3rd Sunday of Lent. We are blessed by your desire to give thanks to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, both parishioners and guests. May you be renewed in mind, heart and spirit through the Word and Eucharist we share. Thanks for joining us!

Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15 Psalm 103 I Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
Luke 13:1-9

A bush in the wasteland around Horeb and a fig tree in a fertile garden are the two images around which today's scriptural message is based. The bush is alive and contains the burning presence of God. The fig tree is barren and produces no fruit. Both are a vehicle for a divine revelation.

"The Lord secures justice and the rights of all the oppressed. He has made known His ways to Moses, and His deeds to the children of Israel." (Psalm 103:6-7)

Moses had shortcomings as well as virtues. He had a passion for social justice and led the struggle for national liberation. His triumphs and disappointments, his complex relationship with God and his people, his condemnations and blessings, his bursts of anger, his silences, his efforts to reconcile the law with compassion, authority with integrity, are what give him a special place in Jewish tradition.

In today's reading from Exodus, we find a repetitious insistence on the word *seneh* (Hebrew for "bush"). This is an obvious allusion to Sinai. God reveals Himself first to Moses from the *seneh*, then to the people from the Sinai.

An important lesson to be learned from this incident in Moses' life is that this man of God put himself in God's presence and was ready to hear. Moses was told that he was on holy ground. He kept a respectful and proper distance. He hid his face from God's face but he listened with all his being to whatever the voice of God had to say.

Because he was open and listened and cooperated with God's grace, Moses accomplished great things. He overcame his failings and his fears and became the leader God called him to be. Moses was a tireless worker who held back nothing. Were it not for him "Israel would have remained a tribe of slaves, living in the darkness of fear, dreading light".

"Merciful and gracious is the Lord, slow to anger and abounding in kindness. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so surpassing is His kindness toward those who fear Him." (Psalm 103:8,11)

The fig tree was one of Palestine's most valuable trees. It was very productive, yielding three crops in one year. According to the parable, the owner of the vineyard had come for three years looking for fruit and had found none. He was ready to have it destroyed until the vinedresser intervened.

The vinedresser was able to get one more chance for the fig tree. In addition, he was ready to take some unusual steps to do all he could to get the fig tree to produce fruit. Manuring a vineyard is most unusual and under normal circumstances a fig tree does not need such care.

The figure of the vinedresser stands for Jesus Himself. The fig tree stands for each one of us. We have received the Law of Moses, we have the prophets, we have heard the Word of God, Jesus Christ. All have told us that we have abilities and are expected to put them to use.

God's kindness and mercy through Jesus' intercession will grant us time. There is a limit, however. The useless fig tree is threatened with destruction. It used up space, consumed nourishment, yet produced nothing.

God calls us to repentance, especially during Lent. We can find new life through works of mercy, prayer, and fasting. Instead of being barren fig trees we can become men and women whose lives are on fire for doing God's will.



*Moses,
you're standing
on holy ground.*

End of Bulletin