

2nd Sunday of Easter Bulletin for St. Ambrose Parish

April 19th, 2020



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DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: Faustina wrote that Jesus promised that all who recite this **chaplet** at the hour of death or in the presence of the dying **will** receive great **mercy**. According to Roman Catholic tradition, the **chaplet** may be **said at any time**, but it is **said** especially on **Divine Mercy** Sunday and Fridays at 3:00 pm. Because of social distancing, we will not be having a Divine Mercy service at St. Ambrose on Sunday. Please check the main page of our website for the prayer that you can follow along with.



LIVE MASS WITH FR. HENRY: I (Fr. Henry) do a live mass every Wednesday and Sunday at 9:00 am (unless there are technical difficulties and then it will be put on after it has been recorded.). The next live mass is this Sunday, streamed live from St. Ambrose Church. If you want to watch, go to our web site at www.stambroseymouth.ca or go to my YouTube channel www.youtube.com/channel/UC1CwQV-c8xpu57fbCsu0fLg/videos?view=57&flow=grid (Copy and paste this link into your web browser if you would like to follow along.)

EASTER MISSION: Holy Trinity Parish in Halifax is hosting a livestream Easter Mission: Transforming the World for Jesus from April 19-21. Fr. James Mallon will offer the mission live at 7:00pm each evening. To join in the mission go to www.holytrinity.ca and click on Easter Mission. This Easter season let's spread the Good News of the Resurrection!

Wondering what to do with your time while being isolated? Want to get connected with other people from our parish? Why not join an online group?



There is a 14-session series on the Holy Spirit that people can get involved in at St. Ambrose. The goal would be to finish by Pentecost which as you know is 50 days from Easter Sunday. How it works is you watch the video just before your group meets online, then the 4 or 5 of you will join in for a meeting together with questions you can discuss together. There can also be some sharing time about how things are going. Click on the link to watch an ad for the series.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyhpK-X-onM&list=PLE6t-PqUvPEemaneqIWYbKUN4j8olfe9h

If you want to be a part of a group, please email us Stambrosemail@gmail.com

-Fr. Henry



QUOTE OF THE WEEK: Act as if everyday was the last of your life, and each action was the last you perform. --St. Alphonsus Liguori

SUPPORTING YOUR PARISH FINANCIALLY: During this difficult time, I ask that you continue to support our Parish financially. If you want you can drop donations off at the office during office hours. Please knock on the door to be served. We now have an account on line to which you can donate to. Simply go to <http://www.stambroseyarmouth.ca/> and scroll down the page to the donate button in red and follow the directions.

OUTREACH TO PARISHIONERS: You may have recently had a phone call on behalf of Fr. Henry wondering how people are doing and that he was praying for you at this difficult time. Many numbers have been disconnected or no longer in service. Those of you who have not received a call would you please give the office a call so that information can be updated in our system. Office 902-742-7151

REFLECTION: Daily reflection from My Catholic Life for the weekdays of the 2nd week of Easter.

Born Again

Monday of the Second Week of Easter

“Amen, amen, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.” [John 3:5](#)

Are you born again? This is a common question among many of the evangelical Christians. But it’s a question that we should ask ourselves also. So are you? And what does that exactly mean?

Hopefully each one of us answers that question with a wholehearted “Yes!” Scripture is clear that we must receive a new birth in Christ. The old self must die and the new self must be reborn. This is what it means to become a Christian. We take on a new life in Christ.

Being born again happens by water and the Holy Spirit. It happens in baptism. When we are baptized we enter into the waters and die with Christ. As we rise from the waters, we are reborn in Him. This means that baptism does something truly amazing in us. It means that, as a result of our baptism, we are adopted into the very life of the Most Holy Trinity. Baptism, for most of us, happened when we were infants. It’s one of those things we do not think about very often. But we should.

Baptism is a sacrament that has an ongoing and eternal effect in our lives. It implants an indelible character upon our souls. This “character” is a constant source of grace in our lives. It is like a well of grace that never goes dry. From this well we are constantly nourished and renewed to live out the dignity we are called to live. We are given from this well the grace we need to live as sons and daughters of our Father in Heaven.

Reflect, today, upon your own Baptism. Easter is a time more than any when we are called to renew this Sacrament. Holy water is a good way to do just that. Perhaps the next time you are at church it would be good to consciously remind yourself of your baptism, and the dignity and grace you have been given through this sacrament, by making a sign of the cross on your forehead with holy water. Baptism has made you into a new creation. Seek to both understand and live that new life you have been given during this Easter season.

Heavenly Father, I renew today my baptism. I forever renounce sin and profess my faith in Christ Jesus Your Son. Give me the grace I need to live out the dignity to which I have been called. Jesus, I trust in You.

The Effects of the Holy Spirit

Tuesday of the Second Week of Easter

Jesus said to Nicodemus: “You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” [John 3:7-8](#)

Do you sense the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? In this passage, Jesus offers an image of how the Holy Spirit works in us. He analogizes the Holy Spirit to the wind. We can hear the wind blowing but cannot see

it. We do, however, perceive the effects of the wind. For example, when you see a tree swaying, you know that the wind is blowing.

So it is with the Holy Spirit in our lives. Though we may not be able to tangibly perceive where the Holy Spirit comes from, we will be able to see the effects of the Spirit. When we perceive a new strength within us, or an increase in virtues, or an ability to forgive, etc., we are aware of the fact that the Holy Spirit is present, leading us, transforming us and guiding us.

Additionally, we do not know where the wind goes once it passes. So it is with the Holy Spirit. If our lives are under the power and care of the Holy Spirit, we do not know where we will be led. The Holy Spirit leads us in the moment but does not typically reveal our whole future. We must be content to be led by the daily gentle presence of God, allowing ourselves to be moved here and there. This requires much trust and abandonment. Reflect, today, upon the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. Look for the effects of the Holy Spirit to discern whether or not you are being truly led by God. Allow yourself to be led and moved by the Breath of God and anticipate great things in your life.

Come Holy Spirit, renew within me the grace of my Baptism and lead me each and every day in accord with Your divine will. I abandon myself to Your glorious care and trust in the promptings of Your presence in my life. Jesus, I trust in You.

What Do You Prefer?

Wednesday of the Second Week of Easter

And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their works were evil. [John 3:19](#)

What a strange thing to be so true. God the Father sent the Son into the world to be Light for us all. He is the Light that dispels all darkness. But, according to the Gospel above, “people preferred darkness to light.” They preferred their own sins to freedom from sin. Why is that?

As an example of this reality, all we have to do is watch the news or read the newspaper. It seems that 90% of what is reported in the news media is a sensationalistic presentation of darkness. We hear of one murder after another or one scandal after another. Why does the media focus upon this so much? Because it’s what sells. And why does it sell? Because we too often are drawn to darkness more than we are to light.

Certainly, that is not the case for everyone. So many are quite disinterested in the darkness of the world and the sensationalistic sins all around us. But the fact that the darkness of evil is so front and center all the time should offer us a certain warning about our fallen human nature. We tend to be drawn into mud and too often are all too happy there.

Easter is a time to examine what it is you are drawn to. Do you let yourself be drawn into the Light? Are you attracted by those things that brighten your day? Are you drawn to the many ways that God is present and active in the world all around you? Hopefully you are. But there is most likely some degree of pull toward disorder, sin and darkness. There can be an interior conflict that everyone experiences. It’s good to be aware of this, to identify it as part of our fallen human tendency, and to seek to shed all interest in the chaos and evil all around us.

As a follower of Christ, we are called to keep our eyes on Him and on Him alone. We are called to penetrate the darkness with our faith and to let our whole being be attracted to and drawn toward Christ Jesus. Perfection means that even our passions and desires are ultimately drawn to Christ as the Light of our life.

Reflect, today, upon that which you are drawn toward the most. Commit yourself to the Light this Easter Season. Move your eyes from the temptation to become drawn in and fascinated by the evil around us, to the joyful vision of our Resurrected Lord alive and at work all around us. Let this Light guide your daily life.

Lord, help me to live in the light. Help me to keep my eyes firmly focused upon the glory of Your Resurrection. May the joy of that gaze keep me from the countless distractions of evil all around me. Jesus, I trust in You.

No Rationing of the Spirit

Thursday of the Second Week of Easter

He does not ration his gift of the Spirit. [John 3:34](#)

At wartime, when soldiers have a scarce amount of food, they have to ration it. They only eat small measured portions each day so that the food will last as long as possible. If they do not, they may run out and starve.

What if this were the case with God and His grace? What if the Holy Spirit were to say to us, "Now I'm only going to help you to a limited degree. Once you use up the grace, I'm offering you, you're on your own." Ouch! That would be problematic.

Of course, the good news is that God acts in the completely opposite way with us. He commits to a full outpouring of the Holy Spirit and offers all the grace we could ever need or want. The problem is that we often "ration" His grace anyway. We don't do this because we believe God is limited. Rather, we often do it because we are afraid to let God unleash His almighty power in our lives.

Reflect, today, upon what your life would look like if you let God do whatever He wanted with you. What would change? How would your daily life, your relationships, your words, your actions and your future be different? Intellectually speaking, we know it's right to fully embrace the will of God in all things. But when it actually comes to doing it, there is often much hesitancy. It may be fear of the unknown. Or it may be that we do not fully want to change. Whatever the case may be, God is offering you an unlimited amount of grace by the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It's up to you to decide if you will ration or not.

Lord, I do want to let You do whatever You want in my life. I want to be fully immersed in Your grace. Help me to say "Yes" to You no matter what that leads to and help me to trust in this glorious "Yes" You are calling me to make. Jesus, I trust in You.

Being Tested

Friday of the Second Week of Easter

When Jesus raised his eyes and saw that a large crowd was coming to him, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?" He said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do. [John 6:5-6](#)

God always knows what He is going to do. He always has a perfect plan for our lives. Always. In the passage above we read a snippet from the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish. Jesus knew He was going to multiply the few loaves and fish they had and feed over five thousand people. But before He did this, He wanted to test Philip, and so He did. Why does Jesus test Philip and why does He test us at times?

It's not that Jesus is curious about what Philip will say. And it's not that He is just playing games with Philip. Rather, He is seizing this opportunity to let Philip manifest His faith. So, in fact, this "testing" of Philip was a gift to him because it gave Philip the opportunity to pass the test.

The test was to let Philip act on faith rather than just on human logic alone. Sure, it's good to be logical. But very often the wisdom of God supersedes human logic. In other words, it brings logic to a whole new level. It brings it to a level where faith in God is brought into the equation.

So Philip, in that moment, was being called to offer a solution given the fact that the Son of God was there with them. And he fails the test. He points out that two hundred days' wages would not be enough to feed the crowd. But Andrew somewhat comes to the rescue. Andrew states that there is a boy who has a few loaves and some fish. Unfortunately, he adds, "but what good are these for so many?"

This little spark of faith in Andrew, however, is enough faith for Jesus to have the crowds recline and to perform the miracle of the multiplication of the food. It seems that Andrew at least had a small insight into the fact that these few loaves and fish were important to mention. Jesus takes this from Andrew and takes care of the rest. Reflect, today, upon the precious gift of even a little faith. So often we find ourselves in difficult situations where we don't know what to do. We should strive to have at least a little faith so that Jesus has something to work with. No, we may not have the full picture of what He wants to do, but we should at least have a small inkling of the direction God is leading. If we can at least manifest this little faith then we too will pass the test.

Lord, help me to have faith in Your perfect plan for my life. Help me to know that You are in control when life seems out of control. In those moments, may the faith I manifest be a gift to You so that You can use it for Your glory. Jesus, I trust in You.

Overcoming Daily Fear

Saturday of the Second Week of Easter

When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they began to be afraid. But he said to them, "It is I. Do not be afraid." [John 6:19-20](#)

This very familiar phrase was spoken once again: "Do not be afraid."

The setting is significant. It is dark and the Apostles are out to sea. If you've ever been out in the middle of the sea when it's dark out, you'd know that this is a bit frightening. You cannot see the land and you feel as though you are surrounded by nothing. The Apostles would have been feeling a bit lost as if they were in the middle of nowhere.

But, in the midst of this experience, Jesus came walking to them and told them, "It is I. Do not be afraid." This would have been quite consoling to them.

We must see in this experience of the Apostles the daily experience so many have. Many can feel as if they are surrounded by nothing, alone and lost. Sure, this may not be an overwhelming feeling for some, but it is all too often an experience many do have to one degree or another.

This Gospel passage reveals to us that Jesus comes to us no matter where we are or whatever the situation is that we find ourselves in. He does not wait for us to come and find Him, rather, He enters into our lives right where we are.

This experience of being at sea in the dark comes in many forms. Perhaps your life is filled with activity, but you still feel alone. Perhaps your life is one where you do not have many around and feel the constant experience of isolation. Or perhaps you put on a good face and present yourself as one who has it all together, but inside you are deeply struggling. Whatever the case may be, Jesus wants to come to you and to console you.

Reflect, today, upon these words of Jesus. Listen to Him say to you, "It is I." As you hear Him say these words, turn to Him and acknowledge His presence. Let Him come into the dark sea that you may feel surrounds you. Hear Him say, "Do not be afraid." There are so many experiences in life that we can fear. So many times, that fear can take hold of us. If we but let ourselves focus in on Jesus, the fear of our daily surroundings disappears. We discover, deep within, that Jesus is right there and that all is well because He cares and is in control. Let Him into the boat of your heart and let Him take over. He is coming to you and is waiting for a response.

Lord, so often I fail to acknowledge Your divine presence in my life. So often I fail to see you coming to me. Help me to know that You are always there. Free me from the many fears of life, dear Lord, and give me courage to welcome You fully into my life. Jesus, I trust in You.