

St. Francis of Assisi Old Catholic Church

Ordinary Time

February, 2019



We are a Christ-centered faith community formed to worship God where all are invited. We are welcoming, loving one another by embracing diversity, fostering spiritual growth and hope, living the gospel in the world, and recognizing the God who lives in all.

A different way to be Catholic.

Calendar

Mass:

Every Sunday – 9:00 a.m.

952 Post Road (Route 1)

Colonial Square

Wells, ME



Saturday Feb. 2 9am -12 noon

PC workshop

Wednesday, Feb. 6 6 pm

Liturgy committee meeting

Sunday, February 17

Annual PC Reports Due



Sunday February 24

Agape Mass (and potluck breakfast)

followed by

ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, March 6

Mass 6 pm



**Lent Begins
Ash Wednesday**



Events

Things are happening in our community. Our church is alive and active. Come, participate and enjoy fellowship with your church community and your greater community.



We meet at 6:00 pm at the church and, following our scripture study, adjourn to a nearby restaurant to share a meal.

Won't you join us?



Spirituality Group

The entire Faith Community is invited to join this group for sharing our stories of struggle and joy in our faith journeys.

Meetings rotate among members' homes and conclude with a potluck dinner.

Interfaith Ministry Opportunities

Laundry love: February 19

4-6 or 6-8pm

Booms Laundry

250 Elm St.

Biddeford

Senior Lunch: February 26

10:45 – 12:00

St. David's Episcopal Church

Kennebunk

Outreach

Shelter Ministries

There is a continuing need for diapers for the York County Homeless Shelter. We have made a commitment to help fulfill this need and continue to do so.

There is also a dire need for Friskies poultry flavored canned cat food at the Safe Haven animal shelter which is another recipient of our outreach.

In Dec/Jan we donated 193 cans of cat food, 37.3 lbs of dry cat food and 32 lbs of cat litter



BLESSING BAGS

As part of our ongoing outreach to the greater community, we are handing out "blessing bags" (filled with several essentials for an individual on the street) to those who need them.

Please consider becoming a part of this ministry and carry a blessing bag in your car.



Donate Bottles and Cans

Thank you to all in the community who collect returnable bottles and cans for our CLYNK campaign. The money collected goes to the Wells Fuel Fund for those who need help during our cold winters.

So far this year we have collected

\$2.65

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Lectionary Reading for February

by Roger Vermalen Karban

Throughout this month, it is essential to remember Paul of Tarsus' conviction that every Christian has unique gifts of the Spirit. Yet as we hear in the 1 Corinthians passage on the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, these gifts only have the effect the Spirit intends when we employ them with love. They don't "work" any other way.

The apostle Paul begins this book's oft-quoted Chapter 13 by specifically mentioning the gifts of prophecy and tongues, pointing out that lacking love, these "popular," longed-for gifts are nothing. The only thing in the life of another Christ that counts is the love motivating the talents the Spirit has infused in us. Just as the Christ had to die before he could receive the life the Spirit gave him, so his followers would have to die by loving those around him before they could receive that same life. Dying for others is the name of his game.

Jesus, the prophet, quickly finds out that pain is also a part of his gift. Returning to his hometown shortly after beginning his public ministry, he prophetically reacts to people's demand to perform the kind of miracles he performed in other places by reminding them of Yahweh's habit of helping non-Jews, even reminding them of two classic examples. They become so angry at his response that they actually try to kill him.

Those gifted by the Spirit eventually make Psalm 71 one of their most frequently used prayers. God is the only one on whom we can always depend. God is our refuge, rock and hope. If we are actually going to employ our gifts for the common good, we have no other choice.

Yet at the same time that we are using our gifts for others, we are deeply aware of who we are. How can anyone so imperfect and sinful been given such a valuable treasure? Perhaps, that is one of the reasons we should listen carefully to the readings of the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Isaiah, Paul and Peter knew a lot about being called by God. Each was convinced they had done nothing to merit or invite such a call. On the contrary. In the midst of his call, right smack dab in the middle of his majestic "theophany," Isaiah can only concentrate on his "unclean lips." Since prophets are to be Yahweh's mouthpiece, lips are essential; the consciences of these people are proclaiming God's word. If they, of all people, screw up that word, we are in deep trouble. Only after a seraph touches Isaiah's lips with a burning ember from Yahweh's altar, does he have the courage to say, "Here I am, send me!" Now, it is God's word that he will be proclaiming; it is no longer the word of a sinful, wicked, doomed person.

Paul informs his Corinthian community that he had a similar experience when the risen Jesus called him on the road to Damascus. Christ saw something in him; something that would eventually make him a terrific evangelizer of Gentiles. His term "born abnormally" refers to someone who doesn't realize she is pregnant until she is in labor. In other words, "No one saw this one coming." Yet Paul has not only arrived. According to his "humble" estimate, he has "toiled harder than all [the other apostles]." If he didn't even know he was in

the running, how could he do anything to prepare for the honor?

One of those "others" became a fisher of men and women before Paul experienced his call. After first challenging Jesus' fishing techniques, Peter is on the receiving end of an unheard of and totally unexpected catch. Instinctively, certain his stupidity has just become an obstacle to apostleship, he points out the obvious: "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." But instead of saying, "You're right, Peter. I'll start looking for someone else," Luke's Jesus simply says, "Do not be afraid," and calls him

Since we believe God is not only in our midst, but that we are each called to carry out God's ministry in a unique way, we have no choice but to reflect on how we live our lives; this is precisely what the readings of the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time expect us to do.

Almost no biblical prophet suffers more psychologically than Jeremiah. One need only peruse Chapters 10-20 of his writings to surface the pain he constantly experiences. The theology he learned as a child simply doesn't work anymore. In his experience, rarely are the good rewarded and the bad punished. The prophet's only recourse from his failed, traditional theology is to give himself over completely to Yahweh. He certainly can't form a meaningful relationship with anyone or anything else. No matter what happens around or to him, Jeremiah's doomed once he stops trusting in God. He is always poetically in danger of morphing into a barren, dried up desert bush. Yahweh is his only connection to real life.

Six hundred years later, Paul finds the risen Jesus offering him an even more deeply-rooted life. That is why he is so disturbed by some in his Corinthian community who have given up on a personal resurrection from the dead. Though they believe the historical Jesus rose from the dead, they don't see how his experience carries over to them. If that is the case, Paul points out in so many words, "We are the most pitiable people of all." We are suffering and dying for nothing.

As we hear in the first and third readings during the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, such oneness is also rooted in *hesed*, the biblical quality that makes us strive to do more than people expect of us. David does this in the 1 Samuel passage. He could have easily killed Saul, his mortal enemy, when he and Abishai sneak into the king's camp in the middle of the night. But he doesn't. He freely chooses to spare Saul's life as a sign of his respect for "Yahweh's anointed." No one could have anticipated such a generous gesture.

In a parallel way, no one could have expected Jesus' earliest followers to mirror his example of going beyond expectations in their relations with one another. Yet that is precisely what Luke's Jesus demands. Unlike Jeremiah, this Galilean carpenter isn't disturbed by a God who refuses to be limited to just rewarding the good and punishing the evil. "He himself is kind," Jesus insists, "to the ungrateful and the wicked." Anyone committed to carrying on God's ministry has no choice but to be "merciful, just as your Father is merciful." That means we give and not just lend, turn our right cheek when we are hit on the left, and love even our enemies. The Gospel Jesus expects us to practice *hesed*, loving-kindness, all the time and in the deepest levels of our lives. It is one of the main ways that lives can be transformed.

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The Spirit has graciously gifted us so that we are able to effectively carry on the ministry of Jesus. It is only up to us to endure the pain that ministry entails. As Jesus as well as Paul of Tarsus recognized, when we employ our gifts with love, it is a package plan. One cannot exist without the other; love cannot exist without pain.

Roger Vermalen Karban is a priest of Belleville, Illinois and pastor-emeritus of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Renault, Illinois. He holds a licenciate in theology from the Gregorian University in Rome and pursued Scripture studies at Saint Louis University. He currently teaches at Saint Louis University and Southwestern Illinois College

Adapted from Celebration, Feb. 2019



Annual Epiphany Pot Luck and Yankee Swap

It was another delicious and fun gathering which even included a visit from a past parishioner (who moved out of the area) as well as an individual new to our community.

Following breakfast, the Yankee Swap resulted in some familiar “re-gifts” and some new and interesting ones. How many of them will show up again next year?



ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, February 24

We get that no one likes meetings, but this is IMPORTANT. Our Church wants and needs your input. The phrase “We are the Church” is never more true than when you have this opportunity to speak your opinion, share your thoughts and voice your concerns.

At this meeting annual reports will be handed out, next year’s budget will be proposed, new Parish Council officers will be elected, and we will have the opportunity to discuss how we, as a Faith Community, want to continue to share God’s Word and continue the ministry of Jesus. **THIS IS FOR THE ENTIRE ST. FRANCIS COMMUNITY**, so please, make every effort to be present.

BLESSING OF THE THROATS

Feb. 3 at Mass

Saint Blase was the bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the fourth century. Very little is known about his life. According to various accounts he was a physician before becoming a bishop. His religion spread throughout the entire Church in the Middle Ages because he was reputed to have miraculously cured a little boy who nearly died because of a fishbone in his throat. From the eighth century he has been invoked on behalf of the sick, especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat.

His feast day is Feb. 3.



Spotlight!



Meditation/Prayer



Sarah and sponsor, Janet



Invocation of the Spirit

Confirmation of Sarah Rapone

The Community gathered on Sunday, January 13th, not only to attend Mass, but to witness and assist Bishop Rosemary in the calling down of the Holy Spirit and the Sacrament of Confirmation for Sarah Rapone. A reception followed Mass.



Godparent to be, Sarah, and Jessica at the Rite of Acceptance

Rite of Acceptance of Jessica Case

January was a busy month for our little faith community. With great joy, we also formally accepted Jessica Case into the Catechumenate. After exploring our faith with us for two years, she is now preparing for Baptism at the Easter Vigil. Her 3 year old daughter, Sydney and yet-to-be-born son will be baptized along with her.

The purpose of daily meditation/prayer is the cultivation of a sense of the sacred. Sacred energy renews us. Prayer enables us to transform the world, because it transforms us! Let's commit ourselves to daily meditation/prayer...

"To love someone is to say, you at least will never die. You will never die because, in this life and the next, you will never be separated from the community of life, God's family, because in accepting my love you are touching the body of Christ just as really as did anyone who touched the historical Jesus. You will never die and you will never go to hell because you are bound to Christ."

~ Gabriel Marcel

(as quoted by Ronald Rolheiser in Against an Infinite Horizon: The Finger of God in Our Everyday Lives)



Parish Council

- President: Debbie Gaudreau
- Vice-Moderator: vacant
- Treasurer: Dawn Saporito
- Secretary: Carol Olmstead
- Members-at-large: Janet O'Day
Pat Emery
Maryann Stacy

The Most Reverend Dr. Rosemary Ananis, Pastor

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