

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church Newsletter

February 7, 2021

My Dear Parishioners,

As the old saying goes, time flies. It seems like we just put away our Christmas decorations, and now we are already preparing for our observance of Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is in just two weeks, on Wednesday, February 17th. In order to promote social distancing, we are adding two services to our traditional Ash Wednesday schedule. Masses on Ash Wednesday will be at 6:30 AM and 7:00 PM. There will also be 3 additional Services, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM, and 4:30 PM. The three services will be simple Liturgy of the Word services without music. Please see the bulletin, the e-newsletter, and the website for details.

As with previous Lents, we will have the Stations of the Cross with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament on the Fridays of Lent, at 7:00 PM in the Church.

To help us further enter into Lent, we will again have a Parish Day of Reflection on Saturday, February 20. This year we are blessed to have Reverend Monsignor Thomas Flanigan as our Retreat Master. Msgr. Flanigan is the retired pastor of Corpus Christi Parish in Lansdale, and, interestingly, in the early 1970s, he lived in our rectory and said Mass in the old church and St. Patrick's Mission as he taught at Archbishop Wood High School. So we are especially excited about Monsignor joining us this year. Please see the bulletin, the e-newsletter, and the web-site for details and please sign up.

For the men in our parish, there are a couple of virtual retreats coming up. "Real Life Catholic" [Real Life Catholic | Chris Stefanick](#) is sponsoring a virtual weekend retreat from February 19-21. The retreat features quite a few charismatic lay and ordained speakers. It can be viewed either in private or in small groups, such as by the men in your family and the men in your neighborhood. This is the link: [2021 National Catholic Mens Conference \(virtualcatholicconference.com\)](https://virtualcatholicconference.com)

Also ManUpPhilly is back and is sponsoring a one day virtual retreat on Saturday, March 6. The link for that retreat is [Man Up Philly Conference – Philadelphia's Largest Men's Spirituality Conference](#)

Of course, we live and pray with confidence because we know that God wants us to succeed, and because we know that He is constantly sending us helps from Heaven so that we will succeed. Fourteen of those Heavenly helps are the 14 Holy Helpers. The 14 Holy Helpers are saints of the early Church who were invoked during the Middle Ages in times of war and plague. Along with this Sunday's readings, I have included an article about the 14 Holy Helpers from Catholic News Agency.

In a personal note, I would like to thank all of you for your kindness and your prayers as my family mourned the loss of our father, Joseph R. Pawelko Sr. Your prayers and condolences helped to sustain us this past week, and we are certain that they have helped our father as he continues his journey to our true home. Let us continue to lay siege to Heaven for all of our deceased loved ones, for the sick, for our first responders, and for an end to the Coronavirus.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

Fr. Michael J Pawelko



The Fourteen Holy Helpers



While the COVID-19 pandemic has turned life upside down for many people in 2020, it's not the first time the Church has gone through a major health crisis. In the middle of the 14th Century, the Plague - also called "The Black Death" – also called "The Greatest Catastrophe Ever" - ravaged Europe, killing 50 million people, or about 60% of the population, within a few years. Lacking the advances of modern medicine today, the people had no choice but to cling to their faith. It was at this time that the Fourteen Holy Helpers - Catholics Saints, all but one of whom were early martyrs - came to be invoked by Catholics against the plague and other misfortune. Devotion to these 14 Saints started in Germany at the time of the plague, and they were called "Nothelfer," which in German means "helpers in need."

As bouts of the plague resurfaced over the decades, devotion to the Holy Helpers spread to other countries, and eventually Pope Nicholas V declared that devotion to the Saints came with special indulgences.....

Here's a bit about each of the Fourteen Holy Helpers:

Saint George: While little is known definitively about his life, St. George was a fourth-century martyr under the persecution of the emperor Diocletian. A soldier in Diocletian's army, St. George refused to arrest Christians and offer sacrifices to Roman gods. Despite bribes from Diocletian to change his mind, St. George refused the order and was tortured and eventually executed for his offenses. He is invoked against skin diseases and palsy.

St. Blase: Another 4th-century martyr, St. Blase's death is very similar to that of St. George. A bishop in Armenia during a time of Christian persecution, St. Blase was eventually forced to flee to the forest to avoid death. One day a group of hunters found St. Blase, arrested him and brought him back to the authorities. At some point after his arrest, a mother with a son who had gotten a fishbone perilously stuck in his throat visited St. Blase, and at his blessing, the bone dislodged and the boy was saved. St. Blase was ordered by the governor of Cappadocia to denounce his faith and sacrifice to pagan gods. He refused, and was brutally tortured and eventually beheaded for this offense. He is invoked against diseases of the throat.

St. Erasmus: A 4th-century bishop of Formia, St. Erasmus (also known as St. Elmo) faced persecution under the emperor Diocletian. According to legend, he fled to Mount Lebanon for a time to escape persecution, where he was fed by a raven. After he was discovered, he was arrested and imprisoned, but made multiple miraculous escapes with the help of an angel. At one point he was tortured by having part of his intestines pulled out by hot rods. Some accounts say he was miraculously healed of these wounds and died of natural causes, while others say that this was the cause of his martyrdom. St. Erasmus is invoked by those suffering from stomach pains and disorders, and by women in labor.

St. Pantaleon: Another 4th-century martyr persecuted under Diocletian, St. Pantaleon was the son of a rich pagan, but was instructed in Christianity by his mother and a priest. He worked as a physician to the emperor Maximianus. According to legend, St. Pantaleon was denounced as a Christian to the emperor by his peers who were jealous of his rich inheritance. When he refused to worship false gods, St. Pantaleon was tortured and his murder was attempted by various methods - burning torches on his flesh, a bath of liquid lead, being thrown into the sea tied to a stone, and so on. Each time, he was rescued from death by Christ, who appeared in the form of a priest. St. Pantaleon was only successfully beheaded after he desired his own martyrdom. He is invoked as a patron saint of physicians and midwives.

St. Vitus: Also a 4th-century martyr persecuted by Diocletian, St. Vitus was the son of a senator in Sicily and became Christian under the influence of his nurse. According to legend, St. Vitus inspired many conversions and performed many miracles, which angered those who hated Christianity. St. Vitus, and his Christian nurse and her husband, were denounced to the emperor, who ordered them to be put to death when they refused to renounce their faith. Like St. Pantaleon, many attempts were made at killing them, including releasing them to lions in the Colosseum, but they were miraculously delivered each time. They were eventually put to death on the rack. St. Vitus is invoked against epilepsy, paralysis, and diseases of the nervous system.

St. Christopher: A 3rd-century martyr originally called Reprobus, he was the son of pagans and had originally pledged his service to a pagan king and to Satan. Eventually, the conversion of a king and the instruction of a monk led Reprobus to convert to Christianity, and he was called on to use his strength and muscles to help carry people across a raging stream

The Fourteen Holy Helpers

where there was no bridge. Once he was carrying a child who announced himself as Christ, and declared the Reprobis would be called “Christopher” - or Christ-bearer. The encounter filled Christopher with missionary zeal, and he returned home to Turkey to convert nearly 50,000. Angered, the Emperor Decius had Christopher arrested, imprisoned and tortured. While he was delivered from many tortures, including being shot with arrows, Christopher was beheaded around the year 250. He is invoked against epilepsy and toothache, and is the patron of a holy death.

St. Denis: There are conflicting accounts of St. Denis, with some accounts claiming he was converted to Christianity in Athens by St. Paul, and then became the first Bishop of Paris sometime in the first century. Other accounts claim he was a Bishop of Paris but a martyr of the third century. What is known is that he was a zealous missionary who eventually came to France, where he was beheaded on Montmartre - the Mount of Martyrs - a place where many early Christians were killed for the faith. He is invoked against demonic attacks.

St. Cyriacus: Another 4th century martyr, St. Cyriacus, a deacon, was actually favored by the emperor Diocletian after he cured the emperor’s daughter in the name of Jesus, and then the friend of the emperor. According to the Catholicism.org and The Fourteen Holy Helpers, by Fr. Bonaventure Hammer, O.F.M., after Diocletian died, his successor, emperor Maximin, increased the persecution of Christians and imprisoned Cyriacus, who was tortured at the rack and beheaded for refusing to renounce Christianity. He is the patron of those who suffer from eye diseases.

St. Acacius: A fourth-century martyr under the emperor Galerius, St. Acacius was a captain in the Roman army when he heard a voice telling him to “Call on the help of the God of Christians,” according to tradition. He obeyed the voice and immediately sought baptism in the Christian faith. He zealously set about converting the soldiers of the army, but was soon denounced to the emperor, tortured, and sent before a tribunal for questioning, before which he again refused to denounce his faith. After many more tortures, from some of which he was miraculously healed, St. Acacius was beheaded in the year 311. He is the patron saint of those who suffer from headaches.

St. Eustace: Little is known about this second-century martyr, persecuted under the Emperor Trajan. According to tradition, Eustace was a general in the army who converted to Christianity after a vision of a Crucifix that appeared between the antlers of a deer while he was hunting. He converted his family to Christianity, and he and his wife were burned to death after refusing to participate in a pagan ceremony. He is invoked against fires.

St. Giles: One of the later Holy Helpers and the only one definitively known to not be a martyr, St. Giles became a seventh-century monk in the area of Athens, despite his birth to nobility. He eventually retreated to the wilderness to found a monastery under the rule of St. Benedict, and was renowned for his holiness and the miracles he performed. According to Catholicism.org, he also once counseled Charles Martel, grandfather of Charlemagne, to confess a sin that had been weighing on him. Giles died peacefully around the year of 712, and is invoked against crippling diseases.

St. Margaret of Antioch: Another fourth-century martyr persecuted by Diocletian, St. Margaret, like St. Vitus, converted to Christianity under the influence of her nurse, angering her father and causing him to disown her. A consecrated virgin, Margaret was tending flocks of sheep one day when a Roman spotted her and sought to make her his wife or concubine. When she refused, the Roman had Margaret brought before a court, where she was ordered to denounce her faith or die. She refused, and she was ordered to be burned and boiled alive, and miraculously she was spared from both. Eventually, she was beheaded. She is invoked as a patron of pregnant women and those suffering from kidney diseases.

St. Barbara: While little is known of this third-century martyr, St. Barbara is thought to have been the daughter of a rich and jealous man who sought to keep Barbara from the world. When she confessed to him that she had converted to Christianity, he denounced her and brought her before local authorities, who ordered that she be tortured and beheaded. According to legend, her own father did the beheading, for which he was struck by lightning shortly thereafter. St. Barbara is invoked against fires and lightning storms.

St. Catherine of Alexandria: A fourth-century martyr, St. Catherine was the daughter of the Queen of Egypt, and converted to Christianity after a vision of Christ and Mary. The Queen also converted to Christianity before her death. When Maximinus started persecuting Christians in Egypt, St. Catherine rebuked him and attempted to prove to him that his gods were false. After debating with the emperor’s best scholars, many of whom converted due to her arguments, Catherine was scourged, imprisoned, and eventually beheaded. She is the patron saint of philosophers and young students.

This article was originally published on CNA March 11, 2020.



Sunday Mass Readings

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Reading 1: [Job 7:1-4, 6-7](#)

Job spoke, saying: Is not man's life on earth a drudgery? Are not his days those of hirelings? He is a slave who longs for the shade, a hireling who waits for his wages. So I have been assigned months of misery, and troubled nights have been allotted to me. If in bed I say, "When shall I arise?" then the night drags on; I am filled with restlessness until the dawn. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; they come to an end without hope. Remember that my life is like the wind; I shall not see happiness again.

Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6](#)

R. (cf. 3a) Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted. OR:

R. Alleluia.

► Praise the LORD, for he is good; sing praise to our God, for he is gracious; it is fitting to praise him. The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; the dispersed of Israel he gathers. **R.**

► He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He tells the number of the stars; he calls each by name. **R.**

► Great is our Lord and mighty in power; to his wisdom there is no limit. The LORD sustains the lowly; the wicked he casts to the ground. **R.**

Reading 2: [1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23](#)

Brothers and sisters: If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and woe to me if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

Alleluia

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Christ took away our infirmities and bore our diseases.

R. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel: [Mark 1:29-39](#)

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.



Parish Lenten Day of Reflection

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20 2021

10:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School Cafeteria

10:30am

Welcome

11:00am

Reflection by Msgr. Flanigan

12:00pm

Break & Lunch

1:00pm

Holy Hour (Church)

Reflections by Msgr. Flanigan (Church)

Lenten Confessions (Church)



Retreat Master:
Rev. Msgr. Thomas P. Flanigan
Church of St. Joseph
Aston, Pennsylvania

If you are planning on attending our Parish's Lenten Day of Reflection, please detach this portion, and drop it in the Collection Box OR Drop it off at the Rectory by Monday, February 8th.

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Number of Family Members Attending _____

Ash Wednesday

February 17, 2021

6:30 AM Mass ~ Church
9:30 AM Service ~ Church
11:30 AM Service ~ Church
4:30 PM Service ~ Church
7:00 PM Mass ~ Church

Ashes will be distributed within each of these Liturgies.



