

SALVATION – A “SHARE” IN ETERNAL LIFE OF GOD

Possibly no other part of Scripture has caused more dispute among Christians than the meaning of Paul’s Letter to the Romans. To many it is the text that gave rise to the reformation. So, what does Paul mean when he writes: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ? And why has the Church chosen it for us today? What does it mean to be justified? From the start, it has been held by the Church that salvation is not something that we can ever achieve or earn on our own. It is always God’s gift.

If we accept this, then what role do we play in our salvation? Are we just puppets, with God pulling our strings? Are we able to sit back and rest on our spiritual laurels? Do our life choices, our good works or our commitment to the Gospel make a difference? For some, this idea that has all been decided ahead of time might sound attractive. If it has, then why worry? Why be faithful, honest or just in this life? Indeed, the litany of our own personal and communal sins becomes irrelevant if we simply think that God has already decided beforehand.

But Paul doesn’t stop with telling us that we have been justified, he goes on to say that we now have hope and access to God’s grace. Because we have been justified, we can boast in hope of God’s glory because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts, and makes us capable of more than just blind obedience or the bare minimum. In other words, Paul tells us that God is on our side revealing His mercy and forgiveness that pours forth like living water – purifying, cleansing and renewing the heart that desires life with Him.

It is this image of mercy flowing like water that is central to today’s Gospel. In an encounter that is full of symbolism and meaning, the Samaritan woman meets the One who reveals God’s mercy to all. In the brokenness of her past, this woman is isolated and separated from her community. But in her encounter with Jesus, she goes from suspicious outsider, full of doubts and misunderstandings, to spiritual seeker, and finally becomes an evangelist ready to share the news of her renewal.

Key to this change is her use of titles. First Jesus is a Jew, then Sir, then a prophet and finally the Christ. For her, it was a mini RCIA journey as the offer of living water slowly soaks into her very being, renewing her and finally changing her. How quickly this outsider becomes an insider, perhaps not to her community be certainly to the truth of the kingdom.

Lent invites us to seek God’s mercy, too. And just as we seek God, we come to know that God is also seeking us, taking the initiative so that we each might lead lives that are justified by Him. This offer of living water is given to us today; let us drink freely of this life-giving refreshing gift.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be celebrated every Friday in Lent at 6:00 p.m., in the Chapel.

R.C.I.A.

Please continue to pray for our Elect as they continue on their journey of faith.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon	Mar 20	2 Sm 7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16, Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22, Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24a
Tues	Mar 21	Dn 3:25, 34-43, Mt 18:21-35
Wed	Mar 22	Dt 4:1, 5-9, Mt 5:17-19
Thur	Mar 23	Jer 7:23-28, Lk 11:14-23
Fri	Mar 24	Hos 14:2-10, Mk 12:28-34
Sat	Mar 25	Is 7:10-14; 8:10, Heb 10:4-10, Lk 1:26-38
Sun	Mar 26	1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a, Eph 5:8-14, Jn 9:1-41



YOUR SUNDAY TITHING AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Regular Collections	\$	7,377.01
Nativity Maintenance	\$	685.00
Nativity Elem.	\$	637.00
Capital Improvement	\$	215.00
Miscellaneous	\$	802.75
TOTAL COLLECTION	\$	9,716.76
CASH NEEDED	\$	14,400.00

SPECIAL APPEAL – MAINTENANCE FUND

TOTAL GIFTS AND PLEDGES TO DATE	\$174,166
PAYMENTS TO DATE	\$167,941
BALANCE TO COMPLETE PLEDGES	\$ 6,225

THE EPISCOPAL ORDIANTION AND INSTALLATION OF BISHOP-ELECT LOUIS F. KIHNEMAN, III.

The new date for Bishop-elect Louis F. Kihneman, III, is scheduled for April 28th, 2017, at 2:00 p.m. here at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cathedral. Vespers will be held on Thursday, April 27th, at 7:00 p.m.

ST. JOSEPH ALTAR CELEBRATION – “A LABOR OF LOVE”

The Parish Life Committee of the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary is proud to announce the St. Joseph Altar will be on display this Sunday, St. Joseph’s Day, from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. We invite all you to view the altar. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon. The altar is a true “Labor of Love” for the committee and we hope everyone will stop by, view the altar, leave your petitions and honor St. Joseph on his feast day.

PARISH LENTEN MISSION

Nativity Cathedral’s annual Parish Lenten Mission will take place from April 1st until April 4th. Fr. Dan Estes, a priest working in the Diocese of Corpus Christi (the diocese from which our new Bishop Kihneman comes) will be leading our mission this year. Fr. Dan will introduce the Mission at all Masses on April 1st and 2nd, and follow it with two evening presentations on April 3rd and 4th at 6:00 p.m. Mark your calendars for this refreshing Lenten spiritual time with Father Dan.

CCD CLASS INFORMATION

CCD classes are on Wednesdays, from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m., in the Sacred Heart Center.

SCHEDULED LAY MINISTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS	LECTORS	ALTAR SERVERS
Mar 25 4:00 pm 1. Deacon Ben 2. Jim Coskey 3. Kathleen Coskey 4. Ann Kavanagh 5. Liz Joachim Mar 26 7:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Jim Shugart 3. Marcia Mayfield 4. Dale Dorcik 9:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Nanette Burke 3. John Brauchle 4. Barry Gilmore 5. Bobby Weaver 11:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Deacon Michael 3. Mary Wimberly 4. Sondra Williams 5. Johnny Williams 6. Rocky Greathouse 7. Susan Toche 5:30 pm 1. Annette Luther 2. Teresa Ballinger 3. Angela Cannon	Mar 25 4:00 pm Julie Capuano Mar 26 7:00 am Sister Mary Jo Mike 9:00 am Jim Compton. 11:00 am Michelle Sekuller 5:30 pm Maggie Landry CANTORS Mar 25 4:00 pm Billy Endicott Mar 26 9:00 am Dennis Burke 11:00 am Choir	Mar 25 4:00 pm Carlo Ashton Brinden Butterfield Mar 26 7:00 am Makayla Pfarrer Wyett Stewart 9:00 am Morgan Newman Rhys Newman Rush Newman McKinzy Mathis 11:00 am Michael Pfarrer Aidan Tarrant Clayton Stoddard Simon Randall 5:30 pm Annabelle Landry Veronika Landry Julia Landry

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Mar 20 - Women of Mary, 5:30 p.m.
 Mar 21 - Men of St. Joseph, 7:00 a.m. – SHC
 Bingo Mania 5:30 p.m.
 Mar 22 - **Cleaning Team “C”**
 Mass at Seashore Retirement Home, 3:00 p.m.
 Mar 23 Mass at Greenbriar Nursing Home, 10:00 a.m.
 Mar 24 Station of the Cross at 6:00 p.m.

COMMUNION VISITATION

Jesus says of you and me, “You are the salt of the earth”. No one should be deprived of the Most Holy Eucharist because they are homebound, elderly, have no means of getting to Mass and/or sick in their home. Sister Jackie Tarrant, RSM will gladly bring the Eucharist to you in your home. Together we can be “salt of the earth”. Sister can be reached at 228-223-8129 or the rectory at 228-374-1717.

BINGO MANIA

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The following families are scheduled for March 21st. Davis (Andy & Jennifer), Gollott (Arny & Jamie), Gollott (Victor & Trulie), Gonzalez (Tony & Margaret), Gopffarth (Bobby & Amy), Kelly (Joshua) and Kuluz (Kevin & Bridgette). **REMEMBER! If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to secure a replacement.**

GIRL SCOUT COOKIES FOR SALE!

Girl Scout Troop 6460 from Nativity BVM Elementary School will be selling Girl Scout cookies after all masses this weekend. Please help support our girls!

Mass Intentions

	6:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
Mon Mar 20	Otilio Aristizabal	Bobby Weldon
Tue Mar 21	Flor Aristizabal	Carlis Young
Wed Mar 22	Richard Wells.	Chester Balias Fly.
Thur Mar 23	Hedwig Marie Moyer	Gary Michiel
Fri Mar 24	Glenn/Joyce Pisarich	Collins-Sims Fly.
Sat Mar 25	<u>8</u> – Sonny Ross	<u>4</u> Josephine Esposito Allen
Sun Mar 26	<u>7</u> – Dan Williams	<u>9</u> - For the Parishioners
	11 – Clare Hornsby	5:30 - Carlis Young

PLEASE KEEP OUR SICK IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Tiffany Whitehead, Lena Marchioni, Kay Lawson, Jeanie Harbison, Mickey Roberts, Holly Hill, Georgia Bellais Dominick, Maxine Kiddinger, Marie Manning, Lisa Walker Kirkman, Raymond Egers, Betty Hilton, Walter Blessey, Mary Lancaster, Patsy Smolcich, Danny Boney, Sr., Kathleen Hebert, Mickey Bradley, Cheryl Terry, Gwen Gollotte and Greg Hotaling and Richard “Red” White.

NATIVITY BVM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*Congratulations to Tami Madeira, the March winner of the Nativity BVM School \$3,000 monthly raffle! Remember, you still have three more chances to win! Tickets for next year’s raffle will go on sale in late May. *Congratulations to the following Nativity students who won special awards at the recent MS Region VI Science and Engineering Fair: Aidan Cloud-1st place/Engineering; Arny Gollott-3rd place/Earth and Environmental Science; Ava Stoddard-4th place/Botany; Jacob Nguyen-6th place/Computers/Math; Zachary Lyons-5th place/Organic Chemistry. * Arny Gollott also won a special award given by the MS Dept. of Marine Resources for Excellence in Marine Science. *A special celebration will be held on Thursday, March 23rd at 5:30 p.m. for the students who participated in the LEGOS and Robotics programs this school year. We are in awe of all that the children accomplished and we are so appreciative of the adult and young adult mentors who worked with them. *A Lenten Dinner will be held this Friday from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Nativity School. Come and enjoy some great food—dine in or take out! All proceeds benefit the school. *The annual Diocesan Track Meet, sponsored by Nativity School, will be held on Thursday, April 27th at St. Patrick’s High School. Coaches for the various teams will hold a meeting on March 21st in anticipation of this great event.

NATIVITY B.V.M. CATHEDRAL’S 5TH ANNUAL

UNCORKED AND UNCAPPED WINE AND BEER

TASTING! APRIL 29TH, 2017.

Save the date! Saturday, April 29th, 2017, Exotic Wines – Craft Beers – Gourmet Food’s – Sumptuous Silent Auction and Live Entertainment. Tickets are \$50.00 per person, \$80.00 per couple and \$350.00 for a reserved table of 10

THE CITY OF D’IBERVILLE’S BICENTENNIAL

Let us offer congratulations to our neighbor to the north. The City of D’Iberville will begin its Bicentennial Celebration on Mrch 24, 2017 at the Town Green. Please try to attend!