The Justice of God

Jesus said to his disciples: Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place.

Christ is not abolishing the Ten Commandments, but he is calling his followers to a more perfect, more sincere fulfillment of them. The whole moral value of any legal observance (the Mosaic law included), comes from the interior disposition of the one who observes or keeps the law. No one serves or honors God by any exterior acts, be they ever so arduous or continuous, unless these acts proceed from an intention and a will to honor and please God. This is the charter, the constitution, of the new law, Christianity. The old law is not abolished, but deepened and given a new life.

We must be truthful always, and people of our word. This virtue is not only necessary for our salvation, but is the basis of rational discourse between people in civilized society. While our civil courts still deem it necessary to impose oaths on contestants and witnesses (since they have, unfortunately, to take account of those who lie and deceive, who still are a menace to society), the truthful person need not be afraid of insulting or dishonoring God by calling God as his guarantor, if required to do so.

True and loyal service of God therefore begins in the heart and has its value from this interior disposition. Keeping the Ten Commandments is our way of showing God that we are grateful, obedient and loyal to him who gave us all we have and who has promised us future gifts infinitely greater still. And just as our love for God is proven by our true love for our neighbor, so the last seven of the commandments impose on us obligations regarding our neighbor. It is only by fulfilling these seven that we can fulfill the first three which govern our relations with God.

This truth is expressed by our Lord in the words: If you are offering your gift at the altar, and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there... first be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift.

Personal questions:

- In our life, are we always open to Jesus' request for a greater justice?
- Are we aware when we are not yet in full justice?
- In the practice of justice, do we match it with the action of God?
- Do we realize how we are to live justly in the human relations we have been given?
- Do we engage our justice behavior to imitate something of the justice of God, of God’s gratuity, God’s creativity?

Victor Sanchez, Seminarian, victor13_64@hotmail.com
Special Intentions

We invite you to have a Sanctuary Lamp lit at the Blessed Sacrament to have your very special intentions remembered for a week.

To arrange this, please call or visit the Ministry Center. The Thursday Holy Hour Ministry will offer special prayers for your intention.

One Sanctuary Lamp will burn for Margaret F. O’Neil by Family.

Mass Intentions for This Week

MONDAY - February 17

Presidents’ Day

Seven Holy Founders of Servite Order

Jas 1:1-11/Mk 8:11-13

11:00 am Edward & Irene Shults - Mary
5:15 pm Caroline Harber - Nancy & Wayne Harber

TUESDAY - February 18

Jas 1:12-18/Mk 8:14-21

6:45 am Stephen Hanna - Sharon & Bob Napier
11:00 am Raymond Kirst - Pastoral Care

WEDNESDAY - February 19

Jas 1:19-27/Mk 8:22-26

11:00 am Michael Petrina - Jim & Colleen Knauf
5:15 pm Lucia Chippianelli - Pearsall Family

THURSDAY - February 20

Jas 2:1-9/Mk 8:27-33

6:45 am Rita Regina - Peter & Pat Spinelli
11:00 am Raymond Kirst - Joyce Rooney

FRIDAY - February 21

Peter Damian, bishop & doctor of the Church

Jas 2:14-24, 26/Mk 8:34-9:1

11:00 am Margaret O’Neil - Family
5:15 pm Christina Leone Cybrynski - Dr. & Mrs. Anthony Leone

SATURDAY - February 22

Chair of Peter the Apostle

1 Pt 5:1-4/Mt 16:13-19

9:00 am Doris Growney & Andrea Levy - Family
4:30 pm Joseph Polyak

SUNDAY - February 23

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary time

Lv 19:1-2, 17-18/1 Cor 3:16-23/
Mt 5:38-48

7:30 am Loren Kellogg - Hilliard Family
9:00 am James Murray - Patrick Dwyer Family
11:00 am In Thanksgiving for the Mills Family - Family
5:00 pm Martha Dooley - Regan Family

Sunday Communion Service - February 23

The Highlands: Mary Ann Monley
Heather Heights: George Kimber & Dick Reddington
Choosing Wisely

The book of Sirach (written around 180 BC) was authored by Ben Sira, a scribe and teacher who ran an academy for young men in Jerusalem, in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. The passage we hear today is as strong and clear on human free will as anything found in the Bible. God is not responsible for evil: God gives us all free will, but does not give anyone license to sin. We have a choice: good or evil, justice or sin, life or death. We have free will, but choices have consequences. Can’t you imagine parent’s consternation if Ben Sira taught anything else? Yet St. Paul, especially after writing Romans, would argue “yes, but you need to acknowledge the power of sin! We can only make the right choices with the help of God’s grace.” And that’s why we never read the Old Testament and stop. Both Testaments contain important messages, but we always need to keep Christ, our need for redemption, and God’s grace in the picture.

Wisdom of the Cross

It seems some folks in Corinth didn’t especially like hearing about the cross. They felt the less said about suffering, the better – in their mind, it was the resurrected Lord who taught them all they needed to know. Paul would have none of it. It was through the cross that Christ conquered the power of sin and death. Only loving enough to be willing to suffer, entrust himself completely to the Father, and sacrificing himself for our sake could Christ defeat the powers of this world. Paul’s opponents thought themselves wise, but they were clinging to worldly wisdom, not God’s wisdom.

Near Occasions of Sin

The phrase should be familiar; it is part of the Act of Contrition. But for those new to the faith: a near occasion of sin is any person, place, or thing that of its nature, or because of human frailty, can lead one to do wrong, thereby committing sin. Today’s Gospel can help shed light. While calling a brother or sister a fool in anger, or holding on to anger instead of trying to reconcile, or looking at someone in lust are not violations of the letter of the law in the 10 commandments, these violate the spirit of the commandments, and certainly qualify as near occasions of sin. For more, read Victor’s article on the front page.

Temple of the Holy Spirit

To prepare for next week’s 2nd reading, Google ‘Come Down, O Love Divine’. Verse three captures it:

And so the yearning strong,
with which the soul will long,
shall far outpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace,
till Love create a place wherein the Holy Spirit
makes a dwelling.

Isaiah in the Winter

Last week we heard Isaiah’s counsel that if we shelter the oppressed and the homeless, our light will break forth like the dawn. This winter, that could translate as emergency help with heating bills. In a letter inviting all parishes to take up a second collection, Bishop Matano wrote: “… because of cutbacks in federal funding, and because of the bitter cold, Catholic Charities has had to turn away far too many families (150 families in Monroe County). I am inviting your parish to take up a voluntary second collection sometime in the next month … funds will be forwarded to your local Catholic Charities agency … solely to provide direct assistance to families in need of heating assistance.” Here at St. Louis, we will take up that second collection next week. We have already sent $1,000 from our emergency tithing fund.

A Holy Gift from God: CLE

So maybe consistent life ethic isn’t a phrase that has made it big yet. But chances are high, you embrace the message. Namely, life is a precious gift from God, to be treasured. In our individualistic, throw away culture, the value of every human life, especially the most vulnerable, can get lost. Our Consistent Life Ethic team is committed to doing what we can to promote the Catholic ethical principles that protect the value of life, and to work to address the many challenges and attacks that diminish the sacredness of every human life. Our next meeting is Thursday, February 27 at 7PM in the parish Meeting Hall. We are looking to get a newly invigorated team going. For information, or questions, email Deacon Dave and Barb Snyder at 1DeaconDave@gmail.com or 734-8019 if you don’t have access to email.
My church is composed of people like me. I help make it what it is. It will be friendly, if I am. Its pews will be filled, if I help fill them. It will do great work, if I work. It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver. It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, if I invite and bring them. It will be a church of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a church with a noble purpose, if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these same things. Therefore, with the help of God, I shall dedicate myself to the task of being all the things that I want my church to be. Amen.
CATHOLIC 101

Are You Ready and Willing to Train for Christ?

At the last World Youth Day, Pope Francis shared this wisdom:

“Jesus offers us something bigger than the World Cup! He offers us the possibility of a fulfilled and fruitful life; he also offers us a future with him, and endless future, eternal life. But he asks us to train, ‘to get in shape’, so that we can face every situation in life undaunted, bearing witness to our faith. How do we get in shape? By talking with him; by prayer, which is our daily conversation with God, who always listens to us. By the sacraments, which make his life grow within us and conform us to Christ. By loving one another, learning to listen, to understand, to forgive, to be accepting and to help others, everybody, with no one excluded or ostracized. Dear young people, be true ‘athletes of Christ’!”

Just as athletes, musicians, actors and inventors; anyone who becomes outstanding in their field, we must train and practice, we must get in shape. Why should that be any different for the most important thing we do, following Christ as a Catholic? We are called by Jesus to be the best disciple that we can be; to do that we must continually practice our faith and become lifelong learners of our Catholic faith.

In the coming weeks I will be sharing a brief column in the bulletin on some of the teachings of the Catholic faith as well as ideas from expert writers on what it means to be Catholic. It is my hope that all of us can learn something new, refresh our memory, or come to a better understanding about Catholicism. The information that I will share is not my opinion or theology. I will be sharing documented Church Tradition and teaching. You will see the notation (CCC), which notes the information came from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. I will also note other sources when necessary. I will also be sharing ideas and thoughts from published writers with knowledge in this field. Looking forward to learning with you, Cris.

So let's begin: What are the precepts of the Church?

“The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life.” (CCC #2041). Simply put the precepts are the minimum requirements for being a Catholic. There are six:

- Attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.
- Confess your sins at least once a year or more often if necessary.
- Receive Holy Communion during the Easter season. Receiving weekly or daily is encouraged.
- Observe the laws of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
- Obey the marriage laws of the Church.
- Provide for the needs of the Church through sharing time, talent, and treasure.

“God’s Law of Love”

Families have rules. Without rules, family life would be chaos. As a family, brainstorm a list of rules that you are all called to follow in your home in order for you all to get along together. Think about rules for play time, rules for eating, rules for how to speak to one another, rules for going out with friends, and so on. Emphasize that families follow rules as a way of showing love and respect for one another. This Sunday’s Gospel, Jesus talks about following the Law. God’s Law of love can be thought of as rules that we are to follow in order to show our love and respect for one another.

When Matthew in today’s Gospel speaks of “the Law and the prophets” he means the whole Scripture. When the Messiah brings the fullness of the kingdom none of scripture will be done away with. Instead it will be fulfilled. Jesus does not overturn the Law of Moses, nor does he set his followers free from the Law. He requires his followers to go beyond the Law by doing more than the Law requires.

The Law condemned murder. Jesus condemns anger. The Law condemned adultery. Jesus condemns even lustful looks. As Jewish Christians who had always been faithful to the Law, the community needed a way to understand the difference Jesus and the kingdom he brings have made. They affirmed that God had always been at work in history through “the Law and the prophets.” But God’s work goes beyond that to be embodied by the Messiah who reveals the definitive will of God. The written scriptures and their interpretation in tradition are surpassed by Jesus whose life and teaching are the definitive revelation of the will of God.

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus points out that the Law requires people to do the minimum. He has come to teach us how to go beyond the minimum requirements of the Law and to respond to others with love. Jesus tells us in this Sunday’s Gospel that the best way to understand God’s Law of love, is to listen to Jesus and to live like him.
WE PRAY THROUGH LENT

WARM SOUP AND NOURISHING PRAYER

Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday, March 5 is just around the corner and it is time to mark your calendars for our “Fridays in Lent” gatherings. The following are the prayer formats for each evening:

Friday, March 7** ~ Mary Van Houten  
Musical prayer and reflection (7:00 pm)

Friday, March 14 ~ Father Bob Ring  
Taize Prayer (7:00 pm)

Friday, March 21 ~ St. Louis School 5th Grade  
Stations of the Cross (7:00 pm)

Friday, March 28 ~ Musica Spei  
Musical Stations of the Cross (7:00 pm)

Friday, April 4 ~ St. Louis Faith Formation  
Living Stations of the Cross (7:00 pm)

Friday, April 11** ~ Father Bob Ring  
Evening Prayer (7:00 pm)

Friday, April 18 ~ St. Louis Parish Family  
Tenebrae (7:30 pm)

**On Friday, March 7 and Friday, April 11 a simple soup supper will be held beginning at 6:00 pm in the Parish Meeting Hall. The soup suppers will be a pot-luck style meal. Please RSVP on the Wednesdays of these two weeks by calling Elizabeth (586-5675) at the Ministry Center. Let Elizabeth know if you will be bringing a crockpot of your favorite soup (remember meatless) to share and/or a loaf of bread. If you will be attending the prayer portion of the evening only you don’t need to RSVP.

The prayer portion of these evenings will begin at 7:00 pm in the church with the exception of April 18, Tenebrae, which will begin at 7:30 pm.

We know through Scripture that Jesus can be found in the breaking of the bread. Come and break bread and pray with other disciples who share our faith. Let’s get to know one another in these opportunities of a shared meal and prayer this Lent.

Little Rock Scripture Study  
“The Women of the Old Testament”

Discover their Strength  
Courage  
Wisdom

Bold and decisive, also meek and faithful, they are always compelled to act in ways that bring about change. God’s saving deeds often came through the mind and will of amazing women using limited resources. Their stories are remarkable in that they arise from historical eras that crimped their options in influencing or changing the flow of history.

10-week Study Begins Tuesday, February 25  
1:15 p.m. in Parish Meeting Hall  
$10 Cost of materials includes study guide, scripture, and commentary.  
Please RSVP to Birdie (586-5675) by February 17

Peer-led, informal, faith-sharing, join us!  
(Additional session days & times available if enough people are interested. Email Cris Wensel at cwensel@dor.org)

Little Black Books – It isn't just the content, it is also the method. Little Black books in Lent are an invitation to make prayer and reflecting on Scripture a part of every day; an invitation to ponder a spiritual question and 'spend some time with the Lord’, at home, at work, or whenever you have 6 minutes to spare. Pick one up the 1st weekend of March.

ASH WEDNESDAY AT ST. LOUIS

6:45 am  Mass/ distribution of Ashes
9:10 am  School Liturgy/ distribution of Ashes  
(everyone welcome)
11:00 am  Mass/ distribution of Ashes
5:15 pm  Mass/ distribution of Ashes
7:00 pm  Mass/ distribution of Ashes
These Lenten Reflections will attempt to help you to slow down and deepen your relationship with God. Give yourself a Lenten gift and set aside the time to be with us for this special presentation.

St. Louis
64 S. Main St.  Pittsford, NY

Church of the Transfiguration
50 W. Bloomfield Rd.  Pittsford, NY

St. Catherine of Siena
26 Mendon-Ionia Rd.  Mendon, NY

Monday, March 11
11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
(following 11:00 a.m. Mass)
OR
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

...Be STILL...
How can we learn to quiet our hearts in this busy and take time to listen to God?

Tuesday, March 12
9:30 a.m. - 10:15 p.m.
(following 9:00 a.m. Mass)
OR
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

...and KNOW....
How is it possible to really experience God in a meaningful way?

Wednesday, March 13
9:30 a.m. - 10:15 p.m.
(following 9:00 a.m. Mass)
OR
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

...that I am GOD...
How can we benefit more deeply from the richness of believing in a Triune God?

After teaching Scripture at St. Bernard's Seminary for 11 years, Dr. Joseph Kelly joined the faculty at Nazareth College where he taught in the Religious Studies Department for 27 years. He now devotes his time to teaching Adult Education courses in scripture and theology in parishes and congregations throughout the Diocese of Rochester. He is also very active in ecumenical and interfaith work in Monroe County. Look for his article regarding Pope Francis' idea that the Church is a Field Hospital in America Magazine this Spring. He and his wife, Pat, will soon celebrate their 42nd wedding anniversary.
SAINT’S PLACE UPDATES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS – Annual Super Sale starts Wednesday, July 16 and runs through Saturday July 19. More details to follow. Volunteers are needed and welcomed. Volunteers who work five hours get a chance to shop before opening morning!

WINTER COATS – Saint’s Place has been blessed with donations of many winter coats from various schools, businesses and other organizations. Assumption CYO members recently collected winter coats for us. It is an amazing sight to see all the coats, but the reality is that we still need more warm coats, ALL sizes. So as you are buying new coats at the sales, please consider donating your gently used, clean coats.

REFUGEE NUMBERS – The last three months have been very busy with new arrivals. In October because of the government shut down, Rochester saw only a handful of arrivals. This has been followed by a steady number of arrivals. Each week we are setting up 5 to 6 homes. This is creating a severe shortage on certain furniture items, especially kitchen tables and chairs and small dressers. If you have either that you could donate, please call 385-6860 to arrange a pick up. We have had to give families card tables for their kitchen table because of our shortage.

VOLUNTEERS – Saint’s Place needs you! Flexible hours, on the job training, friendly atmosphere, a chance to help someone who truly needs your help. Instant rewards and meaningful interactions with newly arrived refugees. Become a volunteer – someone who notices, someone who cares. Call 385-6860 for more information or just drop by either location any morning Mondays – Thursdays. (46 South Main Street or St. John of Rochester, Parish Center - Saint’s Place Clothing Closet)

Saint’s Place, 46 S. Main St., Pittsford, NY 14534. Colleen Knauf, Executive Director.
Saint’s Place Ministry Hours: 46 S. Main St.: Mon. through Thurs.: 8:30 am to 3:30 pm. Closed Fridays.
St. John of Rochester: Mon., Tues., Thurs.: 9:15 am until 12 noon; Wed.: 9:15 am to 2:30 pm.; Closed Fridays.
Phone: 585-385-6860. Fax: 585-385-3963 or saintlady@saintsplace.org, or www.saintsplace.org

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In order to meet publishing deadlines, we request this form be returned to the school office by Feb. 14. Thank you.

PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO ST. LOUIS SCHOOL. COMPANY CHECKS ARE ACCEPTED.
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

DAWN SCHNELL
DSCHNELL@ROCHESTER.RR.COM
585.281.1888

St. Louis School; 11 Rand Place, Pittsford, NY 14534

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3 | Data Mgr/Chemical Tech | RIT/MCC, AS Chemical Tech
4 | Consulting/finance/Marketing/Sales/Education/Program Development | U of R Simons School, MBA
5 | Part-time in Private Accounting | Nazareth, BS Accounting

SEEKING EMPLOYMENT - CAN YOU HELP? Helping One Another: Currently we have 5 individuals who are looking for employment. Information about them, their education history and employment interests are listed below. If you or someone you know is looking to hire someone who matches these criteria (indicate the reference number listed below as all information is confidential), please contact Birdie at the Parish Ministry Center (586-5675). If you are unemployed and would like to add your resume to the list, please email (cwensel@dor.org), fax (387-9888) or send your resume to the Ministry Office, 64 South Main Street, Pittsford, New York 14534, Attention: Cris Wensel.

THE FRUIT OF THE VINE CONVERSATION SERIES
Tuesday, February 18, Parish Meeting Hall “Ask Father Bob”
Refreshments 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.; Discussion 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Thanks to our new Holy Father, Pope Francis, many people are interested in the Catholic faith. Now more than ever, it is a time to learn about our faith so that we can be prepared to answer questions about Catholicism. This evening Father Bob will help us by answering questions about Church teaching and how to best to respond to those sometimes difficult questions. Bring your questions. Be enlightened!

LIFE! IN FOCUS
"Bishop Matano recently told the Catholic Courier he has attended the March for Life every year he has been a bishop. “It has been part of my ministry for many years now as well as when I was a priest.” He said the presence of so many Rochester pilgrims despite the weather conditions demonstrates the deep faith shared by his new flock. “We are always here to march as one family in the Church.” “The lives of children must be protected ... as well as the lives of all people." (www.catholiccourier.com/news/local-news/bishop-matano-joins-pro-life-activists-at-march-for-life)
PARISH STAFF DIRECTORY

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