

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

FEBRUARY 21, 2021



Reading I: Genesis 9: 8-15

God's surmounting promise after the devastating flood was never again to bring another one to the earth. The sign of this new covenant was to be "the rainbow in the clouds."

Reading II: I Peter 3: 18-22

The great flood in Genesis "prefigured baptism." These later sacramental waters bring salvation for us through the death of Christ.

The Gospel: Mark 1: 12-15

The testing of Jesus by Satan in the water-less desert and the summary of His teaching lead to Our Lord's power soon to be on display in Galilee.



- 5 p.m.: Barry Weissman, Mary Ellen Albarino,
Nancy Jean Kosior and Alfred F. Romano
10 a.m.: Frances Hernandez, Carolyn Bender,
Evelyn Joyce and Anna J. Moynihan

LAST WEEK'S MASS ATTENDANCE

- 5 p.m. Saturday, February 13: **42**
10 a.m. Sunday, February 14: **51** in the church;
10 in the hall
Ash Wednesday, February 17:
9 a.m.: **36**
7 p.m.: **63** plus **10** in the hall

GRATITUDE

Your Parish Community is

GRATEFUL

for your consistent contributions.

February 7-14: Totaled \$ 5,436.96

Envelopes: \$ 2,417.00 – Online: \$ 3,019.96

SPIRITUAL COMPARE AND CONTRAST

You may remember the very challenging essay exam from your school days that began with the words "Compare and Contrast." You really had to know your material to answer smartly. If you didn't, you would likely spin a web of conjecture with the vain hope that your teacher could be fooled by your lengthy burst of meaningless verbiage. I leave to your imagination another more coarse definition of what that's called!

There is no such problem, however, with comparisons and contrasts in Sacred Scripture. This first weekend of Lent, we read the flood story recap in Genesis, wherein the newly-dry land becomes the setting for a new covenant God makes with mankind.

Retaining the watery theme is today's excerpt of Peter's First Letter, telling us that the waters of baptism have the innate power under the Final Covenant to save us all from destruction.

Then comes today's Gospel. In his trademark almost-texting style Mark tells us how Jesus was tested in the harshness of a waterless desert. We have to depend on the other more detailed Gospel versions to learn the exact nature of the devil's tactics.

But what Mark does add is the comfort Jesus derived afterward from ministering angels.



It is relatively easy to compare and contrast flood waters and an arid desert as different backgrounds for the birth of covenants. But what might be more difficult for us at the beginning of Lent 2021 is the comparison and contrast we can make of keeping our baptismal covenant promises since Lent 2020. We have presumably since learned a lot about ourselves with all that the pandemic has brought. But through it all, have we been true Christians with all around us?

What about those nasty little sins we have committed against others, like impatience, rash judgment and mean words? This not to omit the bad choices we may have made in seeking comfort from our pain. But more important is our Lenten resolve and the changes we will make going forward.

God's covenant of loving mercy and salvation still stands as strong as it ever was. Our spiritual posture is the only variable. This kind of comparison and contrast is a demanding, but pertinent, Lenten exercise.

In the "Alice in Wonderland" story, at one point Alice says to the Cheshire Cat, "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where," said Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

As with Alice, so with us and the Church. Without objectives, we will have nowhere to go, and we'll just keep wandering aimlessly. We need to remember that Jesus once declared for all to hear: "I am the Way."

God love you and give you His peace,

- **Rev. Leonard N. Peterson**

CONQUERING THE TONGUE

is better than fasting
on bread and water.

ST JOHN OF THE CROSS

DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.

Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.

Fast from anger and be filled with patience.

Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.

Fast from worries and trust in God.

Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.

Fast from pressures and be prayerful.

Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.

Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.

Fast from grudges and be reconciled.

Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

- Pope Francis

A CALL TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

We are continuing to share recommended resources for insight into the current issues of social justice from a Biblical/Church perspective.

And so we invite you to prayerfully consider "On the 'Today' Show, Cardinal Gregory Reflects on Racism:"

https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2021/02/16/cardinal-wilton-gregory-faith-racism-today-show-al-roker-240035?utm_source=piano&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=7868&pnespid=1_5yt6VFBgWNQFQWYL6y.HqeLj9o3QN0FOzYwgUA



the
CARDINAL'S
ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL
Sharing God's Gifts

From supporting needy parishes and religious education to charitable outreach and COVID-19 relief, your generosity makes a difference. As of February 12, \$15,275 toward our goal of \$43,000 has been received/pledged by 35 families. Thank you.

Visit www.cardinalsappeal.org/donate.

YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATE

Last week's meeting first focused on the games the kids like to play. Roblox was the clear winner with its many videogame options. Similarly, Minecraft made the grade – and both allow for interaction and innovation. Ms. Monopoly was mentioned because of its concept, and a dancer in the group enjoys the Pointe Shoe Race wherein one tries to make it across the room on - her toe shoes.

The Scripture choices reflect what the participants thought they'd refer to regularly for inspiration:

1 Peter 5:7 - Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Proverbs 3:6 – In all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight

1 John 4:6 - We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit[a] of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

James 5:16 - Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Isaiah 43:2 - When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

1 Thessalonians 5:16 - Rejoice always. (Chosen by three participants.)

Romans 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[a] have been called according to his purpose. (Chosen by two.)

YOUNG ADULT RETREAT IN GARRISON

A retreat titled "**Defenders of Christ: In a World Undone**" will offer 18- to 30-year-olds a chance to wind down and reflect on how to be strong Catholics in this world, especially during the Lenten season.

The retreat will take place at the Graymoor Spiritual Center in Garrison from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. **Saturday, March 6.** Meals will be provided, as well as Mass celebrated for the Third Sunday of Lent. Fr. Erik Lenhart, a Franciscan priest, will preside. The cost is \$50.

For information, contact Hank Grimsland of the St. Joseph's New Paltz College Student Group, at hankgrimsland@gmail.com or 594-5597.

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

BLANKET OIL

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

Fuel Oil • Sales and Service

All Your Plumbing & Heating Needs

Ken and Jean Dolan ~ Proprietors

P.O. Box 1020 • Pine Bush, NY **744-8770**

“

9