

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

JANUARY 29, 2023



THIS WEEKEND'S READINGS

First: Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

Second: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12a

FOCUS: *From a beatitude perspective, discipleship is worth the cost, and suffering will not have the last word.*

Jesus gives us a different point of view on suffering and discipleship through the beatitudes. Suffering will not have the last word; rather, those who suffer will be blessed. Discipleship is not without cost, but it will be rewarded. With a beatitude perspective, we are reassured and inspired to press onward with rejoicing rather than fear.

LITURGY OF THE WORD:

In the first reading, the prophet speaks of the humble and righteous remnant of Israel. In the second reading, Paul explains that God calls the weak and lowly so there can be only boasting in the Lord. In the Gospel, Jesus goes up a mountain, where his disciples follow him. He teaches them with a series of statements promising blessings and rewards for those who suffer, especially for his sake as disciples.



MASS INTENTIONS

5 p.m.: Victoria Mercado, Barbara Dolce and the Ryan, Borst & Costello families

10 a.m.: Margaret Rappo, Dominick DeGasperi and Connie Capria

CELEBRATING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

National Catholic Schools Week, which begins on the last Sunday in January and runs for an entire week, is celebrated annually to highlight the exceptional education that comes with a Catholic education. This year, it's January 29 to February 4, and the 2023 theme is "Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service."

Catholic schools focus on community, and students are taught to be a part of their community through service. Catholic schools also encourage confidence, personal development, leadership skills and academics by maintaining low student-to-teacher ratios.

This week gives an opportunity to see what Catholic schools can offer. Although there are several in our area, because St. Paul's is a mission church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, that school is our focus here.

Schools typically plan Masses, open houses and other activities for students, families, parishioners and community members, and **Our Lady of Mount Carmel School** is no exception. Here are some of this week's highlights:

- There is an open house from 9-11 every morning this week
- Items are being collected for the Feeding Our Neighbors campaign: Granola bars on Monday; hot chocolate on Tuesday; soup on Wednesday; pasta on Thursday and canned vegetables on Friday
- Ice cream social Wednesday afternoon
- Board games with parents Thursday afternoon
- Mass at 10 a.m. Friday

For more information, call (845) 343-8836 or visit <https://mtcarmelschoolmiddletown.org>

For general information on Catholic Schools week, visit <https://www.ncea.org>



TREASURER'S REPORT

January 15-22: Totaled \$ 6,053.21

Envelopes: \$ 2,034.00 – Online: \$ 4,019.21

THANK YOU!

WeSHARE TIP

Online donors can elect to cover the processing fees charged to the church. To do so, recurring donations have to be canceled and then set up again.

Sal Lucido is available to assist with this as well as helping any contributors new to WeShare. He can be reached at (845) 692-6587.

LAST WEEKEND'S MASS ATTENDANCE

5 p.m.: 63

10 a.m.: 130

LEGO Build-off
 Sunday,
 February 12th
 11:30AM-1:30PM

Invite your family & friends.
Make a team or build solo!

Snacks Available

LET'S GO!

Questions? - Email us at
saintpaulsym@gmail.com

COOKIES FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Next weekend, the first weekend of February, the 4th and 5th, is a **Coffee Social** weekend. But a **Bake Sale** to benefit our Prayer Blanket Ministry was separately scheduled. Talk about serendipity!

The no-sew fleece Prayer Blankets are made twice a year in a multigenerational community that includes Confirmation candidates – unless the supply runs low in which case the core group convenes.



A few weeks prior, there's a bake sale to sweeten its coffers. Now in its sixth year, this ministry remains funded through donations and the bake sales – despite the continuing-to-rise cost of supplies.

And in those years, St. Paul's Prayer Blankets have brought comfort to more than 500 people, near and far! What a warm outreach!

SPONSOR OF THE WEEK

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brenda@sunray-travel.com

DID YOU KNOW ...

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, Candelmas and Groundhog Day have a connection!

The Catholic Church's liturgical calendar indicates **February 2** as the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. However, some recall this day as the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary because such was the feast day named until 1969.

According to Mosaic law, which God gave to the Israelites through Moses, the firstborn male child belonged to God, and the parents had to "buy him back" on the 40th day after his birth by offering a sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons, in the temple – thus the "presentation" of the child.

Mosaic law also says a Jewish woman who gave birth to a child was considered "unclean." The new mother could not be out in public until her ritual purification. If her child was a male, this exclusion lasted for 40 days.

According to Luke's Gospel, the presentation of Jesus and the purification of the Blessed Mother took place in the temple on the same day. Today, both are remembered during Mass on **February 2**, based on Christ's birth taking place on December 25.



The Gospel of Luke also explains that the old prophet Simeon and the prophetess Anna were at the temple that day. Like many others, they had spent their lifetime waiting for a Messiah. Among all the children and mothers coming into the temple that day, Simeon recognized Jesus as the Christ Child. He held Jesus and exclaimed a hymn of thanksgiving, which included the words: "**a light** to the revelation of the Gentiles." Those words eventually sparked Candelmas, the custom of blessing candles on the Feast of the Presentation. Those candles would be used in a procession – and then through the long winter.

Candlemas is always **February 2**, exactly 40 days after Christmas. **February 2** is also halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox, so even in ancient times, the date had weather significance. An old English poem links Candlemas to weather:

***If Candlemas be fair and bright,
 Come winter, have another flight.
 If Candlemas bring clouds and rain,
 Go winter, and come not again.***

German settlers, long familiar with the candles of Candlemas and hedgehogs as means of predicting the end of winter, brought that tradition to Pennsylvania when they arrived. The more-plentiful groundhogs replaced hedgehogs in the role of rodent meteorologist, and the first Groundhog Day was **February 2, 1887**. Wonder if he'll see his shadow this year ...

