

ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH BULLETIN

FOR

SUNDAY, MARCH 14, 2010

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 14, 2010

Saint Alphonsus

Roman Catholic Church

A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust

750 Pittsburgh Street • Springdale, PA • 15144

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Administrator: Rev. George E. Saladna, S.T.L., S.S.L.

Weekend Assistant: Rev. James P. McDonough, S.T.L., J.C.L



Parish Established September 9, 1901

Church Dedicated September 5, 1926

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY MASS: Sat. 5:00 P.M. and Sun. Morn. at 8:00 A.M. & 11:00 A.M.

WEEKDAY: Mass held in Chapel next to Church. See bulletin each week or call Rectory for schedule of the 8:00 A.M. Mass which is not held every day (never on Sat morn).

HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION: these days vary in time and obligation from year to year. See bulletin or call Rectory each time for details.

CONFESSIONS: Sat. from 3:30 to 4:30, and anytime by appointment.

MARRIAGE, BAPTISM: call parish office (six months before marriage).

COMMUNION CALLS AND OTHER SERVICES: call office for information.

PARISH OFFICES & STAFF

ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER (RECTORY: former Convent building)

(724) 274-5084

Marsha Etzrodt, Secretary

Office Hours: Mon. - Thur.: 8 to 4, Fri.: 8 to Noon

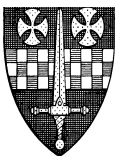
LIGUORI CENTER OFFICES (school building side entrance)

(724) 274-2547

CCD & Youth Min. - Karen Mueller

Social Services - Cathy Moxie

Music Director/Organist – Vickie Roof

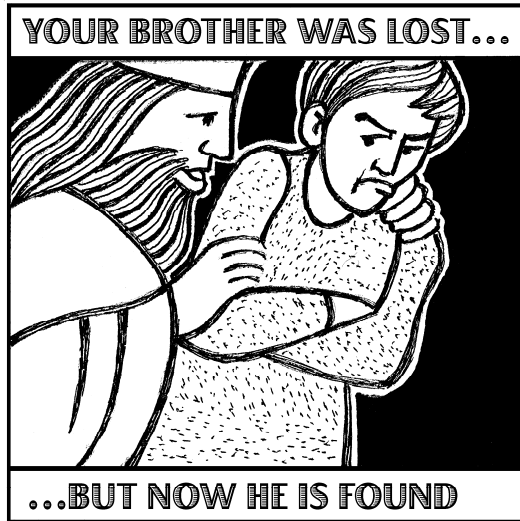


New Parishioners: We welcome new parishioners whether newly moved into the area or those who have fallen off through inactivity. Welcome! Register by calling or coming to the parish office. Become an active, attending and supporting member of the parish. And please let us know if you move away or have your telephone or address changed. Thank you.

Church Hall Telephone: (724) 274-2547

Diocesan Victim Assistance Hotline 1-888-808-1235

CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF
PITTSBURGH
VICARIATE
NO. 4



Today's Gospel episode from Saint Luke tells the wonderful story of the so-called "prodigal son." Saint Luke's Gospel is often called the "Gospel of Mercy," since it contains many stories of the Lord being the champion of the underdog: the sinner, the pagan, women, etc.

Even though today's story is called that of the prodigal son, it is better to think of the Father as being the prodigal. The word "prodigal" means "extravagant, abundant, reckless and even wasteful" while the younger son was reckless and even wasteful with the goods he inherited from his father, the father was far, far more prodigal with his forgiveness of that son when he finally came to his senses and returned home. Contrary to what would be accepted by human values and wisdom, the father knew no limits to his generosity and was always ready to welcome his wayward son, no matter what.

This is what the gospel story is trying to teach us, and why it is such a popular and heartwarming tale. God our Father is always true to his word and true to himself. He is a giving and forgiving Father. He never changes; he is always the same, no matter how we may change. No matter what we do against him, he is ready and willing to take us back. Indeed, he is always trying to woo us back, he loves us so much.

Saint Luke wants us to know that where there is life, there is hope. He wants all the outcasts and misfits of the world to know that Jesus has come to be their savior. They are the ones who need him the most, more than the self-righteous. Today's Gospel is our consolation, for the devil would just love to have us believe that there is no hope for us, that we are beyond salvation, that God associates only with "good" people; that the Church is an association of saints, that we can forget about any chance of us getting to heaven.

No, God is truly a **PRODIGAL FATHER**. The light is always in his window, as a beacon of hope, calling us home. Let us turn away from the false gods and come back to our senses and return to our loving and forgiving Father.

-- Fr. Saladna

SCHEDULE OF MASSES FOR THIS WEEK

MONDAY, MARCH 15 – Lenten Weekday

8:00 AM Nancy Lochrane

TUESDAY, MARCH 16 – Lenten Weekday

8:00 AM Ray Hutzler

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17 – Lenten Weekday

8:00 AM Edward Skripets, Sr. (Birthday)

THURSDAY, MARCH 18 – No Mass scheduled for today

FRIDAY, MARCH 19 – Solemnity of St. Joseph

8:00 AM Joseph Tabacek

7:00 PM Stations of the Cross with Benediction

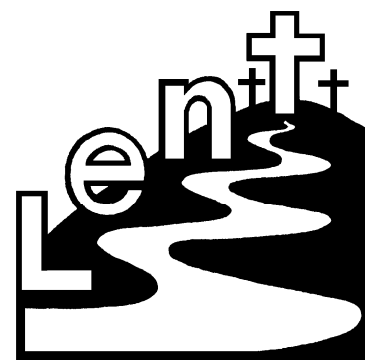
SATURDAY, MARCH 20 – No Mass on Saturday morning

5:00 PM [For Sunday] Anna Evans (Birthday)

NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 21 – Fifth Sunday of Lent

8:00 AM For all Parishioners, Liv. & Dec.

11:00 AM Agnes E. Urik (Birthday)



2010 COMMUNITY LENTEN WORSHIP SUNDAY SERVICES AT 3:00 PM

Today, March 14, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Rev. David Carlisle, speaker.

March 21, Cheswick Presbyterian Church, Pastor Keith Harris, speaker.

CCD CLASSES will end for the year two weeks from today, on Sunday (Palm Sunday), March 28. Even though CCD will end for the season, the obligation to attend Mass and be "Eucharist-Centered" never ends, and we remind parents and guardians of the children of their obligation to set good example for the young ones by bringing them faithfully to Mass each Sunday.

Baby Jesus School will continue on Sundays at the 11:00 AM Mass (but none on Easter Sunday).

LOOKING AHEAD TO HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Please note two special things for Holy Week:

1. The special **CONFESSION DAY** will be on Wednesday, March 31, when we will have three priests hearing confessions from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM. This will provide an excellent opportunity for you to make your confession as part of your Easter Duty, and with three priests there will not be long lines.
2. **EASTER SUNDAY MASSES** will be as follows:
 - A. **Easter Vigil** – Saturday, April 3, at 8:30 PM.
 - B. **Easter Sunday itself** – three Masses – 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM.

LOOKING AHEAD TO EASTER SUNDAY—

Remember that the Mass schedule for Easter is different from a regular Sunday. The Saturday evening Mass is the Mass of the Easter Vigil, and this begins at 8:30 PM, not at the usual 5:00 PM Saturday evening Mass time. The Easter Vigil is also longer, perhaps an hour and a half, because so many special things happen at this service. On Easter Sunday morning, we have three Masses: at 7:00 AM, 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM. We mention all this now so you can plan your own Easter Schedule.

ON EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4, Bishops David Zubik and William Winter of the Diocese of Pittsburgh will have their annual Blessing of Families at St. Paul Cathedral. This will take place in the afternoon, 2:00 PM. As they greet and bless your family personally, they affirm and support you as a household of love and witnesses to your faith. All families, single parent, blended, extended, etc., are invited to come and experience the Bishops' expression of appreciation for the gift that you are and the gifts that you bring to our Diocese. Each family attending will receive a special memento to take home and the children will receive a sweet treat.

EASTER MEMORIALS – As in the past, we hope to publish the names of those you wish to be remembered at Easter. List them on the "Easter Memorial" envelope you will find in our new packets (for March/April). Please write or print the names clearly. We often have difficulty in deciphering your handwriting. The memorial envelopes must be received here by Monday, March 29, in order to appear in the Easter Booklet (part of the Easter Sunday Bulletin).

LOOKING AHEAD – HELP, HELP, HELPI! – We ask you once again to set aside two hours on Saturday morning, April 3, the day before **EASTER**, to help clean and decorate the Church for Easter.

We will meet in the Church Hall at 8:00 AM for donuts and drinks. Many hands will get a big job done in no time at all. We will be finished before 10:00 A.M. We ask you to mark the date on your calendars, and we **THANK YOU** ahead of time for your help.

Saturday, April 3, 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM
EASTER CLEANING AND DECORATING

MASS FOR SHUT-INS ON WPXI – WPXI-TV will be discontinuing the Sunday Mass at 6:00 AM on Channel 11, but will broadcast the Mass at 6:00 AM on Pittsburgh Cable News Channel (PCNC) and The Retro TV Network (RTV). This transition of airing the Mass on PCNC and RTV will be effective April 11, 2010. Check your local listing for PCNC and RTV Channel positions.

MAY VACATION SWEEPSTAKES – Once again during the month of May we will be participating in the Capuchin Fathers' "Sweepstakes" program, together with other Catholic parishes and schools and institutions which all benefit from the profit of the Sweepstakes. Tickets will be mailed early in April, and the Sweepstakes will run through the entire month of May, except Sundays, with winners based on the PA Big Four Daily Number. If you would like to receive a sweepstakes ticket, but are not on the sweepstakes mailing list, please call the parish office and we will be happy to send you a ticket. More details about this May Sweepstakes will be found in future bulletins.

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

– April 23-25 at the Gilmory Retreat Center in Moon Township. For more information or to register, contact Jay and Judy at 412-635-7775 or wwmepittsburgh@gmail.com or check us out on the web at wwme-pittsburgh.org.

Our Ministry of Support

Thank you for your offerings to Saint Alphonsus Parish
For Sunday, March 7, 2010

Offertory\$6,952.77
Parish Share.....\$1,937.00

**PLEASE REMEMBER SAINT ALPHONSUS
CHURCH IN YOUR WILL**

The special second collection this weekend, March 13-14 will be a "triple-header," a collection to be shared by three causes: (1) The **American Bishops' Campaign for Human Development**, providing seed-money for programs to help eradicate the causes of poverty in the USA, (2) the **Home Missions**, places in our country which due to the very small number of Catholics are considered to be "mission territories," and (3) the **Black and Native American Missions**. We thank you for your support of these three causes in this Sunday's special second collection.

SPEAKING OF COLLECTIONS, we want to thank **ALL** of our parishioners and friends for their support of Saint Alphonsus Church. This wonderful support is evidenced by the way you support the annual Parish Share Program and our regular collections, be it the regular Sunday collection or the special appeals to your generosity for special programs (remodeling, improvements, etc.). Even though our population is shrinking and becoming more elderly without room for expansion such as can be found in the more outlying areas, the people of Saint Alphonsus have continued to show their love for the Church in their generous and sacrificial giving. All this is a tribute to your faith and love. We are grateful to have been given such good and cooperative parishioners and friends. Thank you and God bless you all.

FREE SPAGHETTI DINNER – Come and bring a friend – Springdale United Presbyterian Church on Saturday, March 20, 4-7 PM. For additional information call 724-274-8310.

ST. BONAVENTURE: A MAN OF ACTION AND CONTEMPLATION

VATICAN CITY, 3 MAR 2010 - In his catechesis during this morning's general audience, Benedict XVI turned his attention to St. Bonaventure who, he said, "makes me feel a certain nostalgia because, as a young scholar, my research focused on this author, who is particularly dear to me".

Bonaventure, who was born around the year 1217 in the Italian town of Bagnoregio and died in 1274, was one of the great Christian figures who contributed to the "harmony between faith and culture" in thirteenth-century Europe. He was "a man of action and contemplation, of profound piety and prudent government".

Baptized with the name of Giovanni da Fidanza, he suffered an illness during childhood from which he nearly died, but his mother entrusted him to the recently-canonized St. Francis of Assisi and the young Giovanni recovered. This event marked his whole life. During his education in Paris, where he studied theology, he decided to enter a Franciscan convent and took the name of Bonaventure. In the first years of his religious life he stood out for his knowledge of Sacred Scripture, the 'Sentences' of Peter Lombard, and other great theologians of his age.

Bonaventure's book entitled "Evangelical Perfection" was his response to critics of the Minor Orders who questioned their right to teach in universities and even the authenticity of their consecrated life. In that work the saint showed "how the Minor Orders, and especially the Friars Minor, by practicing the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, were in fact following the counsels of the Gospel itself", the Pope explained.

"Over and above these historical circumstances, Bonaventure's teachings in this book and in his own life still retain all their validity", he said. "The Church is enlightened and beautified by the faithfulness to their vocation of these sons and daughters of hers, who not only put the evangelical precepts into practice but, by God's grace, are called to observe the evangelical counsels and thus bear witness - with their poor, chaste and obedient lifestyle - to the fact that the Gospel is a source of joy and perfection".

When in 1257 Bonaventure was elected minister general of his order, the Franciscans numbered more than 30,000; most of them were in Europe but they also had a presence in North Africa, the Middle East and China. "It was necessary", said the Holy Father, "to consolidate this growth and, especially, to give it a unity of action and spirit, in complete faithfulness to the

charism of St. Francis. In fact, various ways of interpreting the saint of Assisi's message had arisen among his followers and there was a real risk of internal division".

In order to preserve the saint's authentic charism, his life and teachings, Bonaventure "zealously gathered documents concerning Francis and carefully listened to the recollections of those who had known him personally". Thus the "Legenda Maior" came into being, which is considered the most complete biography of St. Francis.

Bonaventure presents Francis as "a man who passionately sought Christ. With the love that leads to imitation, he entirely conformed himself to Him. Bonaventure indicated this as a living ideal for all the followers of St. Francis.

"Such an ideal, which remains valid for all Christians, yesterday, today and always, was also suggested as a program for the Church in the third millennium by my venerable predecessor John Paul II", Pope Benedict added.

Almost at the end of his life, Bonaventure was consecrated a bishop and appointed a cardinal by Pope Gregory X, who entrusted him with the preparations for the Council of Lyons which sought to reunify the Latin and Greek Churches. However Bonaventure never saw the results of his labors because he died while the council was still underway.

The Pope concluded his reflections with a call to take up the heritage of this saint and doctor of the Church, who "reminds us of the meaning of our lives with the following words: 'On earth we can contemplate the immensity of divine things by reason and admiration; in the heavenly homeland, on the other hand, we can view them, when we will have been made similar to God and by ecstasy will enter into the joy of God'".

- Vatican Information Service

AMAZING GRACE

After apartheid was abolished in South Africa, special hearings were held to allow victims a voice, and to establish justice and peace. One day an elderly black woman and a white police officer faced each other across a courtroom. The officer, a Mr. van der Broek, had just been found guilty of murdering the woman's son and her husband. He had come to her home a number of years earlier, shot her son, and burned the body while he and his cronies reveled in the act. Later, he returned and took her husband. For two years, she heard nothing about him. Then van der Broek came and led the woman to a river bank, where she saw her husband bound and beaten on a pile of wood. The last words she heard him say were, "Father, forgive them," as the officers poured gasoline over him and set him on fire. Justice caught up with Mr. van der Broek. He was found guilty, and it was now time for sentencing. The judge asked the woman, "What should be done to this man who so brutally destroyed your family?" She replied, "I want three things. First, I want to be taken to where my husband's body was burned so that I can gather up the dust and give him decent burial. My husband and son were my only family, so I want, second, for Mr. van der Broek to become my son. I would like him to come twice a month to the ghetto and spend a day with me so that I can pour on him whatever love I still have within me. Third," she said, "I would like Mr. van der Broek to know that I forgive him because Jesus Christ died to forgive me." She walked across the courtroom and embraced him. The policeman fainted, overwhelmed by her response. Then quietly, friends, family, and neighbors—all victims of similar oppression and injustice—began to sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound."

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ASPINWALL VETS HOSPITAL – A Mass is celebrated every Sunday at the hospital, at 10:30 AM, for Catholic patients and staff. Disabled patients need help in getting to the chapel, and volunteers from neighboring parishes are encouraged to come to assist them. April is the month traditionally assigned to our parish for this work but one can help anytime at all. Anyone who is able and willing to help is invited to come. It does not have to be EVERY Sunday in April, just whenever you could help. Be there at 10 AM and staff will tell you how you can help for the occasion. Thank you. For more information call Liz Yanni at 724-274-6860