



Father Sam's Forum

One of the great comic relief stories of the bible appears before us today. Jonah's reluctance to go to Ninevah and announce the Lord's call to repentance was used to contrast the eagerness with which Gentiles heard God's call and the lack of response by the chosen people. Those who heard the story were supposed to chuckle at the absurdity of these Ninevites—today's Iraqis—actually listening to a Jewish prophet.

Our gospel text from Mark also has a call to repentance. Jesus comes on the scene at the very start of this evangelist's account and announces that God's Kingdom has come. What do we do about that? "Repent, and believe in the gospel," is the answer.

Conversion stories can touch us today. We hear about a father who has undergone a change of heart and figured out that corporate America does not have the ability to fulfill his desire for connection with his family, and so he foregoes a promotion and chooses instead a more simple way of life in order to spend more time with his wife and children. Or an alcoholic mother who takes the step to conquer her addiction through a rehab program so she can reconnect to her family.

Jesus' call of the first disciples as recorded by Mark is also a conversion story. Without much detail, Mark simply says these fishermen left all behind in order to follow Jesus. But what is implied? Do we realize that these men left a way of existence, their very livelihood, in order to follow? They left their families and friends, the comfort of their ordinary lives.

Could we do that today? Would we? For most of us, the Lord never asks us to abandon our families or our jobs, our neighborhoods or our friends. But God might ask us to change the ways we relate to them. God might ask us to re-evaluate them. God might ask us to go deeper into ourselves and see the truth of who we are meant to be.

"The time is running out," St. Paul writes in the epistle today. Clearly the Christians of his day believed that the world as they knew it was coming to an end. Some people have predicted that in 2012 our world will end. We are in the end times...and we have been since the birth of Christ. This is the final age but no one of us knows how many centuries, decades, years, months, days or hours it will be. The

reality is that we are to be ready, prepared to meet the Lord at any time. As we respond to the invitation of Jesus to repent, to turn our lives around, it shouldn't be out of fear of what might happen if we don't, but of hope in what will happen if we do.

The world as we know it may be passing away, only because we have seen the truth of what really matters and have listened to the call to repentance. "Teach me your ways, O Lord," is our psalm response today. Are we open to be taught God's ways? Don't the Scriptures tell us that our ways are not God's ways? How can we better understand that God's plan for us always exceeds our own plans? Maybe God is asking you to leave those nets, get out of your boat, and follow him more closely!

Mass Intentions: Jan. 25—Feb. 1

Sunday, January 25—3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 7:30a **Joseph Fisher** (Gregg Baley)
 10:00a **Deceased Members of the Julkowski & McKenzie Families**
 (Ron & Mary Anne Julkowski)
 12:30p **Andrew Palombo** (Bob Graziano)
 6:00p **For the People of the Parish**

Monday, January 26—Timothy & Titus, bishops

- 8:30a **Kathy Quarture** (Shirley, Jack & Pete)

Tuesday, January 27—Weekday

- 6:30a **Mary McCloskey** (Women of St. Benedict)
 8:30a **M/M William C. Gaab** (Family)

Wednesday, January 28—Thomas Aquinas, priest

- 6:30a **James "J" Rocco** (M/M James Rocco Family)
 8:30a **William Lauth** (Nancy Huffner)

Thursday, January 29—Weekday

- 6:30a **Virginia Pompeani**
 (Jeff & Mary Jeanne Nobers)
 8:30a **Andrew Sedmak** (Wife & Family)

Friday, January 30—Weekday

- 8:30a **Norma Ostronic** (Donna Burt)

Saturday, January 31—John Bosco, priest

- 8:30a **Albert Wallo** (Women of St. Benedict)
 5:00p **For the People of the Parish**

Sunday, February 1—4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 7:30a **Ronald Brooks** (Kristen Farrell)
 10:00a **John & Mary Godzo** (Margaret Drapp)
 12:30p **Robert J. Manion** (The Manion Family)
 6:00p **Edward Novak**
 (Peggy Ann Secunda & Will Podolak)

The Sanctuary Candle burns this week in memory of Paul Schweibinz, requested by Claire Meredith, and the Bread & Wine is in memory of Priscilla Bayer, requested by the 6:30am Mass group.



Pastoral Staff

Lay Ecclesial Ministers

Michael Benya, Business & Facilities Manager—Ext. 201
 Gregory Fincham, Director of Music & Liturgy—Ext. 304
 Dennis Gehrlein, Pastoral Associate—Ext. 206
 Janet Roberto, Youth Ministry Director—Ext. 234
 Colette Specia, Director of Religious Education—Ext. 205

Parish Staff

Mary Ann Bitters, Parish Secretary—Ext. 200
 Rachele Buynak, Religious Ed. Secretary—Ext. 208
 Justin Cumer, Maintenance—Ext. 200
 Shirley Jacobs, Administrative Assistant—Ext. 202
 Beverly Jurcic, Director

St. Benedict's Preschool—724-731-0222

Cathy Malencia, Formation Coordinator—Ext. 209
 Elaine Motyl, Youth Ministry Assistant—Ext. 234
 Dave Murtaugh, Maintenance—Ext. 200
 Kathy Pfeifer, Communications—Ext. 200
 John Risher, Weekend Maintenance—Ext. 200
 Kevin Wolford, Maintenance Supervisor—Ext. 200

* Religious Education/Youth Ministry—724-941-9587

Serving the Parish Next Weekend: Jan. 31—Feb. 1

Sat. 5:00pm— Fr. Chortos

Lectors: Smore, Auer **Greeters:** Patnesky, Tatman **EMHC:** Greenwald, S Locke, Klinar, Mertens, Milavec, Ligman, Norton, Vandewater, Sarra **Servers:** A Weaver, Lioon, Peterson, Curran, Curry

7:30am— Fr. Esposito

Lector: Hornack **Greeters:** Turchick, Barker, Boston, Kolling **EMHC:** Basile, Hollot, Gavran, Faina, Puskarich, S & J Brooks **Servers:** J, M, A & B Lyle

10:00am— Fr. Esposito, Deacon Layton

Lectors: Wanninger, Fitzgerald **Greeters:** Oberschelp, Fisher **EMHC:** Glod, Daley, Torres, McGovern, Stein, Davis, Smith, Fisher, Wanninger **Servers:** Mullan, M & A Severa, G & M Oberschelp

12:30pm— Fr. Esposito

Lector: McPoyle **Greeters:** Irwin, Ragan **EMHC:** Hayward, Baits, P, K & L Newmaster, Herald, Boyd **Servers:** S & S Luzier, Graves

6:00pm— Fr. Chortos

Lector: Dorman, Broglie **EMHC:** Roberto, Munsick, Quinn, Benya **Servers:** Schratz, Rhoads

Readings for the Week of January 25

Sunday: Jon 3:1-5,10/1 Cor 7:29-31/Mk 1:14-20
 Monday: 2 Tm 1:1-8 or Ti 1:1-5/Mk 3:22-30
 Tuesday: Heb 10:1-10/Mk 3:31-35
 Wednesday: Heb 10:11-18/Mk 4:1-20
 Thursday: Heb 10:19-25/Mk 4:21-25
 Friday: Heb 10:32-39/Mk 4:26-34
 Saturday: Heb 11:1-2,8-19/Mk 4:35-41
 Next Sunday: Dt 18:15-20/1 Cor 7:32-35/Mk 1:21-28

Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them. . .

Please remember in your prayers **Sigmond Rutkowski**, father of our parishioner Betty Jasek, **Anna Rea**, mother of our parishioner Diana Nizamoff, **Thomas Ruston**, father of our parishioner Pam Kabo, and **Casimir Koza**, father of our parishioner Richard Koza. May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Special Projects Collections

We will continue to ask your support for our special parish projects through a number of second collections this year. In 2008, we received \$9,927 that we used toward the needed improvements in O'Brien Hall, and to purchase the riding mower (\$15,000) for our extensive property maintenance. We had to purchase a snow plow for this mower recently which assists us in keeping our lot and driveways cleared. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Ministers Needed for Lenten Services

As part of our Lenten observance, we are offering a 7:00pm Mass on Wednesdays this year. Ministers for the Mass are needed. Can you help by serving as a Lector or Communion Minister? Altar Server? Also, we need Altar Servers for our Friday evening Stations of the Cross. Stations will be held every Lenten Friday at 7:45pm. Call Kathy Pfeifer at the parish office to sign up for serving.

A Word About Donations

Everyone will begin to prepare their 2008 tax returns soon, and the parish sends out statements that indicate your contributions to the parish. Please note that only contributions made **to the parish** are recorded at the office. If you made a contribution to another charity, such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society, or one promoted by a visiting priest, even though you may have used an envelope from your packet, these are not parish donations. Those funds go directly to those organizations and we do not keep records of them.

Preschool Registration

Registration for the 2009-2010 school year is now taking place at St. Ben's Catholic Preschool. If you have a child between the ages 3 and 5 and are interested in touring our school, please call 724-731-0222 for an appointment.



Question of the Week

How can the Church grant annulments?

Lesson of the Week

What are rules for marriage in the Church?

In today's world, weddings are big business. For us, marriage is a sacrament. So the first rule for marriage is to remember what we believe about this sacrament. Like all sacramental celebrations, the Church desires the rite to be done in a way that is dignified and consistent with our belief. A church wedding is about the call from Christ to live a vocation. The fairy tale wedding (i.e. Queen for a day, the Princess Bride) has no place in the Church. A procession of haute couture attendants that doesn't include the whole wedding party and even families makes no sense with what we believe and teach since marriage is connected so intimately with family life. When people come asking for strange requests like pop music they are not understanding the sacramental nature of marriage. If the focus gets placed on non-essentials like flowers, dresses and receptions, then the real reason of the celebration gets overlooked. It certainly is important to demonstrate that this is a special day and that's why we dress up and decorate, throw a party, and all that, but the reason behind those exterior things is the interior reality of two becoming one in Christ and being a sign of Christ's love for his Church (*Letter to the Ephesians*). The second rule is that a baptized Catholic (the white dress is connected to baptism) is expected to marry according to the canons; that is, in the presence of a priest or deacon, and two other witnesses, in a Catholic church, not in a park or garden or hot air balloon. That's what makes a marriage valid and it's a precept of the Church as discussed in a previous lesson. With the proper permission, a Catholic may marry a person of another Christian faith in another Christian church, or a non-Christian in a neutral location, but the necessary pre-marital instructions, counseling and the promise to share the Catholic faith with any children born of the union is still required. The pre-marriage preparation is intended as a time to enter discussion about what it means to live this vocation. Sometimes couples don't see their call from God to live as married people as the way they are fulfilling God's plan for their lives. If the church wedding is selected by those who have little or no connection to the Church's ordinary life—they hardly come to Mass or receive the sacraments—one might wonder why it is important. We sometimes wonder if it is just the "big show" people are looking to create without the true intention to be a sign of Christ's love. Marriage is important and we always want to do what we can to support those called to live this sacrament.

Youth Ministry News

Souper Bowl Sunday January 31– February 1

America's teens are transforming Super Bowl Weekend into an event that encourages people to care for their neighbors in need. Armed with soup pots, our teens will be collecting at the doors of our church, asking you to donate the cost of a bag of chips. Every penny we raise here will be donated to the St. Benedict Conference of St. Vincent de Paul to help local families meet their needs during times of financial difficulties.

Monday Night Course: Sexuality & the Meaning of Life

Father Mike and Janet Roberto are leading a 12-week course for teens on Monday nights from 7:00pm to 8:30pm starting February 2 based on Theology of the Body. There is a \$25 fee for materials and food. Parents, please encourage your teens to get involved. One teen said that she wanted to attend, but is afraid of what her parents would presume if she asked to go.

Youth Ministry Calendar Jan. 25–Feb. 1

Jan. 25, 7:00pm (PBAC) - Youth Teen Night

Jan. 27, 3:00-4:00pm (PBAC) - Busted Halo

**Jan. 30, 7:30pm (Rm 204/206) - Family
Movie Night "Kung Fu Panda"**

Feb. 1, 7:00pm (PBAC) - Youth Teen Night

March for Life Contest

Katie Cushma, our parishioner and a sophomore at PTHS, has again won the National March for Life Contest. The theme for this year's contest was "Remember—the Life Principles Mean 'Equal Care' with No Exceptions!" She won First Place in the Essay Category in the High School Division. In addition to a cash prize for herself and a prolife organization of her choice, Katie also received a trip to Washington D.C. to participate in last week's March for Life. She was introduced at the noontime rally, helped lead the March to the Supreme Court, and was recognized for her achievement at the Rose Dinner on Capitol Hill that evening. Her winning essay will also appear in the 2009 March for Life Education & Defense Annual report. Congratulations Katie!

**Hotline for Victims of Sexual Abuse
412-456-3060 or 1-888-808-1235**



Youth Council Sponsors Pasta Dinner

Our Youth Council is sponsoring a pasta and meatball dinner in O'Brien Hall on Saturday, February 7, serving from 3:30—7:30pm. Tickets for the event will be on sale this weekend and next, after all Masses. Pre-sale price is \$7.50 for adults and \$4.00 for children 10 and under. Tickets will also be sold at the door and the cost is \$8.00 for adults and \$4.50 for children under 10. A special family rate of \$27.00 is being offered for those with larger families. To get this family price you must buy your tickets during the pre-sale weekends. Our menu includes ziti and meatballs, salad and rolls, beverages and dessert. Our purpose for having the dinner is to create a time where the parish family can mingle and strengthen the bonds of community. The proceeds from this event will help toward the improvements planned for the Pope Benedict Activity Center. Our dream is to create a youth friendly space there with up-to-date technology, recreational areas, and refreshment capabilities.

Eagle Scout Project

Corey Spindler, our parishioner, is working on his Eagle Scout project by collecting items to help mothers and children in need. Donations will be accepted either before or after the 7:30am, 10:00am and 12:30pm Masses on February 1 in O'Brien Hall. Items needed are Diapers (all sizes), Baby Food (all brands & stages), Formula (powdered & liquid) and Baby Hygiene Products (shampoo, wash, wipes, etc.). All items should be new and in original packaging. Monetary donations will also be accepted. All proceeds go towards Catholic Charities in Washington County. Contact Corey Spindler at 724-825-6214 with any questions.

Kindergarten Registration

St. Louise de Marillac School will hold Kindergarten Registration on February 2, from 9:00am until 12:00 noon, 6:30pm until 7:30pm (for working parents only) and February 3, from 9:00am until 10:30am. Prospective students must be 5 years old by September 1, 2009. Bring to registration an original Birth Certificate, an original Baptismal Certificate (unless the child was baptized at St. Louise), a Social Security Number, immunization records and a \$25 per child registration fee, which is non-refundable and non-applicable.

Catholic Men's Fellowship

Catholic Men's Fellowship (CMF), associated with the National Men's Fellowship, is about equipping men in today's world to live their faith despite the pulls that might make it tempting to disregard its teachings. The CMF of St. Benedict offers Catholic men (fathers, husbands and single men) the opportunity to share their faith and love for Christ as Catholic Christian men through prayer and fellowship. We meet every Saturday from 7:30am to 9:00am in Room 204/206. Those interested should contact Ed Corbett at 724-942-6429 or email at Eccorbett@comcast.net.

The 4th annual CMF Conference of the Diocese of Pittsburgh will take place on April 18, at the AJ Palumbo Center, Duquesne University. There is a line-up of outstanding and dynamic speakers who will enlighten men on how to "be transformed" with God in their daily lives. Tickets are just \$30 for adults and \$10 for students if ordered before February 1, and includes bus transportation and lunch. For further information, contact Ed Corbett.

"Souper Bowl" Day of Caring

Students in grades 5-8 of our Religious Education program are sponsoring a "Just Harvest" luncheon on January 31 from 1:30-4:30pm. "Just Harvest" is an organization that works towards the elimination of poverty and hunger. This meager luncheon is a family event intended for all parishioners. It includes a choice of soup, bread and a beverage. Donations of \$5 per adult and \$2 per child (under the age of 10) will help raise funds for this organization. Hand painted bowls designed by our students also will be available for purchase. Please RSVP to the Religious Education Office at 724-941-9587.

Rachel's Vineyard

Rachel's Vineyard, a weekend retreat designed to heal the emotional and spiritual wounds of abortion, will be held on February 6—8 at the Spiritan Center in Bethel Park. To register or for more information, visit www.ccpgh.org, or call Catholic Charities at 412-456-6999 before January 30 and ask for Ann Depner or Karen LaFrance. Financial aid is available.

***Relevant Radio is an all-Catholic Radio Station.
It can be found at 1590am—WZUM***



Diocesan Adult Faith Formation Series

We invite you to join us for a presentation by Colleen Carroll Campbell entitled *"Have No Contempt for Their Youth: The Story of Today's New Faithful"* on February 5 at 7:30pm at St. Paul's Seminary Auditorium. Mrs. Campbell is an author, columnist, television and radio host, and former White House speechwriter. Continuing education credit is available for priests, deacons, and catechists. The lecture is free and all are welcome to attend.

DVDs of three special parish liturgies are available in the Parish Office for a donation of \$10 each. We have the Dedication of the new church, Fr. Donatelli's Retirement Mass and his Funeral Mass.

Christmas Flower Donations

M/M William Oberschelp	Mr. John Kosir
M/M Daryl King	M/M John Rice, III
M/M Joseph Brula	M/M Ronald Selva
M/M Kevin Fury	M/M Alan McCrum
M/M Paul Eugene Watson	M/M John Havel
M/M Brian Toscano	M/M Gerard Marceau
Mr. Paul Salvatora	M/M Ronald Hornack
M/M Julius Jernigan Hall	Mr. Edward Moritz
Mrs. Dolores Simmons	M/M Greg Curry
M/M Zoltan W. Latinovich	M/M Gregg Perich
M/M Michael Schultz	Ms. Leona Wasko
Mr. Gerald Serrino	M/M Albert Burba
Mrs. Anne Stutzman	Ms. Deborah Silver
M/M Michael G. Scarton	M/M Thomas Marnik
M/M Theodore Starcevic	M/M Frank Ferrera
M/M Donald Maydak	Mrs. Marlene Bour
M/M Daniel Meier	M/M Henry Verner
M/M John Wright	M/M James Ralston
M/M Donald Heitmeier	M/M Gregg Morris
M/M Shawn Nelson	M/M Peter Donina
M/M Raymond Magnotti	M/M Thomas Tallon
M/M David Brekosky	Cynthia Cutler-Hart
M/M Joseph Salizzoni	M/M David Beltz
James May & Leslie Heisler	M/M John Kruppa
M/M Warren T. Bulseco	M/M Charles Osting
Ms. Debbie Jo Weaver	M/M Robert Cleary
M/M Bernard Deverson	M/M Kent Baldauf
M/M David Babcock & Family	M/M Richard Boyd
M/M Reinold E. Hjerpe	Kenneth P. Jaros
Mr. George Flecker	M/M Frank Buri
M/M Nicholas M. Coholic	Mr. John Subrick

Need confidential assistance? Companionship and understanding for a difficult time? Stephen Ministers are here to help you. Call 724-941-5026.

This Week In Our Parish

Sunday, January 25

**Abbey Coffee House Open after
7:30 & 10:00 Masses**

8:40a	Religious Education Session	
11:10a	Religious Education Session	
7:00p	Youth Ministry Teen Night	(PBAC)

Monday, January 26

7:00p	Aerobics	(PBAC)
7:00p	Catholic Scripture Study	(208)

Tuesday, January 27

8:30a	Special Needs Children	(202)
9:15a	Catholic Scripture Study	(210-213)
10:00a	Church History Class	(204-206)
3:00p	Youth Ministry—Busted Halo	(PBAC)
6:00p	Religious Education Session	
7:00p	Contemporary Choir	(Choir)

Wednesday, January 28

12:00p	AA	(208)
6:00p	Religious Education Session	
	8th Grade Social	(PBAC)
6:30p	Confessions	(Church)
7:30p	Tae Kwon Do	(OBH)
7:30p	St. Vincent de Paul	(206)

Thursday, January 29

9:30a	Light Weigh	(213)
12:00p	NA	(206)
6:00p	Aerobics	(PBAC)
6:00p	Troop 1313 Court of Honor	(OBH)
6:30p	RCIA	(204)
7:30p	Adult Choir	(Choir)

Friday, January 30

8:30a	Special Needs Children	(213)
9:30a	Prayer and Share Group	(Cry Rm)
6:30p	Family Movie Night	(204/206)

Saturday, January 31

7:30a	Catholic Men's Fellowship	(206)
9:00a	Aerobics	(PBAC)
11:00a	Confessions	(Church)
1:30p	"Souper Bowl" Day of Caring	(OBH)

Sunday, February 1

**Abbey Coffee House Open after
7:30 & 10:00 Mass**

8:40a	Religious Education Session	
11:10a	Religious Education Session	
7:00p	Youth Ministry Teen Night	(PBAC)

Venetia Heritage Society

The Venetia Heritage Society is sponsoring a trip to Meyersdale for the 62nd annual Maple Festival on March 25. The bus will leave the Peters Township Recreation Center around 7:15am and return around 7:45pm. The cost of the trip is \$80 and deadline for reservations is February 11th. To make a reservation or for more information, contact Erma Grego at 724-941-6956.



TO GET INVOLVED, CALL . . .

Abbey Coffee House

Ellie Puskarich
724-941-4686

Altar Servers

Kathleen Bench
724-942-0338

Ben's Men

Ernie Sichi
724-916-4595

Boy Scouts

Kevin Dolinar
724-942-0388

Cantors, Choirs,

Bell Ringers

Greg Fincham
724-941-9406

Catholic Men's Fellowship

Ed Corbett
724-942-6429

Catholic Scripture Study

Tara Curry
724-942-7539

Elijah Cup

Carlotta Zuback
724-941-5758

Engaged Couples Program IHN

Ed & Mary Lou Fraticelli
724-941-4230

Eucharistic Adoration

Mary Ann Campbell
724-941-4297

Eucharistic Ministers

Jack McGinnis
724-941-4213

Finance Council

Jeff Lioon
724-941-4908

Food Bank

Susan Brooks
724-942-4287

Funeral Repast

Mary Kay Schaner
724-941-5147

Funeral Server

Dick Gawronski
724-873-7911

Greeters

Erma Grego
724-941-6956

Mary Spinabelli
724-942-2478

Lectors

Dawn Pustay
724-942-2451

Library

Ellen Mavrich
724-941-2446

Liturgical Environment

Emma Diamond
724-941-8315

Ministry to the Sick

Barb Scheuering
724-941-9104

MOMS

Kathleen Chaudhari
724-941-8546

Pastoral Council

Amy Schmidt
724-942-0338

Respect Life

Beth Quinn
724-942-1057

Stephen Ministry

Jay Jarrell
724-941-5026

St. Benedict Gardeners

Linda Maydak
724-941-3123

St. Vincent de Paul

Please call parish office
724-941-9406

Ushers

Don Ligman
724-941-5938

Vocations Council

Bill Barker
724-941-1359

Wedding Coordinators

Lois McCloskey
724-941-6879

Women of St. Benedict

Nancy Huffner
724-941-6805