



Father Sam's Forum

We all know people who want to “lay down the law.” In fact, sometimes, we are those people. I know I am, or at least can be. But what law are we talking about laying down? Ours? God’s? Someone else’s?

Moses laid down the law as he told the people of Israel about how they were to live once they would enter the Promised Land. The reason behind the statutes and decrees was not for their own purpose but because they pointed to something else: God’s affection for this particular people. Chosen by God, the Israelites were to be a sign of God’s care to all the world. So they had to live a certain way.

When they didn’t keep the law—or **the Law**, as Jews call *Torah*—the Israelites got in trouble. That’s how the Scriptures understand everything that happened that wasn’t so good for these people. The people suffered as a result of their turning away from the covenant, which was at the heart of the law and their relationship with God.

The Pharisees, whose very name meant those set apart, were rigorous in keeping the Law or *Torah*. It was their belief that if you kept the Law it would keep you. That was the kind of thinking that filtered down over time so that it colored those responsible for religious formation, even in Christianity. In seminaries and convents, the *rule* guided everything about life. It determined when people prayed, ate, slept, and how they dressed. As a guide, it certainly served a purpose, but those who were formed under it when it was applied rigorously would say that it took away the adult responsibility to make one’s own choices and replaced it with a childish kind of subservience.

Fear is never the way to get people to keep the rules. While it can seem to prove useful, “if you don’t do this you will go to hell,” and while there are some requirements which are mandatory, like training for some special function or role, our choices have to be made freely for them to mean something to us. We get to choose how we follow God’s plan for us.

Jesus speaks to us about the things that come out of people: all kinds of evils he calls them. What he is telling us is that we can make decisions about our behaviors and have a free will. We make the right decision when we are formed by the word that has been planted in us. That’s what the Letter of James says today. *Welcome the word that has been planted in you....*

So while it’s important to respect and understand the rules, they are not in and of themselves what saves us. It is our free choices, made out of the desire to be the people God has created us to be, that form us more and more into disciples. It is being hearers and doers of the word, God’s word, as we discern it, distinct from the cultural and human values we sometimes accept without questioning them.

What things call you to be a more just person? A more understanding person? A more compassionate person? When God’s word is planted in us, nourished and tended to, we bear the fruit that leads to eternal life. Our freedom makes us whole...and holy!

Mass Intentions: Aug. 30—Sept. 6

Sunday, August 30—22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30a **Dr. Frank J. Draus** (Kathy Davis)
10:00a **Patsy Lachina** (Lachina Family)
12:30p **For the People of the Parish**

Monday, August 31—Weekday

8:30a **Joseph Klimek** (Carol, Dave & Zack Bobro)

Tuesday, September 1—Weekday

6:30a **Tim Ellwood Smith** (Friends)
8:30a **Robert J. Manion** (The Manion Family)

Wednesday, September 2—Weekday

6:30a **Joseph Fisher** (Jean & Bill Callaghan)
8:30a **Mary Grace Bodnar**
(Neighbors from Gateshead)

Thurs., Sept. 3—Gregory the Great, pope & doctor

6:30a **M/M Joseph Koklich, Jr.**
(Paula & Mark Koerber)
8:30a **Golec & Sterling Families**
(Erin & John Golec and Jack & Danny)

Friday, September 4—Weekday

8:30a **Elizabeth Huffner** (Zediker Family)
1:45p **Manor Care: Deceased of the Hudak Family**

Saturday, September 5—Weekday

8:30a **Edward Scier** (Mary Ann & Dick Fitzgerald)
3:00p **Wedding Mass: Lauren Schmitt
Derek Stikosky**
5:00p **For the People of the Parish**

Sunday, Sept. 6—23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

7:30a **Donald F. Shipman** (Roberta Junker)
10:00a **Rose Fonzo** (Frank & Mary Ellen Meola)
12:30p **Thomas Devine** (Geraldine & Paul McKosky)

The Sanctuary Candle burns this week in memory of Dennis Anacleto Marcos, requested by the Heisinger Family; the Bread & Wine is in honor of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Carole & Tom Burrows; and the Altar Flowers are in memory of deceased members of the Mikos & Rodal Families, requested by Dennis & MaryAnn Rodal.



Pastoral Staff

To reach a staff member, dial 724-941-9406, and then the extension number listed.

Pastoral Life & Worship

- Rachelle Buynak, Formation Office Coordinator— 208
- Gregory Fincham, Director of Music Ministries- 304
- Dennis Gehrlein, Pastoral Associate— 206
- Cathy Malencia, Middle School Minister— 209
- Elaine Motyl, Young Adult Coordinator— 234
- Janet Roberto, Young Adult Minister— 234
- Colette Specca, Director of Faith Formation— 205
- Jay Specca, Coordinator Adult Formation & Liturgy

Pastoral Administration

- Michael Benya, Parish Campus Manager
- Mary Ann Bitters, Parish Secretary—200
- Justin Cumer, Maintenance— 200
- Shirley Jacobs, Bookkeeper— 202
- Jan Martin, Rectory Housekeeper— 216
- Dave Murtaugh, Maintenance— 200
- Kathy Pfeifer, Parish Life Manager — 200
- John Risher, Weekend Maintenance— 200
- Kevin Wolford, Maintenance Supervisor— 200

- Formation Offices: Religious Education/Youth Ministry—724-941-9587

St. Benedict Pre-School

Beverly Jurcic, Director —724-731-0222

Readings for the Week of August 30

- Sunday: Dt 4:1-2,6-8/Jas 1:17-18,21b-22,27/Mk 7:1-8,14-15,21-23
- Monday: 1 Thes 4:13-18/Lk 4:16-30
- Tuesday: 1 Thes 5:1-6,9-11/Lk 4:31-37
- Wednesday: Col 1:1-8/Lk 4:38-44
- Thursday: Col 1:9-14/Lk 5:1-11
- Friday: Col 1:15-20/Lk 5:33-39
- Saturday: Col 1:21-23/Lk 6:1-5
- Next Sunday: Is 35:4-7a/Jas 2:1-5/Mk 7:31-37

Pastoral Council News

With the resignation of Dr. Kathy Davis, who has accepted a new position in the eastern part of the state, we have an open position on council. Any parishioner who is interested in filling the vacancy should contact our council chair, Aimee Schmidt, at aimee@createdinnersandmore.com or 724-941-7406 for more information. Our next council meeting is Tuesday, September 8, 7:30pm.

Rest In Peace

Please remember in your prayers **Elizabeth Jackson**, mother of our parishioner Jay Jackson, and **Peter Andrew Scalise**, nephew of our parishioner Linda Fredianni, who died recently. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

Serving the Parish Next Weekend: September 5—September 6

- Sat. 5:00pm**— Fr. Ruffalo, Deacon Layton
Lectors: Norton, Pustay **Greeters:** Grego, McCloskey
EMHC: Mertens, C & R Satler, Ligman, Femiani, Scheuering, G & P Adams, Specca **Servers:** Byrne, Hillen, J, J & N Bianco
- 7:30am**— Fr. Ruffalo
Lector: Jung **Greeters:** Barton, Henger **EMHC:** Klinar, Puskarich, Basile, Gavran, Walnoha, J & S Christopher
Servers: Meyers, Traficante, Shaw
- 10:00am**— Fr. Esposito
Lectors: Wanninger, Morosco **Greeters:** Oberschelp, Stewart
EMHC: Kail, Faina, Orient, Gaudy, Davis, Torres, T & E Mauro, Wanninger **Servers:** Mullan, C & A Mavrich, Z & J Verner
- 12:30pm**— Fr. Esposito
Lector: Zuk **Greeters:** Becker, McDonnell **EMHC:** Boyd, Huffner, Eckels, Slomiany, Baits, MdGinnis, Quinn **Servers:** Toscano Children

There will be 24-hour Eucharistic Adoration this week beginning Thursday at 4:00pm and concluding Friday at 4:00pm.

Sharing Our Treasure

Date	Offertory	Debt	Parish Share
July 5	\$20,647	\$4,058	\$1,197
July 12	\$21,344	\$2,465	\$4,810
July 19	\$20,492	\$2,952	\$1,285
July 26	\$17,773	\$1,987	\$510
Monthly Totals	\$80,256	\$11,462	\$7,802
Weekly Average	\$21,299		
Weekly Budgeted	\$22,000		

Financially, we are doing Ok. Thanks to everyone who continues to support the parish through their treasure. Look for our year-end report in September. Summer means vacation and people travel, so we expect our numbers to be slightly down. Debt reduction and PSP continue to be steady. With our various summer projects for improvement, such as painting the classrooms, and with the necessary repairs and replacements that we will have to make in the future, our Finance Council will meet in September to draft a plan for obtaining the funds we will need.

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



Youth Ministry News

The Bible as Theology

Three Sessions to Explore It

PTHS is offering a class this year called “The Bible as Literature,” which will explore the various kinds of literature that make up this sacred book. Fr. Sam is offering teens a chance to explore the bible from another point of view. Anyone in grades 10– 12 can sign up for this three session course which will meet on three Wednesdays, September 16, 30, and October 14—every other week so there’s time in between for reading the texts. The time of the class is 5:30—7:30, and a light supper will be included. If you’ve ever wondered about the bible and what it means, this is your chance to come find out! We’ll see how the timeline of the Scriptures stands against history and look for the themes that are so important to our Catholic faith like prophecy, kingdom and salvation. Call Janet or Elaine in Young Adult Ministry to register. You’ll need a bible for the class.

“Alive Again” Sept. 12

This is going to be a phenomenal day!! We have the Bishop’s representative for Mass, great speakers, wonderful food, and an outdoor concert with a chart-topping Christian Artist. All teens are encouraged to come spend the day here at St. Benedicts as hundreds of teens from the Diocese invade our parish for this event. The day starts at 2:00pm and ends around 10:00pm. Tickets are \$15 and includes everything. Call Janet at 724-941-9587 to register. The concert is open to parishioners, but we ask you to reserve your tickets as well.

High School Ministry

This year our format includes some new venues — a once a month big event like the September *Alive Again* concert, a monthly service project, and a bi-weekly drop in time. In addition there will be special programs like Fr. Sam’s “Bible as Theology” series. All high school students are encouraged to participate as often as you can to stay connected.

WOSB Day Trip

The Women of St. Benedict are sponsoring a day trip on September 9, via Molly’s Trolley, to visit the gardens of Temple Rodef Shalam in Oakland, the historical St. Anthony’s Chapel on Troy Hill, and a visit to St. Paul Cathedral, with lunch at the Georgetown Inn on Mt. Washington. The Trolley will leave our parking lot at 9:00am and return at approximately 3:30pm. The cost is \$72, which includes lunch and gratuities. There is only room for 30 people, and reservations are on a first come, first serve basis. To make a reservation please call Nancy Huffner at 724-941-6805 or Mary Beth Bokelberg at 724-941-9085.

Light Weigh

A Light Weigh Orientation Meeting and Sign-up will be held at St. Benedict the Abbot on September 3 at 11:00am in room 213. The 12-week program will begin September 10. Come and find out about the Light Weigh Bible Study– Video Series and Spiritual Weight Loss Program and how this program has been a blessing for others! Please contact Sharon Kimes at 412-831-3476 with any questions.

Building Fund Donations

In Honor of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of John (Kip) & Rita Milavec

Dick & Dolly Wall, the Michael Shannon Family & the David Wall Family

In Memory of Deacon Jack Manion

Ted & Josie Turchick	Audrey Hrehocik
Donna & Nick Nardine	Barbara Alcorn
Donald & Lisa Dorfner	Frances Patnesky
M/M Frank Nappi	Dan Bayer
Knights of Columbus	Gladys Meyers Family
Dennis & Christine Laffey	Nellie Ambrose
Jeffrey Mertens, DMD	M/M Joseph Smith
Janet Boston	John & Rita Milavec
	M/M Robert Joseph
	Sam & Lisa Johnson & Family
	George, Mary Lou & Mary Ellen Frost
	Ken & Jean Meyers, Karen Meyers,
	and Donna & Robert Mocniak

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



Ask Father Sam

Why is the Catholic Church opposed to stem cell use? (Part II)

Lesson of the Week

Why is the Catholic Church opposed to stem cell use? (Part I)

This question has to start with understanding what a stem cell is. The definition according to *Ethics & Medics*, a commentary from the National Catholic Bioethics Center, says *a stem cell is any cell that exists in a relatively immature state and is able to divide to produce one cell that replaces itself, and one that will go on to become a more specialized cell type.*

There are three broad classes of stem cells: adult, embryonic, and reprogrammed. Human embryonic stem cells are obtained by the destruction of human embryos that are between three and six days old. At this early stage, cells are very primitive and able to produce all the cell types found in the mature human body.

Contrast that with what we call adult stem cells which are by definition any stem cell found in a specific type of tissue. These are thought to be more limited, making only the types of cells appropriate to the tissue in which they reside. In addition, we have reprogrammed stem cells, which are functional equivalents to embryonic stem cells, able to produce all of the cells of the mature body.

Stem cells offer hope for treating medical conditions that are caused by loss of cells, either from injury or disease. But to realize this hope, there are some hurdles to overcome. Scientists have to determine how to make stem cells mature into stable tissue that can survive and function normally. Then, they must find ways of effectively using them to treat or cure medical conditions.

Because the pathology of many diseases remains a mystery, stem cell transplantation would fail as the new cells are affected by the same fatal influences as the diseased cells. So, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, and other terrible conditions need more understanding of the cause of cell death before doctors can effectively treat their patients with any type of stem cell.

Injuries, however, offer a more straightforward opportunity for stem cell therapies. Here, the way to effective treatment seems similar, regardless of what type of stem cell generates the replacement tissue. So the question becomes, *What comparison is there between the three classes of stem cells?*

Faith Formation News

Faith Formation Registration

Registration for fall sessions is underway. Forms were mailed out and are also available on our parish website under the faith formation link. Families are reminded again that due to the size of our programs, class requests will not be honored. In addition, registrations will not be accepted on the first day of classes.

Liturgy of the Word for Children

Celebrating a separate Liturgy of the Word with children ages 3—5 provides an opportunity for them to get to know the stories of the bible and become familiar with our sacred tradition. With the new Mass schedule, we want to offer two opportunities for this at both the 9:30 and 11:30 Masses on Sunday mornings. This is a good chance for a family ministry or for a mother-daughter, mother-son, husband-wife team to interact with the children and share faith. If you are concerned about not knowing enough to share your faith, we will get you started and offer support along the way. Call Colette in the Faith Formation Office, 724-941-9587, for more information or to ask about how you can help.

Ushers & Greeters Workshop

There will be workshops for all ushers, greeters, and anyone who would like to serve as a Minister of Hospitality on Sunday, September 6 at 2:00pm and Wednesday, September 16 at 7:30pm in the church. Please plan to attend one of these workshops so we can discuss the history, the importance, and the role of this ministry. Invite a friend to join in ministry with you. . . all are welcome. Remember, St. Benedict wanted his monasteries to be known for the virtue of "hospitality."

Fall Flower Bulb Sale

St. Benedict Gardeners are sponsoring a fall flower bulb sale to benefit the design and renovation of the church grounds. The sale will be held from August 30 through September 13. Six bulb selections are being offered and pick-up is scheduled for early October. If you aren't a gardener, consider purchasing bulbs and donating them back to the church to be planted on the church grounds. See the display in the Narthex for details and order forms.



Fall Ministers' Schedule

It is time to schedule ministers for Masses in October, November and December. Please keep in mind that the Mass schedule changes in September, so indicate if you are able to serve at the 7:45, 9:30 or 11:30 Sunday Masses. All Greeters, Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and Altar Servers should submit any "away" dates and Mass schedule changes to Jay Specca at jspeca@hotmail.com. . . put "Minister Schedule" in the subject line. . . or call 724-941-9587. The new schedule runs the first week of September, so please have your information in before August 31.

WOSB Annual Garage Sale

There are just a few weeks until the Women of St. Benedict will have their annual garage sale on September 18 from 9:00am to 7:00pm and September 19 from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Set up days will be September 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. Volunteers are needed to sort, price and display items, receive donations in the evening, provide lunch for workers during the week, customer service during the sale and clean up on Saturday afternoon after the sale.

Please help by donating items you no longer want or need. Items may be dropped off in O'Brien Hall starting September 13th. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING ITEMS BEFORE THAT DATE.**

ITEMS WANTED: clean baby & children's clothing & toys; jewelry; kitchen items such as dishes, glassware, silverware, pots & pans; small working electrical appliances; knickknacks; paperback books; VHS tapes; audio tapes; DVD's; Halloween costumes; holiday decorations; pictures & picture frames; artificial flowers; baskets, craft & sewing items; small tables & chairs; working lawn mowers; garden tools; working hand & electrical tools; clothing, linens & bedding items that are in good condition and not soiled or torn; healthy house plants.

Please keep in mind when donating items—**WE DO NOT WANT JUNK**—we have a reputation for having "quality" items at our garage sale and would like to continue this tradition.

ITEMS NOT WANTED: automobile tires; stoves & refrigerators; large furniture; computers; old & used sporting equipment; bowling balls; treadmills; encyclopedias & old books, old purses, and clothing that is torn or out-of-date.

For more information or to volunteer, please call Jackie Buck at 724-941-6955 or Nancy Huffner at 724-941-6805.

This Week In Our Parish

Sunday, August 30

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

Monday, August 31

7:00p Aerobics (PBAC)

Tuesday, September 1

8:30a Special Needs Children (210)

6:45p Pre-School Parent Meeting (OBH)

Wednesday, September 2

12:00p AA (208)

6:30p Confessions (Church)

7:30p Tae Kwon Do (OBH)

Thursday, September 3

11:00a Light Weigh (213)

12:00p NA (206)

4:00p Adoration Begins (Chapel)

6:00p Aerobics (PBAC)

7:00p Baptism Class (210)

7:30p Troop 1313 (PBAC)

Friday, September 4

8:30a Special Needs Children (210)

4:00p Closing of Adoration (Chapel)

Saturday, September 5

7:30a CMF (206)

9:00a Aerobics (PBAC)

11:00a Confessions (Church)

Sunday, September 6

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

Bowling League

There are immediate openings for two bowlers in the St. Benedict's Mixed Bowling League. This is not a competitive league but an opportunity for spouses and singles to mingle and have fun. We bowl every other Sunday at 6:30pm starting August 30. Please call either Blaise at 724-942-0748 or Joy at 724-941-6389 for more information and to get on the roster before the limit of 50 bowlers is reached.

Italian Tour Meeting

The final pre-tour meeting is set to take place on Friday, September 18, 7:00pm at the home of Barbara Gigliotti, 341 Snowberry Cr. Venetia. Call 724-941-2908 if you need directions. Ezio, the owner of Renaissance Travel, will be with us to present the travel documents, and Fr. Sam will give every traveler the packet of information necessary for the pilgrimage.



TO GET INVOLVED, CALL . . .

Abbey Coffee House

Ellie Puskarich
724-941-4686

Altar Servers

Kathleen Bench
724-942-0338

Ben's Men

Jeff Mertens
724-941-6484

Bowling League

Blaise Hollot
724-942-0748

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

Ed & Mary Lou Fraticelli
724-941-4230

Eucharistic Adoration

Mary Ann Campbell
724-941-4297

Extraordinary Ministers

Jack McGinnis
724-941-4213

Finance Council

Fred Abrew
724-941-4696

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

IHN

Mary Spinabelli
724-942-2478

Lectors

Dawn Pustay
724-942-2451

Library

Ellen Mavrach
724-941-2446

Liturgical Environment

Emma Diamond
724-941-8315

Military Support

Jamie Christopher
724-747-9396

Ministry to the Sick

Barb Scheuering
724-941-9104

MOMS

Kathleen Chaudhari
724-941-8546

Pastoral Council

Aimee Schmidt
724-941-7046

Respect Life Committee

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

Wedding Coordinators

Lois McCloskey
724-941-6879

Women of St. Benedict

Nancy Huffner
724-941-6805

Youth Council

Sheila Arcuri
724-942-6431