



Immaculate Conception
Catholic Church

10 March 2024

Today's Readings Pg 81

2 Chronicles 36:14-23

Psalm 137:1-6

Ephesians 2:4-10

John 3:14-21



*And this is the verdict,
that the light came into the world,
but people preferred darkness to light,
because their works were evil.*

JOHN 3:19

The Saving Game

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

A long time ago, I came across a piece that I still remember because it's pretty much a commentary on how life is for most of us. It goes something like this: At the age of ten, we think we can live forever. When we're twenty, we think we can save the world. When the big thirty rolls around, we think we can save the company. When the fortieth birthday arrives, we think we can save our children. Then, when we're fifty, we think we can at least save our marriage. And by the time we're sixty, we think we should just save aluminum cans.

A bit flippant perhaps, but it reminds me that even given my own best efforts, I really do not save much of anything. It is always God who does the saving, not me.

It's a conversation replayed in our heads again and

again. We find ourselves unwittingly thinking that if we do all the right things, when we die and go to heaven, then God will have to take us in. If we say the right prayers and follow all the rules, then we will have earned salvation. Yet then we will have saved ourselves and there will have been no need for God's gracious goodness. Then we will have lifted ourselves up by our own bootstraps and not by the Lord Jesus.

Then we will proclaim ourselves as the light to overcome darkness, and it will not be the death and resurrection of the Lord which does so. ●

Reflect

**How have you been saved and
how do you need saving now?**

Lord, We Lift Up to You in Prayer...

April Hicklin, Mary Lou Weepie, Elaine Ernst,
Lois Wickman, Carma Schmidtke, Charlie Corey,
Norm Pint, Pam Miller, Marci Willey, Diana Snyder,
Michael McDonough, Rose Kalb, Dave Chase,
Marisa Davidson, Mary Ellen Youngblut, Karyn Beenken,
Leona Kleitsch, Lindsey Ernst, Ron Babinat,
victims of hatred, racism, violence, natural disaster;
terrorism, and all in our parish, our community, and our hearts
who are suffering and in need of Christ's healing touch †
May they know His loving Presence in the eyes, hands and
hearts of those who give them care.

**May our prayers for help and
healing rise like incense
to our God of hope, love and mercy.**



► Communion To Our Sick Or Homebound Ministry:

contact Michelle Weepie 319-635-2428

► I C Parish Prayer Chain Hotline:

Please contact Vivian Rourke at 319-238-3225 (V) or 319-238-2083 (M)

► Sacrament Of The Sick ~ Anointing for the seriously ill or dying, call the Sacred Heart Parish Center 319-283-3743, or if having surgery speak with Father Atwood in the Sacristy before or after Mas

► Baptism Class For Parents:

All parents who wish to have their child baptized at Immaculate Conception parish are required to attend a baptism class prior to scheduling the baptism. Please contact Deacon Jim at 319-509-1210 for scheduling details.



► I C Cemetery – contact the parish office

► Funeral Dinners: Group #3 Sept, Oct, Nov & Dec

We provide desserts & serve a catered meal

I C STAFF

~ Fr. Ray Atwood, Pastor ~

IC Parish Office Wednesday Mornings after 8:30AM Mass

Office at Sacred Heart Parish Center 319-283-3743

Sacred Heart Rectory 319-283-9577

email: dbq151@dbqarch.org

~ Deacon Jim Patera ~

Office at Sacred Heart Parish Center 319-283-3743

Cell phone 319-509-1210

~Glenda Kleitsch IC Secretary/Bookkeeper~

I C Parish Office PH: 319-635-2211

located at 405 Fairbank St

I C Parish Office hours:

Mon-Thurs 8AM – 3PM Closed Friday

Mailing address: P O BOX 505 Fairbank IA 50629

email: icfairbank@gmail.com

[website: http://icfairbank.weebly.com/](http://icfairbank.weebly.com/)

[Archdiocesan website: www.dbqarch.org](http://www.dbqarch.org)

~Kim Weepie, DRE & Youth Ministry~

PH: 319-240-5912 kim.weepie@gmail.com

DRE Office PH :319-635-2211

located in the Parish Center at 405 Faribank St

Mailing address: P O Box 505, Fairbank IA 50629

Jean Sauerbrei, Facility Rental Coordinator

PH: cell 319-296-8459

or email jmsauerbrei@yahoo.com

Lent



March 10, 2024

“The Serpent in the Desert”

Signs point to things. For example, a stop sign indicates a place where traffic should halt; A “No Smoking” sign indicates a place where you are forbidden to light up; a power station is a sign of electricity; clouds are a sign of a storm. Signs are found throughout Scripture. Today's Gospel is no exception. In speaking with Nicodemus, Our Lord points backward to a sign given to Moses in the desert.

In the Book of Numbers, chapter 21, we hear the complaints of God's people against Moses. They didn't like the food provided by their Lord. In anger, the Lord punished them by sending seraph or fiery desert serpents, which bit and killed many. In response to Moses' plea, God ordered him to make a seraph serpent and mount it on a pole. Whoever looked at it would recover. There is no healing power in a bronze serpent. But the reason it was chosen was because it was the same nature as those serpents which bit the people. The difference between that image and real serpents was that the bronze serpent had no venom. If people looked at the image with faith, they were healed. The serpent was God's instrument of healing, just as live serpents were his instruments of punishment. That's the background for the Gospel passage.

The *Catechism* explains: “Already in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word; so it was with **the bronze serpent**, the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim” (CCC 2130). The serpent account was real, but it also pointed to a future event, to which Our Lord refers in the Gospel.

“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life” (Jn. 3:14). Jesus, in this instance, pointed backwards in order to point forwards. The sign of the seraph serpent, which resembled the serpents which bit the people but without venom, pointed to Jesus on the Cross. Jesus was the innocent Redeemer of the world. He had no venom of sin in Him, and He was lifted up, like the serpent, to heal our wounded nature. Like the bronze serpent, Jesus shared our human nature, and so was the perfect instrument of redemption.

What does this all mean? It means that the crucified Christ is our Redeemer. Lent is a time to grow closer to him. By prayer, we communicate with the crucified One; by fasting, we imitate his forty days in the desert; by almsgiving, we sacrifice something meaningful in order to be filled with God's grace. Years ago, every Catholic hospital and every Catholic school had a cross or crucifix in each room. Where is the crucifix in your home? Is it in a prominent place? Lent is the best time of the liturgical year to reflect on the crucified Christ, the One who was lifted up on Good Friday to save us.

The image of Christ, who came to redeem and not condemn the world, is a rich source of reflection. If you do not have a cross or crucifix, then purchase one or several this Lent. And, while you're at it, read the four Gospel accounts of Our Lord's suffering and death. They are found at the end of each Gospel. You will have a fruitful Lent if you make these two practices part of your Lent 2024 experience.

God Bless You!! Father Ray Atwood

Parish Financial Support

Mar 3-7

Budget	\$2895
Offertory	\$234
Building Fund	\$230
Easter	\$45
Stations of the Cross	\$500
Donut Sunday	\$125



*34 jars
donated.
Awesome!!*

thank you!

March 2024

Wednesdays ~ March 13 thru April 17 IC Parish Hall
~ New Study Group for Moms

After 8:30AM Mass 9:15-10:15AM

Come join us for a fascinating journey of discovery.

Sun Mar 10 ~ Anointing of the Sick after Mass

~ Women & Identity ~

By Adele Ahlberg Calhoun & Tracey Bianchi

\$10.00 ea. & can be picked up at the office.

Tuesdays, March 12th to April 30th

IC Parish Hall 9:00am or 6:30pm

Contact Info: Carma Schmidtke 319-240-2495

Thurs Mar 14~ Parish Life Mtg 9:30AM Parish Hall
~ KC Meeting Parish Hall 7PM

Tues Mar 19~ Fairbank Community Blood Drive 2-5PM
American Legion Hall

Sun Mar 17~ Donut Sunday hosts Faith Formation

Wed Mar 20 ~Monthly Community Potluck 11:30AM

~ Pastoral/Finance Mtg 5:30PM

~ Faith Formation Mtg 7PM

March 22 – IC Church Fish Fry

Parish Hall, Fairbank 4:30-7:30PM

Cod, baked potato, baked beans, coleslaw, roll, dessert.

Adults \$15.00 10-6 yrs. \$7 5 & Under Free

Dine In and Carry Out Available!!!

Signup Sheets are available in the east entrance.

Sat Mar 23 ~ Blaire Smith Baptism 11:00AM



*We offer our sympathy to
The Family and Friends of
Leona Kleitsch (Edward's Wife)*

*And Mary Dimmich
Condolences for Mary can be sent
To Jana Spence (her daughter)*

*34201 Positano Court
Sorrento, FL 32776*

Helping Hands Clothing Closet had 300 client visits (142 adults, 158 children) in February. Clients came from 17 different communities throughout northeast Iowa. We will have winter clothes out until March 20th and will be putting spring/summer clothes out on March 23rd. Our volunteers gave 48 hours of their time to helping our clients. If you are interested in volunteering let us know. Thank you for all the donations!!



Sun Mar 10 8:30AM IC Don Brandt†

M: Deacon Jim EM: Glenda Kane

Servers: Marshall Weepie, Alivia Weepie

Lector: Betty Salisbury

Sun Mar 10 10:30AM SH For the People

Mon Mar 11 8:30AM SH Pete & Iva Greco†

Wed Mar 13 8:30AM IC Donald & Regina Beenken†

Thurs Mar 14 8:30AM SH Gene Adams†

Friday Mar 15 Noon SH Dorothy Adamson†

Friday Mar 15 5:30PM SH All Souls in Purgatory

Sat Mar 16 4:30PM SH Rob Casey †

Sun Mar 17 8:30AM IC Pat Shannon †

EM: Anita Destival, Kelly Galleger

Servers: Wally Kaufman, Rachel Kaufman

Lector: Jean Bellis

Sun Mar 17 10:30AM SH For the People

Palm Sunday, Mar 24, 2024 8:30 AM Mass

M: Deacon Jim EM: Duane Schmidtke

Servers: Ella Weepie, Cameron Szurley

Lector: Kevin Bodensteiner

March Ushers and Greeters

Bob Bellis, Tom Kleitsch,

Joe & Dianne Rubino, Richard Rundle

March Money Counters

Glenda Kane & Lynn Plaster

Easter Schedule

Sun Mar 24 ~ Communal Penance Service 3-5PM SH

Mon Mar 25 ~ Confessions SH 5:30-6:30PM

Wed Mar 27 ~ Confessions IC 5:30-6:30PM

Thurs ~ Mar 28 Holy Thursday IC Church 7:00 PM

~Confessions after 7PM Mass IC

Fri ~ Mar 29 ~ Good Friday IC Church 12:00 Noon

Sacred Heart 5:30PM

~ Confessions after 5:30PM Good Friday Mass SH

Sat ~ Mar 30 Holy Saturday Sacred Heart 8:00PM

Sun ~ Mar 31 Easter Service IC Church 8:30 AM

Sacred Heart 10:30 AM

If you wish to donate toward the **Easter flowers** please complete the form below and put it in the collection, mail, or bring to the office no later than **Wed. March 27.**

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Contact Name & Ph: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____



Gospel Reading

John 3:14-21

Jesus tells Nicodemus that the Son of Man will be raised up so that those who believe in him will have eternal life.

Background on the Gospel Reading

The fourth Sunday of Lent is sometimes called *Laetare* Sunday. *Laetare* is a Latin word that means "rejoice." Traditionally, Sundays are named after the first word of the liturgy's opening antiphon. On this Sunday, the antiphon is taken from the book of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 66:10-11). Even as we observe our Lenten sacrifices, we rejoice in anticipation of the joy that will be ours at Easter.

Today's Gospel reading is taken from John's Gospel. It consists of two parts. The first part is the final sentence of Jesus' reply to Nicodemus, the Pharisee who approached Jesus at night. Nicodemus acknowledged Jesus as someone who had come from God and seemed to want to be a follower of Jesus. Jesus greeted Nicodemus with the observation that one must be born from above to see the Kingdom of God. The dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus that followed was about the meaning of this phrase. Nicodemus misunderstood Jesus at every point, but there was no animosity in the questions he posed to Jesus.

In the part of the conversation with Nicodemus in today's Gospel, Jesus referred to an incident reported in the Old Testament. When the Israelites grumbled against the Lord during their sojourn in the desert, God sent venomous serpents to punish them for their complaints. The Israelites repented and asked Moses to pray for them. The Lord heard Moses' prayer and instructed him to make a bronze serpent and mount it on a pole. All who had been bitten by a serpent and then looked upon the bronze serpent were cured. By recalling this story, Jesus alludes to the salvation that would be accomplished through his death and Resurrection.

The second part of today's Gospel is a theological reflection on Jesus' words to Nicodemus. The Gospel of John is known for this kind of reflection offered within the narrative. The words of the Evangelist are in continuity with the words of the prologue to John's Gospel. In these reflections, John elaborates on a number of themes that are found in his Gospel: light and darkness, belief and unbelief, good and evil, salvation and condemnation.

In John's reflection, we find an observation about human sinfulness. Jesus is the light that has come into the world, but people preferred the darkness. We wish to keep our sins hidden, even from God. Jesus has come into the world to reveal our sins so that they may be forgiven. This is the Good News; it is the reason for our rejoicing in this season of Lent and throughout our lives.

MONDAY

March 11
Lenten Weekday
Is 65:17-21
Jn 4:43-54

TUESDAY

March 12
Lenten Weekday
Ez 47:1-9, 12
Jn 5:1-16

WEDNESDAY

March 13
Lenten Weekday
Is 49:8-15
Jn 5:17-30

THURSDAY

March 14
Lenten Weekday
Ex 32:7-14
Jn 5:31-47

FRIDAY

March 15
Lenten Weekday
Wis 2:1a, 12-22
Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

SATURDAY

March 16
Lenten Weekday
Jer 11:18-20
Jn 7:40-53

SUNDAY

March 17
Fifth Sunday of Lent
Jer 31:31-34
Heb 5:7-9
Jn 12:20-33

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

If God is the God of life...

then it is wrong for us to kill our brothers and sisters in his Name.

If God is the God of peace...

then it is wrong for us to wage war in his Name.

If God is the God of love...

then it is wrong for us to hate our brothers and sisters.

PRAYER FOR THE VICTIMS OF WAR, IRAQ, MARCH 7, 2021



"Lent is not something we do for God – Lent is something we do *with* God."



