



# Community News

## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

We reveal Jesus to the world when we share our time, talent, and treasure.

### PROMISE:

“...he shall rescue the poor when he cries out...” (Ps 72:11)

### WORD:

Is 60:1-6/ Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13/ Eph 3:2-3, 5-6/ Mt 2:1-12

### ORDER:

- Go and search diligently for the child, pay him homage and serve him. (Mt 2:8 & Ps 72:11)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Attend Praise and Worship regularly.
- Keep the fire burning in our hearts by following the teachings of Jesus.
- Be in the light always by frequently availing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## Let's Pass The Torch

### REFLECTION:

The story of the three kings is the story of our life. The magi traveled long distances through difficult roads in search of the newborn child who is to be the King of the Jews. We too are in a journey in search of a purpose and meaning in life, which can only be attained if we are guided by faith for it is in finding God that our purpose will be revealed to us.



The road in search of Jesus is bumpy and dark, like our life's ups and downs, struggles, and sufferings. Jesus wants us to find him, which is difficult if we are fumbling in the dark. Like the Magi who were led by a brightly shining star in their search for Jesus, we too must find the light of Jesus to shine in us if we are to be successful in finding him. To be in the light is to follow his teachings, to go beyond our comfort zone and to give our

best when serving him. The search for the truth requires courage, determination, and hope.

Paying him homage, singing praises and glorifying his holy name is not enough. We must let his light in us radiate to others so they too may find Jesus. We

must share our gifts and fortune with the poor and sacrifice our time to assist them in their needs. We are Christians not only for our own good but for others as well. Jesus teaches that faith is for sharing. After all what we are we owe to Jesus, what we have comes from God.

So let us pass the torch that is the light of Jesus to others that we may fulfill our obligation of sharing and making Jesus known to the whole world. This will make us shine brightly and discover Christ in us as we uncover the splendor beneath the surface of the innocence of the Newborn Child Jesus.

## Tending the Flock

### What Is Our Lifestyle?

“The very gift for which we give thanks is also a reason for an examination of conscience, for a revision of our personal and communal life, to ask ourselves: what is our lifestyle? Do we live as children or as slaves? Do we live as people baptized in Christ, anointed by the Spirit, delivered and free? Or do we live according to the corrupt, worldly logic, doing what the devil makes us believe is in our interest? In our existential journey there is always a tendency to resist liberation; we are afraid of freedom and, paradoxically and somewhat unwittingly, we prefer slavery. Freedom frightens us because it causes us to confront time and to face our responsibility to live it well. Instead, slavery reduces time to a “moment” and thus we feel more secure, that is, it makes us live moments disconnected from their past and from our future. In other words, slavery impedes us from truly and fully living the present, because it empties it of the past and closes it to the future, to eternity. Slavery makes us believe that we cannot dream, fly, hope...”



“Nostalgia for slavery is nestled in our heart, because it is seemingly more reassuring than freedom, which is far more risky. How we like being captivated by lots of fireworks, beautiful at first glance but which in reality last but a few seconds! This is the reign, this is the charm of the moment!”

“For us Christians, the quality of our actions, of our life, of our presence in the city, of our service to the common good, of our participation in public and ecclesial institutions, also depends upon this examination of conscience.”

— Pope Francis

### Save the Date

**Jan 10-12** : Singles Encounter  
 Venue : America's Keswick  
 Whiting, NJ

**Feb 5-12** : Medical Mission to the Philippines

**Feb 21-23** : Life in the Spirit Seminar  
 Venue : St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
 Deal, NJ

### Marshalls

**Jan 3** - Art Monta & Raul Caragay  
**Jan 10** - Toti Lukban & George Pe  
**Jan 17** - Dan Catarata & Tottie Felibrico

### The Lord's Provision December 28, 2019

**Tithes: \$545.00 Love Offering: \$150.00**  
*Thank you for your generosity!!*

### God's Blessings

#### Birthday

Grace Bustamante	1/3	Eppie Rebong	1/5
Malou Yosuoico	1/4	Jay Mijares	1/6
Patrick Mazo	1/5	Carmela Palumbo	1/6
Woody Woodard	1/7		

#### Anniversary

Jay & Tet Edralin	1/4
Rene & Edna Perez	1/4
Manny & Jocelyn Rodriguez	1/5
Leo & Nona Alquiros	1/8
Wendell & Mildred Lumapas	1/8
Epo & Joy Pagente	1/8

### Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?

For Blessed Mother's visit - Tess Corso 732-604-1914  
 For Prayer Service - Morris Teves 732-597-2016

## Faith Smugglers

We begin the year 2020 guided by our Community word for the month of January – Jesus is the revelation of God's Truth and Light to the world.



How providential

it is, that our word reflects the direction initiated by Pope Francis in his address to the Roman Curia enjoining the Cardinals, Archbishops and all of us to be brave, to make a difference, and to stand up for Jesus in our family, in our work place and in society. Pope Francis further enjoins us to cause our evangelization program to evolve and be radical missionaries in this rapidly changing world where faith is often forgotten, leaving Jesus in the dustbin.

In obedience, our directions for the month point us to the way by which we can accomplish this call – 1) Perform works of mercy as our gift to the Child Jesus, and 2) Be steadfast in giving our time, talent and treasure to serve in community.

The first direction reminds us that we can never go wrong if, at the beginning of each day, whatever plans we have, we first seek God's guidance in scriptures to check if our plans or undertaking are in conformity with His will. And, as we recog-

nize His word for us, we are able to surrender and obey to His directions. Thus, we grow in knowledge and understanding through the love of Christ.

The second direction invites us to be "hearers and bearers of the word" as proclaimed in Isaiah 42:6: "*I, the Lord, have called you for the victory of justice, I have grasped you by the hand; I formed you and set you as a covenant of the people, a light for the nations.*" And, in our Order for the month in Matthew 4:19 we are told: "*Come after me and I'll make you fishers of men,*" suggesting that instead of whining and bickering and assuming the words "my thoughts and plans are better than yours" are about you, to remember instead that we are meant to be united as a community to "*...be united in the same mind and in the same purpose*" (1Cor 1:10) in our mission to spread God's love in Jesus, whether it is comfortable for us or not.

A graphic statement made by Pope Francis should be our guide in mission, "*...I ask you to bring the healing power of God's grace to everyone in need, and to be shepherds*

*living with the smell of the sheep...*" Likewise, in his message to the Filipino OFW's after celebrating the first Filipino Simbang Gabi, he enjoins us "*... be smugglers of the faith.*"

Where then, is our mission field? And how do we begin? We begin in our family, our little church, then, move on to our work place or to places where God is not known, by standing witness to the love of Jesus in our life through our humility and obedience.

In all four weeks, Jesus is introduced as the Light that dispels the darkness of sins in our lives. As we look up to Him, as we cry out to Him in times of trials and tribulations, Jesus sheds a ray of hope into our hearts and minds. Our country, the Philippines, has experienced the devastation of the recent natural disasters – earthquakes and typhoons, as well as man-made disasters, wherein our faith is once again tested. Shall we lose ourselves in the mire of self-pity or desperation? Hopefully not! All of us are called to be like Jesus, bearers of Good News. We should all look up to that Star, and He will guide us to the right path of righteousness and truth. We all are victims of these various calamities because we are all one; and God, who is impartial, sees our individual hearts. Are we moved with compassion to love and care for our suffering brothers and sisters? How are we responding to His call to be "radical missionaries or be smugglers of the faith"?

*Adapted from [www.bldworld.org](http://www.bldworld.org)*



## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

We reveal Jesus to the world when we fulfill our baptismal vows.

### PROMISE:

*"...whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him."* (Acts 10:35)

### WORD:

Is 42:1-4, 6-7/ Ps 29:1-4, 3, 9-10/ Acts 10:34-38/ Mt 3:13-17

### ORDER:

- *Act uprightly and be acceptable to Him.* (Acts 10:35)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Fulfill your baptismal vows.



## The Grace Of Identity

### REFLECTION:

We reveal Jesus to the world when we (a) openly and directly reject the temptation of sin, the devil himself and his empty promises, (b) publicly and openly profess our faith to the Holy Trinity, and (c) actively serve in building our holy, catholic and apostolic church.

Baptism is the first of the sacraments of initiation and the fundamental grace we receive is our identity. Beyond getting our name, understanding our identity defines who we are; where we came from and where we are going; what our capabilities are and how we should use them; what is our purpose and where should we complete it. Our identity is our starting point; without it we have no sense of direction. Establishing our own identity is key to our ability to reveal Jesus to the world.

Jesus' baptism is the foundation of



Christian baptism. By that I mean: what happened at Jesus' baptism is demonstrative of what is true of everyone who is a believer.

Let me start at the end of Jesus' baptism. When Jesus came up from the water, we read that there was a voice that came from heaven saying, *"This is my beloved Son, with whom I*

*am well pleased."* (Mt 3:17). The amazing reality of our baptism is that God is saying the same to us. We are Beloved by the Father! God loves us; He created us out of love. This is one of our identities. We are all lovable, and we are all capable of loving back. We reveal Jesus to the world when we keep and share God's love in our hearts.

In the Gospel, *"After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened for him,*

*Identity - See Page 2*

## Know Your Saints

### Saint Gregory the Great: Patron of Singers

Born around 540 into a family of great wealth and influence in Rome, Gregory was Pope of the Church between 590 and 604 AD. His great-great-grandfather was Pope Felix III who reigned at a time before the clergy took a vow of celibacy. After his father died, he converted his family's villa into a monastery.

Gregory made clear he preferred the monastic life and referred to himself as a servant of God. As Pope he was big on missionary work and sent people out to bring many to Jesus and the Church. He emphasized the aspect of service to the poor for deacons whom he tasked with giving alms to the poor. At least one deacon was assigned to every church and ordained for this purpose. Gregory gave alms generously from the riches donated to the Church and made clear to his subordinates that their duty was to relieve the distress faced by the poor.

Because of his great respect for the poor, it was Pope Gregory and the Church that became the most respected and obeyed force in Rome and across Italy. The people looked to the Church for government rather than the distant and indifferent emperors in Constantinople.

He is believed to have established the *"cantus planus"*, a melodious, monophonic singing style known today as the Gregorian Chant. Gregorian chant gives us the oldest music still in its original form, some dating to the centuries just after the death of Gregory.

St. Pope Gregory suffered from arthritis in his last years and when he died in 604, he was immediately proclaimed a saint by popular acclaim. His relics remain in St. Peter's Basilica to this day.



## Teaching Schedule

- Jan 11** - Response to the Word - SPE 3  
**Jan 12** - Shepherds Training Refresher  
           Christian Parenting 2  
           4 Basic Truths - ME 21  
**Feb 8** - Jesus in the Old Testament  
           Making of the Gospel - SPE 3  
**Feb 15** - Prayer  
           Praise & Worship - ME 21  
**Feb 29** - Shepherds Training I

## Save the Date

- Jan 10-12** : Singles Encounter  
           Venue : America's Keswick  
                   Whiting, NJ  
**Feb 5-12** : Medical Mission to the Philippines  
**Feb 21-23** : Life in the Spirit Seminar  
           Venue : St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
                   Deal, NJ

## Marshalls

- Jan 10** - Eugene Yosuiico\*  
           Toti Lukban  
           George Pe  
**Jan 17** - Manny Rodriguez\*  
           Dan Catarata  
           Tottie Felibrico  
**Jan 24** - Jeff Sarmiento\*  
           Erwin Bustamante  
           Eric Tan

\* Door Marshall

## The Lord's Provision January 3, 2020

**Tithes:                 \$605.00**  
**Love Offering:       \$282.00**

***Thank you for your generosity!!***

## Identity - Cont'd from Page 1

and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. (Mt 3:16). Like Jesus, the Holy Spirit is doing the same to us at our baptism. We are filled by the Holy Spirit! This is our other identity.

As believers, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit after our baptism. God's presence is always with us through the Spirit, who empowers us to complete all that God calls us to do. With God's love in our hearts, and the Holy Spirit's power within us, we can reveal Jesus to the whole world and fulfill our baptismal vows. "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Mt 28:19).

## **God's Blessings**

### **Birthday**

William Colon	1/10	Rosalie Angeles	1/14
Jeric Balmaceda	1/11	Yoly Crisol	1/14
Gening Mabutas	1/11	Lilia Mejares	1/16

## **Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers**

German & Letty Butay, Carl & Mina Duque, Ramon  
Miranda, Carmencita Pacis

## **Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?**

For Blessed Mother's visit - Tess Corso 732-604-1914  
 For Prayer Service - Morris Teves 732-597-2016

## **Renewal**

*"After Jesus was baptized, He came directly out of the water. Suddenly, the sky was opened and he saw the Spirit of God descend like a dove and hover over Him."*

- Matthew 3:16

"Mary" Christmas on this last day of the Christmas season, the celebration of the Baptism of Jesus. The Lord is calling us to end Christmas by going back to Baptism, the beginning of our Christian life. Today is an ideal time to renew our baptismal promises by rejecting Satan, all his works, and all his promises and by believing ever more deeply in the Triune God.

When we end Christmas in Trinitarian, baptismal faith, we know in a life-changing way we are beloved sons and daughters of God our



Father, with whom He is well pleased (Mt 3:17). This affirmation of perfect, infinite, unconditional, eternal fatherly love fills us "with the Holy Spirit and power" (see Acts 10:38). Loved by the Father and filled with the Spirit, we imitate Jesus and go "about doing good works and healing all who were in the grip of the devil" (Acts 10:38). In this way, we establish "the victory of justice" on the earth (Is 42:6) "to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement, and from the dungeon, those who live in

*darkness"* (Is 42:7).

This year, the culture of death may well give way to a civilization of love and life. The renewal of your baptismal promises today has a lot to say about the future of the world. On this last day of Christmas, renew your Baptism.

*Adapted from [www.presentationministries.com](http://www.presentationministries.com)*

*Give to the LORD, you sons of God,  
give to the LORD glory and praise,  
Give to the LORD the glory due his name;  
adore the LORD in holy attire.*



## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

We reveal Jesus to the world when we testify that He is the Son of God.

### PROMISE:

“...I will make you a light to the nations.” (Is 49:6b)

### WORD:

Is 49:3, 5-6/ Ps 40:2, 4 7-10/ 1 Cor 1:1-3/ Jn 1:29-34

### ORDER:

- “...be my servant.” (Is 49:6)
- “...call upon the name of our Lord.” (1 Cor 1:2)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Proper witnessing.
- Boldly proclaim the Word of God.
- Serve with humility.



## Called To Be Holy

### REFLECTION:

In the gospel readings, John the Baptist points to Jesus' saving mission - to offer His life as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. He proclaimed: “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world”. He continued saying “A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.” He testified further, saying “I saw the Holy Spirit come down like a dove from heaven and remain upon him”. In this the Holy Spirit revealed who Jesus is, the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Although Jesus was without sin, He was still baptized to show us obedience to God.

If you notice, the word Lamb appears several times in the new testament and refers to Jesus. Lamb, as you know is a weak and fragile animal who is a symbol of obedience, docility, and defenseless love. It is not an aggressive creature but



a peaceful one. In the face of an attack, it does not fight back but endures it and this is how Jesus is - He is a lamb. God sent him into the world as a sacrificial lamb. Jesus has come into the world to free us from the slavery of sins, taking our faults

upon himself, just like a sacrificial lamb.

John the Baptist proclaimed: “On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. Now I have seen and testified that He is the Son of God.” The Holy Spirit revealed to John that Jesus is truly the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is the same Spirit that makes the Lord Jesus Christ known to us through the gift of faith. God gives his Holy Spirit as our helper and guide who opens our hearts and minds to receive and comprehend the great mystery and

Be Holy - See Page 2

## Know Your Saints

### Saint Thomas Aquinas: Patron of Students

Considered one of the greatest scholars of the Church, Thomas Aquinas was an Italian theologian best known for writing the classic *Summa Theologica* which combined the wisdom of the ancient world with the new message of Christianity. He was born in 1225 and was sent to receive his first training at the age of five from the Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino where he was noted to be diligent in study and devoted to prayer. A holy hermit had foretold his career, saying to his mother before his birth: “He will enter the Order of Friars, and so great will be his learning and sanctity that in his day no one will be found to equal him.”

Thomas studied at the major universities of Europe and obtained his Doctor of Theology degree from the University of Paris. Because of his quiet manner and large size, he was called “the dumb Sicilian ox”. But one day, after surprising his class with a brilliant explanation of a difficult passage, his teacher said: “We have called Thomas ‘dumb ox’, but I tell you his bellowing will yet be heard to the uttermost parts of the earth.”

Thomas Aquinas was loved for his kindness and willingness to share his knowledge. Prayer, he said, had taught him more about the world than study. His prayer: “Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know You, a heart to seek You, wisdom to find You, conduct pleasing to You, faithful perseverance in waiting for you and a hope of finally embracing You.”

St. Thomas died while on his way to meet the Pope in 1274. He is the patron saint of students and of learning and of all Catholic universities throughout the world.



## Teaching Schedule

**Feb 8** - Jesus in the Old Testament  
 Making of the Gospel - SPE 3

**Feb 15** - Prayer  
 Praise & Worship - ME 21

**Feb 29** - Shepherds Training I

## Save the Date

**Feb 5-12** : Medical Mission to the Philippines  
**Feb 21-23** : Life in the Spirit Seminar  
 Venue : St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
 Deal, NJ

## Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers

Joseph & Liz Paderon, Bert & Cora Velez, Helen Hernandez, Mennen Castillo, Manny & Evelyn Palacios

## Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?

For Blessed Mother's visit - Tess Corso 732-604-1914  
 For Prayer Service - Morris Teves 732-597-2016

## **God's Blessings**

### **Birthday**

Nanette Smith	1/17	Fe Odon	1/20
Patricia DeJean	1/18	Jing Nieveras	1/21
Ino Dominguez	1/20	Ron Padolina	1/21

### **Anniversary**

Raul & Mimi Caragay	1/18
Manny & Em Ho	1/18
Eugene & Malou Yosuiico	1/20
Toto & Sette Lemon	1/20
Roy & Arlene Roldan	1/21
Jun & Gay Anito	1/22

## **Marshalls**

**Jan 17** - Manny Rodriguez\*  
 Dan Catarata  
 Tottie Felibrico

**Jan 24** - Jeff Sarmiento\*  
 Erwin Bustamante  
 Eric Tan

\* Door Marshall

## The Lord's Provision **January 10, 2020**

**Tithes: \$640.00**  
**Love Offering:**  
**\$153.00**  
*Thank you for your generosity!!*

## Be Holy - Cont'd from Page 1

plan of God – unite all things in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 1:10)

Jesus is considered the first one who received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus, it anointed him with power—the power of healing, the power to cast demons and the power of authority to teach.

When we get baptized, our original sins gets washed away. It is an immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy spirit. It symbolizes obedience to the Lamb of God and our death to the original sin. What does it all mean to be baptized by the Spirit? Do we just go about our lives knowing that we are now pure or is there more to that we as disciples need to do? After baptism, we become disciples of Jesus. When we become disciples, we need to be like Jesus, the Lamb of God. It means putting innocence in place of malice, love in place of force, humility in place of pride and service in place of prestige. We are all called to be holy.

## **Crippled?**

Do you know the healing power of forgiveness and compassion? Jesus' treatment of sinners upset the religious teachers of the day. When a cripple was brought to Jesus because of the faith of his friends, Jesus did the unthinkable. He first forgave the man his sins. The scribes regarded this as blasphemy because they understood that only God had authority to forgive sins and to unbind a man or woman from their burden of guilt.

Jesus claimed an authority which only God could rightfully give. Jesus not only proved that his authority came from God, he showed the great power of God's redeeming love and mercy by healing the cripple of his physical ailment. This man had been crippled not only physically, but spiritually as well. Jesus freed him from his burden of guilt and restored his body as well. The Lord is ever ready to bring us healing of body, mind, and spirit. Is there any area in your life that cripples you from walking in the freedom of Christ's transforming love and forgiveness?

Bishop Ambrose of Milan (339-397 AD), an early church father, explains how the healing of the paralytic points not only to Christ's power to heal the whole person, but also to raise the body to everlasting life as well:

*But the Lord, wanting to save sinners, shows himself to be God both by his knowledge of secrets and by the wonder of his actions. He adds, "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you' or to say, 'Rise and walk?'" In this passage he shows the full likeness of the resurrection. Alongside of healing the wounds of body and mind, he also forgives the sins of the spirit, removes the weakness of the flesh, and thus heals the whole person.*

Do you believe in the healing transforming power of Christ's forgiveness and merciful love? Ask him to set you free and transform your mind and heart to be like his heart.

"Lord Jesus, through your merciful love and forgiveness you bring healing and restoration to body, soul, and mind. May your healing power and love touch every area of my life - my innermost thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and memories. Pardon my offenses and transform me in the power of your Holy Spirit that I may walk confidently in your love, truth, and righteousness."

*Adapted from [dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org](http://dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org)*





## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

We reveal Jesus to the world when we joyfully respond to His call.

### PROMISE:

"...I shall see the bounty of the Lord in the land of the living." (Ps 27:13)

### WORD:

Is 8:29-9:3/ Ps 27:1, 4, 13-14/ 1 Cor 1:10-13, 17/ Mt 4:12-23

### ORDER:

- "...come after me." (Mt 4:19)
- "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt 4:17)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Proclaim the good news of salvation with urgency.
- Diligently and joyfully accept community work without reservation.
- Seek the transforming will of God through surrendering your life to Him.

## Discard The Old Self

**REFLECTION:** We reveal Jesus Christ to the world when we joyfully and completely respond to His call. We reveal His image, His love through our actions, speech and attitudes towards everyone we encounter. Why do we hesitate, what's holding us back from fully responding to His call? Do we consider ourselves unworthy of this calling? When we consider ourselves as unworthy, it's actually the devil whispering in our ear. Our Lord and Savior calls us all to follow Him, all sinners and ordinary folks. We are all ordinary people called to do His extraordinary work that brings the lost, imprisoned, hungry and destitute to His saving grace of salvation. We all have to remember, Jesus Christ did not pick the best and brightest to be His disciples, He chose fishermen, a tax collector, ordinary folks just like all of us. So take courage and be bold to work hard as a disciple of Christ to do the extraordinary work that



He has called us to do.

**"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt 4:17)**

Repent! How well do we understand this order? Is it to acknowledge our sins, our faults our misdeeds? When our Lord and Savior calls us to repentance, how have we responded to that call? Peter, Andrew, James and John knew exactly how to respond—they dropped everything, left their father and followed Jesus. Pretty tall order and very difficult to follow, dropping everything and leaving our loved ones. But that is not what our Lord is asking for. Repentance is a call to change our lives, our priorities, our will to conform to His will. When we first heard His call and invitation to "come follow me", I sure hope we all said yes. But was that yes a true yes or conditional yes or worst, did you ignore it? We all need to examine our conscience, our souls

*Old Self - See Page 2*

## Tending the Flock

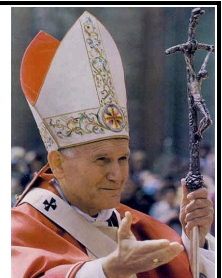
### A Disciple Is A Transformer

Proclaiming Christ means above all giving witness to him with one's life. It is the simplest form of preaching the Gospel and, at the same time, the most effective way available to you. It consists in showing the visible presence of Christ in one's own life by a daily commitment and by making every concrete decision in conformity with the Gospel. Today the world especially needs believable witnesses.

Therefore, testify to your faith through your involvement in the world. A disciple of Christ is never a passive and indifferent observer of what is taking place. On the contrary, he feels responsible for transforming social, political, economic and cultural reality.

You must have the courage to speak about Christ in your families and in places where you study, work or recreate, inspired with the same fervor the Apostles had when they said: "We cannot help speaking of what we have heard and seen" (Acts 4:20). Do not be afraid of presenting Christ to someone who does not yet know him. Christ is the true answer, the most complete answer to all the questions which concern the human person and his destiny. Without Christ the human person remains an unsolvable riddle.

Therefore, have the courage to present Christ! Certainly, you must do this in a way which respects each person's freedom of conscience, but you must do it. Helping a brother or sister to discover Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life is a true act of love for one's neighbor. So, do not be discouraged, because you are never alone. The Lord will not fail to accompany you, as he promised: "Know that I am with you always, until the end of the world" (Mt 28:20).



- St. Pope John Paul II, 7th World Youth Day, 1992

## Teaching Schedule

Feb 8 - Jesus in the Old Testament  
 Making of the Gospel - SPE 3

Feb 15 - Prayer  
 Praise & Worship - ME 21

Feb 29 - Shepherds Training I

## Save the Date

Feb 5-12 : Medical Mission to the Philippines  
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## Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?

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## Marshalls

Jan 24 - Jeff Sarmiento\*  
 Erwin Bustamante  
 Eric Tan

Jan 31 - Arnold Paderon\*

\* Door Marshall

## The Lord's Provision January 17, 2020

Tithes: 540.00  
 Love Offering: 208.31

*Thank you  
 for your generosity!!*

*"...God loves a cheerful giver."  
 - 2 Cor 9:7*



**Please Donate**  
 to the Taal volcano  
 eruption relief efforts

## Old Self- Cont'd from Page 1

if we have really changed our ways, or truly repented. Have we changed our lives, our attitudes, our priorities or even our speech? Or are we still the same as before, focused on our own will, our own plans and our own priorities.

*"Jesus said to him, 'If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.' When the young man heard this statement, he went away sad, for he had many posses-*

*sions," (Mt 19:21-22). Are we like this young man who is so attached to his possessions. Just to clarify, possessions can be anything we're attached to, not just money or any tangible object. It could be our hobbies, things we love doing instead of following the will of our Savior.*

It is hard to imagine proclaiming our love for our Lord and Savior, proclaiming to be disciples but still clinging on to our old selves. These two realities do not and can not coexist, you either love mammon or the Lord. When we cling to

our old habits, priorities and will, we leave no room for the Holy Spirit to remain in our hearts. Admittedly, dropping everything and changing our lives to His will is very hard and can sometimes draw you down. But we all should hold that image of our Savior carrying His cross to His crucifixion. His love and sacrifice for our redemption keeps me going to do the hard work, the extraordinary work that He calls us all to do—responding to His call so that we can reflect Jesus to the world, to be His joyful and willing disciples.

## **God's Blessings**

### **Birthday**

Rissa Gomez	1/24	Grace Padolina	1/25
Aileen Ciocon	1/25	Weng Alberto	1/28
Patrick Calugay	1/25	Gina Sarmiento	1/28
Bernadette Sunga	1/28		

### **Anniversary**

Gerald & Rosalinda Mirandilla	1/26
Dan & Jean Catarata	1/28
Al & Judy Guerrero	1/30

## Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers

Chalie Mojares, Dulce, Cecille, Nestor & Cecille  
 Vasquez, Nestor & Chat Conde

## **The Good News**

Jesus takes up John's message of repentance and calls his hearers to believe in the good news he has come to deliver. What is the good news which Jesus brings? It is the good news of **peace** - the Lord comes to reconcile and restore us to friendship with God. The good news of **hope** - the Lord comes to dwell with us and to give us a home with him in his heavenly kingdom. The good news of **truth** - the Lord Jesus sets us free from the lies and deception of Satan and opens our mind to understand the truth and revelation of God's word (John 8:32). The good news of **promise** - Jesus fulfills the promise of God to reward those who seek him with the treasure of heaven. The good news of **immortality** - Jesus overcomes sin and death for us in order to raise our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body which will never die again. And the good news of **salvation** - the Lord Jesus delivers us from every fear, every sin, and every obstacle that would keep us from entering his everlasting kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy.



The Gospel is the power and the wisdom of God - both power to change and transform our lives and wisdom to show us how to live as sons and daughters of our Father in heaven. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit the Lord makes it possible for us to receive his word with faith and to act upon it with trust and obedience.

*Adapted from [dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org](http://dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org)*





## This Sunday's Counsel

### THEME:

We are sanctified when we overcome our trials with prayer and fasting.

### PROMISE:

"...he is able to help those who are tested." (Heb 2:18b)

### WORD:

Mal 3:1-4/ Ps 24:7-10/ Heb 2:14-18/ Lk 2:22-40

### ORDER:

- *Worship night and day with fasting and prayer.* (Lk 2:37)

### DIRECTIONS:

- Persevere and be consistent with your prayers.
- Give up worldly pleasures.



## Fasting Amidst Trials

**REFLECTION:** How have we been dealing with trials? For those who are non-believers, trials may pose a challenge. Some people may face their trials by trying to drown themselves in worldly pleasures thinking that these pleasures are the answer.

But even those who follow the Lord or us who have been in the community are not exempt from this challenge. Those who devoted their lives in faith may find it even more difficult to overcome their trials once tested. Some would blame God for not taking care of them despite their faithfulness. Some would question God and simply run away from their faith.

The Gospel recounted the witness of Simeon and Anna who both devoted their lives awaiting the promised savior. On the day of the presentation of the Lord, both of them saw and recognized that Jesus is the one they had been waiting for. Their recognition of Jesus didn't just happen instantly. It was the result of their unceasing prayer and sacrifice. Specifically in the case of Anna, she spent day and night praying and fasting.

In the face of trials, we are called not only to pray but also to sacrifice by means of fasting if we truly want to rec-



ognize the will of God and if we desire to fully surrender everything to him.

Our Catholic faith has taught us to practice fasting usually during Lent, a spiritual fasting that involves prayer and abstinence from food and anything else that would turn us away from God.

So why fast when having trials? Why subject ourselves to more suffering by being hungry or by depriving ourselves of anything that is pleasurable? On the surface, it may appear that God is demanding a lot from us but if we look deeper, the Lord is asking us to fast because he loves us. God wants us to be closer to him so that we can work together in overcoming our trials.

*Fasting - See Page 2*

## Know Your Saints

### Saint John Bosco: Patron of Magicians

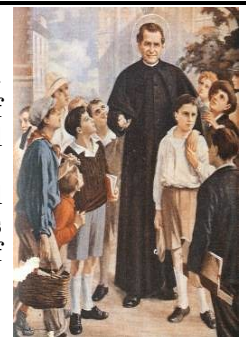
Growing up in a poor Italian farm family in the 1820s, John Bosco would perform magic shows to other children in order to earn extra money. But only if they promised to pray with him before and after the show. During his school days, he worked as a tailor, baker, shoemaker and carpenter.

John was ordained a priest and taught at an orphanage in Turin. He devoted his spare time to finding poor children in the city slums. He entertained them with stories and tricks and find them jobs. He wrote many articles and books explaining the teachings of Christ and showed his young listeners how to print them for themselves.

John Bosco knew it was important for adults to take responsibility for wayward children. "Let us regard those boys over whom we have some authority as our own sons," he once wrote, "Let us place ourselves in their service." He founded the Salesians of Don Bosco, an order of priests who educate boys. To aid abandoned girls, he founded the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians. For lay people, he founded the Union of Cooperator Christians.

This future saint believed greatly in the power of Holy Communion. He wrote, "Do you want the Lord to give you many graces? Visit Him often. Do you want Him to give you few graces? Visit Him seldom. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament are powerful and indispensable means of overcoming the devil. Make frequent visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and the devil will be powerless against you."

St. John Bosco pioneered the art of "Gospel Magic" - using magic and other feats to engage the youth. He died in 1881 and is today known as the patron saint of magicians, apprentices and juveniles.



## Teaching Schedule

Feb 8 - Jesus in the Old Testament  
 Making of the Gospel - SPE 3  
 Feb 29 - Shepherds Training I - ME 19

## Save the Date

Feb 5-12 : Medical Mission to the Philippines  
 Feb 21-23 : Life in the Spirit Seminar  
 Venue : St. Mary of the Assumption Church  
 Deal, NJ  
 Mar 13-15 : Youth LSS  
 Venue : TBD

## God's Blessings

### Birthday

Manny Ho	1/31	Linda Sypher	2/3
Rene Gallofin	2/1	Jivenchy Gerges	2/3
Brenda Palao	2/1	Vicma Cac	2/4
Mike Crocco	2/2	Gene Del Carmen	2/5

### Anniversary

Woody & Ruby Woodard	2/2
Mike and Beth Zarraga	2/3
Allan & Elma Pontipiedra	2/5

## Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?

For Blessed Mother's visit - Tess Corso 732-604-1914  
 For Prayer Service - Morris Teves 732-597-2016

## Rosary Leaders, Prayer Warriors & Proclaimers

Mennen Castillo, Ramon & Ludy Cuasay, Nestor &  
 Chat Conde, Al & Judy Guerrero

## Marshalls

Jan 31 - Arnold Paderon\*  
 Feb 7 - Joel Bermudo\*  
 Wendell Lumapas  
 Feb 14 - Morris Teves\*  
 Ceasar Morte  
 Roy Roldan

\* Door Marshall

## The Lord's Provision January 24, 2020

Tithes: 510.00  
 Love Offering: 196.00

*Thank you  
 for your generosity!!*

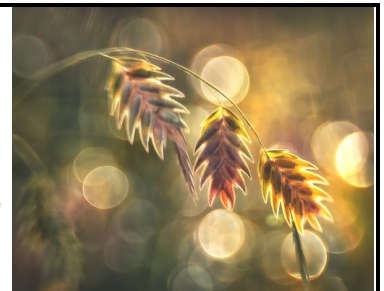
*"...God loves a cheerful giver."  
 - 2 Cor 9:7*



**Please Donate**  
 to the Taal volcano  
 eruption relief efforts

## Joy & Hope

Simeon blessed Mary and Joseph and he prophesied to Mary about the destiny of the child and the suffering she would undergo for his sake. There is a certain paradox for those blessed by the Lord. Mary was given the blessedness of being the mother of the Son of God. That blessedness also would become a sword which pierced her heart as her Son died upon the cross. She received both a crown of joy and a cross of sorrow. But her joy was not diminished by her sorrow because it was fueled by her faith, hope, and trust in God and his promises. Jesus promised his disciples that *"no one will take your joy from you"* (Jn 16:22). The Lord gives us a supernatural joy which enables us to bear any sorrow or pain and which neither life nor death can take away. Do you know the peace and joy of a life surrendered to God with faith and trust?



Simeon was not alone in recognizing the Lord's presence in the temple. Anna, too, was filled with the Holy Spirit. She was found daily in the temple, attending to the Lord in prayer and speaking prophetically to others about God's promise to send a redeemer. Supernatural hope grows with prayer and age! Anna was pre-eminently a woman of great hope and expectation that God would fulfill all his promises. She is a model of godliness to all believers as we advance in age.

Advancing age and the disappointments of life can easily make us cynical and hopeless if we do not have our hope rightly placed. Anna's hope in God and his promises grew with age. She never ceased to worship God in faith and to pray with hope. Her hope and faith in God's promises fueled her indomitable zeal and fervor in prayer and service of God's people.

*Adapted from [dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org](http://dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org)*

## Fasting - Cont'd from Page 1

When we fast, we attain the discipline to know the will of the Lord. The time spent on eating, drinking or feeding any obsession is instead used to have a dedicated time to focus in prayer so that we have undivided attention to really speak to God, listen to Him and understand His will.

We are also given the discipline to depend on the Lord when we fast. This sense of dependence keeps us away from the false promises of the world to solve our problems. We are being taught to take

only what is needed by our body. We are aware that food, clothing, shelter, job are blessings, but given any opportunity, we generally would get obsessed with them. We get attached to the pleasure that the worldly things provide and get stuck with them in the end.

We are being taught patience when we fast. When faced with trials, our human tendency is to get frustrated when our problems are not resolved right away. We have to understand that God's timing is not the same as our timing.

While we live, we cannot avoid

these trials but we do have choices on how we face them. We can continue to question why they happen. Or we face them with certainty that God is there in the midst of our trials only if we allow Him to. Just like Simeon and Anna, we have to keep on praying and believing and remain hopeful.

In time, we will understand that God uses these trials to cleanse, refine and purify us. God allows these trials to transform us into the person He wants us to be. After all, His desire is for us to follow his ways and be saved.