

FEBRUARY 23, 2020

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

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ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Message from Fr. Niall

Dear Friends,

I suppose the first thing you are really interested in is to know what the times of Mass on Ash Wednesday are. We will have our usual 12:15 PM Mass, along with an extra one that evening at 6:00 PM to accommodate those of you who are on your way home from work.

Ashes will be distributed only after the Scripture Readings (Liturgy of the Word) at both Masses.

At the 12:15 PM Mass, I know some of you must get back to work quickly and cannot stay until Mass ends. If you have to leave after the distribution of ashes, such is life. The rest of us who are not constrained by work obligations will stay until the Mass ends. The evening Mass at 6:00 PM should not be a problem for anyone.

Various holy ones have asked me if I would consider a 6:00 AM Mass. I have no problem with that as I am up usually around 4:00 AM to greet the dawn. If that is something you would like me to put on the calendar for next year, please let me know. Though I am not inclined to celebrate Mass at that hour of the day for a few sleepy heads who are ticking the box with "another thing I have to do to torture myself during Lent!"

Please keep in mind that Ash Wednesday is not a Holy Day of Obligation; you are not obliged to celebrate Mass or get ashes on your forehead that day, but it is a very good way to begin Lent and take the season of Lent seriously.

Ash Wednesday is described as a "Day of Abstinence." Let me put this a little more positively - it is a "Day of Giving." If what you abstain from (i.e., from any form of self-indulgence: food, time, treasure, etc.) is not given or shared with someone

else, may I ask, "What is the point?" The three pillars of Lenten practice: prayer, fasting and almsgiving/active charity are meant to focus our attention less on ourselves and more on God and our neighbor.

So, what are you going to give/share with someone on Ash Wednesday and indeed for the rest of Lent? Respond to this positively, and you are on your way to celebrate Lent as it is envisioned - a six-week joyful season of Conversion and turning towards the Gospel.

A little aside here - did you note that the 40 days of Lent don't include The Day of the Lord (Sunday)? If you don't believe me, go ahead and count them out on your fingers. There is no fasting on the Day of the Lord; this is a day when we celebrate our new-found generosity and care for others, beginning with our own families.

A Grace Before Meals from the United States' Conference of Catholic Bishops

*"Blessed are You, Lord, God of all creation.
You make us hunger and thirst for holiness.
Blessed are You, Lord, God of all creation.
You call us to true fasting:
To set free the oppressed,
To share our bread with the hungry,
To shelter the homeless and to clothe the naked."*

God bless,



Reminder

No Bible Study on February 26th & 27th

Reflection for the Week

"But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..." Matthew 5:44

Love your enemies, easier said than done, no doubt. But, remember, the foundation of stewardship is prayer. When we are in close communication with God, it opens our heart and it turns our attention away from "me" and moves it towards God and others. It allows us to have a little more empathy for "our enemy". When we pray for others, even "our enemies", maybe it softens their hearts as well.

Club 55+ Bus Trips

Save the date for future trips: March 25, April 21, May 13, June 23. As always, the bus trips are open to everyone age 50 and over.

Faith Direct

Did you know that St. Catherine of Siena pays a small processing fee (2.5%) for all contributions made through Faith Direct using debit or credit cards? You can now opt-in to give a little bit extra each month to offset these processing costs. Log in to your Faith Direct account for more information on how to do this. There are no processing fees for ACH transactions (automatic bank withdrawals). Thank you as always for your continued generosity and support.

Work from the Heart

"Whatever you do, do from the heart, as for the Lord and not for others..." Colossians 3:23

A special thanks to our interim cleaning crew! We are taking nominations for Employee of the Month 😊

Parish Calendar

For full calendar, visit stcatherine-houston.org

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

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| SAT 22 | 5:00 PM Sunday Vigil Mass |
| SUN 23 | 8:30 AM Sunday Mass 9:30 - 10:30 AM CCE Class 11:15 AM Sunday Mass |
| MON 24 | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open No Daily Mass |
| TUE 25 | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Daily Mass |
| WED 26 | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Ash Wednesday Mass 6:00 PM Ash Wednesday Mass Archdiocesan Social Ministries |
| THU 27 | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Daily Mass |
| FRI 28 | 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM Office Open 12:15 PM Daily Mass |
| Next Week | First Sunday of Lent |
| SAT 29 | 5:00 PM Sunday Vigil Mass Black & Indian Missions |
| SUN 1 | 8:30 AM Sunday Mass 9:30 - 10:30 AM CCE Class 11:15 AM Sunday Mass Black & Indian Missions |

