

St Joseph's of Stratford Parish

National Catholic Church

Since 1907

Weekly Bulletin



3rd Sunday, Ordinary Time, yr B

January 21st, 2018

PARISH CONTACTS

PASTOR
Fr Michal Gitner

PARISH CHAIRPERSON
Nancy Sirois

FINANCE SECRETARY
Barbara Chernesky

Dear Parishioners,

The LII Super Bowl is just two weeks away and the football fans are getting ready for the spectacle. We would like to add another aspect to this sporting and show business extravaganza by inviting our parishioners and friends and guests to participate in the Souper Bowl of caring. For details see page 3 on the bulletin.

Last week, I took part in the annual Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr., prayer service at First Baptist Church here in Stratford. In the seven years, I had been part of it, this was one of the best attended and inspiring. Rev Ed Rawls from the Congregational Church in Stratford preached a sermon titled '*Confessions of a Recovering Racist*' based on his own life experience. Obviously, his reflection resonated with the congregants as we collected over \$1,000.00 to fund scholarships for 4 students (worth \$500.00 each), who have committed themselves to issues of justice and equality, and are choosing relevant courses at a college. With the tragic events involving the USA Gymnastics federation and the 100s of young female athletes or even children, the need for young, strong, fair and courageous future leaders sounds almost like an understatement. The Stratford Clergy Association hopes that those 4 scholarships will contribute to that.

Fr Michal

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday: 5:00 pm - Sunday Vigil

Sunday: 9:30 am

Wednesday: 9:00 am Mass for health

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FAITH MATTERS

GOSPEL CHALLENGE

Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Mark 1: 17)

God calls each of us. Do we embrace the call, constantly and consistently, with passion and purpose? Or do we wax and wane, flip-flopping like one of the fish caught in the daily haul of Andrew and Peter?

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPEL

Last week we considered what Christian discipleship has in common with the following of inspiring human leaders. The vivid picture painted by Mark in today's gospel reading highlights characteristics of Christian discipleship that have no parallel in the world of human discipleship.

In our common human experience, the decision to become a disciple is first and foremost a decision made by the follower. The decision to become a disciple of the Savior has its origin in the decision and call of the Lord himself. Mark's brief narrative probably has its basis in a more complex sequence of events - in which the four fishermen have already heard the 'Good News' preached by Jesus, that 'the kingdom of God is close at hand': alluded to in the previous verses. But Mark wishes to emphasize the authoritative call of Jesus as the basis of the relationship they enter into, and the unconditional nature of their response. 'You did not chose me, no. I chose you' – these words of Jesus at the supper, in John's gospel, are addressed to each of us. Our relationship with the Lord is grounded in his decision on our behalf and his eternal fidelity.

Responding to the call of Jesus – like all the great decisions of a full and generous life – is not without its cost. We are reminded of this by Mark's stark narrative - as the four leave behind old securities and their kinsfolk to throw in their lot with Jesus.

The choice of Jesus is not related to any previous formation or qualifications. Mark describes the call as coming to them unexpectedly, in the midst of their daily work. As successful fishermen, with hired labor, they were probably literate and relatively well informed in the faith of old Israel. But this is of no consequence in Mark's narrative. We who are called together to form the community of the Lord's disciples come from different backgrounds and outlooks, young and old, rich and poor; united in our discipleship of the one Lord we must show the world all that a generous following of Christ has to offer the human family – nothing less than a foretaste of the final Kingdom.

'I will make you fishers of men' – the call to discipleship is an invitation to share in the mission of Jesus, to share his responsibility for the whole human family. If the Church in which we believe is the community of those who have responded to this call, Mark's account presents Jesus as beginning to create the Church at the very outset of his ministry.

The contrast between the relationship entered into by Jewish rabbi of the time of Jesus, and the relationship the Savior entered into with his disciples has often been remarked upon. 'Follow me' – these words give expression to a decision made from all eternity, a decision that will never be revoked, as he leads us to share in his own eternal destiny.

PARISH CALENDAR

Jan 21st

Parish Board meeting

Feb 3th/4th

Souper Bowl of Caring

Feb 14th

The Lord's Kitchen

BY THE WEEK

Sundays: Mercy Tabernacle Church
12:30 - 2:30 pm

Tuesdays: Mercy Tabernacle Church
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Wednesdays: AA meeting 12:00 pm
Irish dance classes 6:00 pm

Thursdays: AA men's meeting 7:30 pm

*For news input in the weekly bulletin, please contact
Father Michal by Wed: mgitner@gmail.com*

Readers roster

Jan 21st

Jan 28th

9:30am Charlie Vasas Nancy Sirois

Next Sunday's readings: Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46,
1 Cor 10:31-11:1 Mark 1:40-45

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

**"Global warming isn't real
because I was cold today!**

**Also great news:
World hunger is over
because I just ate."**

Stephen Colbert

NEWS AND EVENTS

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

"Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat."

On February 3 and 4, the weekend of Super Bowl LII, St. Joseph's will participate in the "Souper Bowl of Caring". Parishioners are asked to remember our hungry neighbors by donating cans of soup and other non-perishable food to the food pantry. Your monetary donation in the "soup pot" will be used to purchase gift cards to help those in need buy meat, dairy items, baby food, etc.

It is estimated Americans will eat more than 33 million pounds of treats and more than \$50 million worth of food on Super Bowl Sunday, while 41 million others will struggle with hunger, including 13 million children.

District 3 PNU Easter Raffle

The PNU has been supporting our Polish National Catholic Church since its organization in 1908 and with your support will continue to do so. The first prize is \$50.00 cash and the second and third prizes are \$25.00 cash. Tickets are \$1.00 each, 6 for \$5.00 and 13 for \$10.00. Please download the tickets and make as many copies as necessary. Your generous support of this District's fund raiser is greatly appreciated. Checks in payment for the Easter Raffle tickets should be made payable to "District 3 PNU". Checks and ticket stubs should be returned to District 3 PNU c/o Blessed Trinity Parish, 37 Winthrop Street, Fall River, MA 02721.

ST. MARK SCHOOL IN STRATFORD is hosting an Open House on Sunday, January 28th from 10:00am to 1:00pm for grades Prek3 through 8th. They are located at 500 Wigwam Lane. All families are invited to tour St. Mark school, meet with faculty and students, and enjoy some refreshments while learning more about the St. Mark difference. For more information please call 203-375-4291 or visit their website at www.stmarkschool.org.

PARISH DUES

It is not a subject that one takes pleasure in reminding others about. However, this is how PNCC works, how we can help the Church to keep on proclaiming the Gospel's message. Contact Fr Michal with the payment, which is \$108.00 for a single person and \$216.00 per family.

Sunday Readings

First Reading

Jonah 3:1-5,10

The word of the LORD came to Jonah, saying:
“Set out for the great city of Nineveh,
and announce to it the message that I will tell you.”
So Jonah made ready and went to Nineveh,
according to the LORD’S bidding.
Now Nineveh was an enormously large city;
it took three days to go through it.
Jonah began his journey through the city,
and had gone but a single day’s walk announcing,
“Forty days more and Nineveh shall be destroyed, “
when the people of Nineveh believed God;
they proclaimed a fast
and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth.
When God saw by their actions how they turned from
their evil way,
he repented of the evil that he had threatened to do
to them; he did not carry it out.

**The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

Response to the Psalm

Teach me your ways, O Lord.

Second Reading

1 Cor 7:29-31

I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running
out.
From now on, let those having wives act as not
having them, those weeping as not weeping,
those rejoicing as not rejoicing,
those buying as not owning,
those using the world as not using it fully.
For the world in its present form is passing away.

**The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

The kingdom of God is at hand.
Repent and believe in the Gospel.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

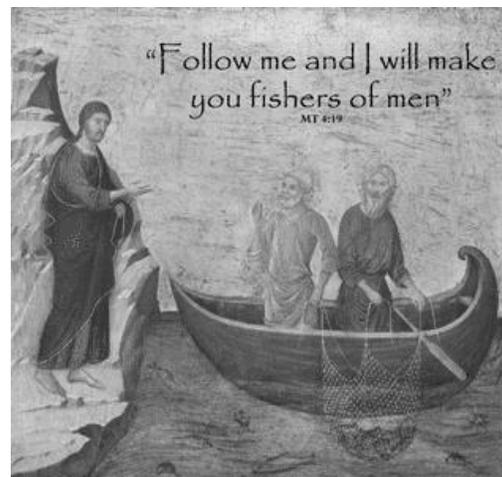
Gospel

Mark 1:14-20

After John had been arrested,
Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of
God: “This is the time of fulfillment.
The kingdom of God is at hand.
Repent, and believe in the gospel.”
As he passed by the Sea of Galilee,
he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their
nets into the sea; they were fishermen.
Jesus said to them,
“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
Then they abandoned their nets and followed him.
He walked along a little farther
and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother
John.
They too were in a boat mending their nets.
Then he called them.
So they left their father Zebedee in the boat
along with the hired men and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



December 31st - March 25th issues of the bulletin are sponsored by John & Jean Macionus

If anyone wishes to contribute to the printing cost of the bulletin, please contact Fr Michal.

