



MARCH 7, 2021

*Jesus found in the temple area those  
who sold oxen, sheep, and doves,  
as well as the money changers seated there.  
He made a whip of cords and drove them all out.*

*John 2:14-15*

## THE LAW

Today's reading from Exodus tells of God giving the Ten Commandments to Moses; this passage is well known to Christians, but it is only the introduction to the entire Mosaic Law, or Torah. The Psalm is a small section of the longest in the Psalter—172 verses—which are generally couplets (two lines) praising the Law as perfect, true, just, right, and so on. The Law is both the source of Jewish identity and the centerpiece of the Jewish intellectual tradition. Paul briefly compares this tradition with those of the Greeks, the two groups in the church at Corinth that were often quarreling. The passage from John's Gospel shows Jesus' righteous anger as he chases the moneychangers from the temple. His actions are a sign of Jesus' own reverence for "my Father's house," which in turn reflects his deep appreciation for the Law.

### "THE LAW OF THE LORD IS PERFECT . . ."

For pious Jews in first-century Palestine, the Mosaic Law prescribed the way every action in life is dedicated to God. Today's reading from Exodus tells how the Ten Commandments, the introduction to this larger legal code, is given to Israel as a gift from God.

In the Gospels Jesus is portrayed as a rabbi, or someone learned in the Law. A rabbi's learning ideally included both the precepts of the Law and its reverent contemplation as a divine gift, within which one could hear God's own voice. This was the way rabbis through the centuries used the Law to adapt to changing circumstances. This seems to be what Jesus was doing with the moneychangers in the temple.

### JESUS, THE LAW, THE JEWS—AND US

When Jesus accused the moneychangers of sacrilege and cleared them out of the temple, the onlookers asked for a sign of his authority to do such a thing. After all, wasn't it a sacrilege to purchase animals for sacrifice with pagan coins? Wasn't this how the Jews adapted to Roman rule? Jesus says nothing about that; he only knows that this commercial activity inside the temple was a sacrilege. Elsewhere in the Gospels Jesus is criticized for not being strict enough with the Law, as when he ate with prostitutes and tax collectors, but here he is prescribing something stricter, something "more."

Jesus is doing something extraordinary, contrary to ordinary practice, prompting the onlookers to request a sign, evidence that God is acting here through Jesus. His insistence that the moneychangers depart, his clear vision regarding "my Father's house," and his cryptic reference to himself as a temple, are signs of his contemplative intimacy with his Father that is the source of his authority about the Law.

Catholics, like first-century Jews, have our regular means for living in God's presence. We have the liturgy, sacraments, devotions, and personal prayer. During Lent, we are asked to be a little stricter with ourselves, listening for God's own voice. If we do, we might discover that we, too, are being called to something "more."

#### ***SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES***

Sunday: Third Sunday of Lent; First Scrutiny  
Monday: St. John of God  
Tuesday: St. Frances of Rome  
Wednesday: Lenten Weekday  
Thursday: Lenten Weekday  
Friday: Abstinence

LENT

THIRD  
SUNDAY OF

# Immaculate Conception Parish

## Immaculate Conception Church & St. Joseph Church

*Pastor: Rev. James J. Ward • Deacon: Mr. Jack Mroz*

Immaculate Conception Rectory: 570-325-2791 • iccjt@ptd.net • www.iccimthorpe.org

St. Joseph Rectory: 570-325-3731 • stjosi@ptd.net • www.saintjosephchurch-jimthorpe.org

*St. Joseph Church side entrance is open daily for private prayer*

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:** Tuesdays after 8 a.m. Mass, & Wednesdays, 6:30pm @ ICC;

Thursdays after 8 a.m. Mass @ St. Joseph Church

Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator: Wendy S. Krisak, MA, NCC, LPC Direct Phone: 800-791-9209; Diocesan Secretary for Youth Protection: Pamela J. Russo, MSW, MS Phone: 610-871-5200, Ext. 2204; Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service: If you have an allegation of abuse against a bishop, please contact the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service ReportBishopAbuse.org or by calling 800-276-1562.

## Third Sunday of Lent

### **Sat. March 6**

4:30 pm (ICC)

**Connor McHugh** (Grandparents)

### **Sun. March 7**

9:00 am (SJC)

**Clarence Ulshafer**, 32<sup>nd</sup> Anniv. (Wife & Children)

### **Mon. March 8**

(private)

**All Parishioners, Living & Deceased**

### **Tues. March 9**

8:00 am (ICC)

**Daniel Plesniarski** (Family)

9:00 am (SJC)

*Adoration & Benediction*

### **Wed. March 10**

(private)

**Margaret Bennett & Anne Forment** (Uhnak Family)

### **Thurs. March 11**

8:00 am (SJC)

**James J. Shober, Jr.** (Jim, Ann, Jennifer & Erin)

### **Fri. March 12**

(private)

**Rasami Nester** (Michael & Jackie Petrucci)

6:00 pm (SJC)

*Stations of the Cross*



## *Fourth Sunday of Lent*

### **Sat. March 13**

9:00 am (SJC)

*Rosary for Life*

4:30 pm (ICC)

**Past & Present Members of the A.O.H. & L.A.O.H** (Dan & Marcia Evans)

### **Sun. March 14**

9:00 am (SJC)

**Dolores Gillespie** (Susan Schatz)

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM ~ LORD, YOU HAVE THE WORDS OF EVERLASTING LIFE.**

**PARISH STEWARDSHIP:** 2/14/21: \$ 4,731.75.

*Thank you for your continued support & generosity.*

**ADORATION AT ST. JOSEPH CHURCH:** This Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament beginning at 9am (or immediately after a funeral Mass if needed). Adoration will conclude with Rosary and Benediction at 5:30pm. Time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is a tremendous blessing!

**EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES:** Due to our bulletin company printing deadlines, any information for the Palm Sunday March 28<sup>th</sup> bulletin is due to the Rectory no later than Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> and anything for the Easter Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup> issue is due by Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

**FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH, MARCH 19:** An evening Mass will be held at St. Joseph Church on Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm to celebrate the Feast Day.

**PARISH BAPTISM CLASSES RESUME:** Parents who wish to have their child baptized need to register to attend a Baptism Preparation Class unless they have attended a class previously. Classes will be offered once a month by Deacon John Mroz and his wife Rita in the Brogan Room at St. Joseph Rectory. Classes will be held on Wednesdays from 6:30-8pm. Scheduled dates for 2021 are: 4/21, 5/19, 6/23, 7/21, 8/18, 9/22, 10/20, 11/17, 12/15. Please call either Rectory office to register for the class. Parents are encouraged to attend class before the baby is born.



**EASTER FLOWER MEMORIAL DONATION ENVELOPES** are included in your packet of mailed envelopes. Please mark the back of the envelope to be included in the booklet printed for Easter Sunday. You may donate in Memory of a Loved one, or In Honor of, or for a Special Intention. The suggested donation is \$10. You may also use any plain envelope including the above information. Please return the envelope to the Rectory **no later than Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>** to be included in the booklet.

**MOTHER PAULINE'S THRIFT SHOP:** Is now open on Mondays, Wednesdays & Saturdays from 9am-1pm. (Weather permitting). We will accept donations beginning in April. Customers will need to wear masks and we will continue to restrict customer numbers in the store.



**SAINT JOSEPH TABLE:** We would like to continue the custom of gathering food for the poor on the Feast of Saint Joseph (March 19) as a way of honoring our patron. Saint Joseph Food Pantry is in need of food in particular canned meats such as tuna, chicken, Dinty Moore Heat and Serve stews, Hormel pot pies and chunky soups. Please bring these items and put them in the baskets by the Blessed Mother Altar at St. Joseph Church now through March 19.

### SUSTAINABILITY IN EL SALVADOR

Drought has become a big problem across El Salvador, making it difficult for farmers to produce enough crops to support their families. But new farming techniques—and a new generation of young farmers—are making a difference. What would you do if your livelihood was threatened? How can you support young people in your community and around the world? Visit [csrcricebowl.org](http://csrcricebowl.org) to learn more.



**THE FOLLOWING DONATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE MEMORIAL FUND:** In Memory of **Kathleen Reihman** from Joe, Sally & Kenny Bott; In Memory of **Thomas Sheehan** from Constance Hoffman; In Memory of **Elizabeth Bach** from Glen & Jennifer Karnish.

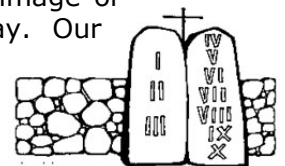
**SJC MEN'S GROUP:** Our collection for the children in Tanzania amounted to \$381.15. Thank you to all who support this mission each month. Our next collection will be March 21.

**SAINT JOSEPH ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY** Located on the corner of 6<sup>th</sup> & North St. will be open Wednesdays, March 10 & 24 and Saturdays, March 20 from 9am-11am.

**TAIZE PRAYER SERVICE:** Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Plane Street, Weatherly will have a Taize Prayer Service. It is a very calming and intimate time with our Lord. It is very informal and the songs of Taize are very simple short biblical phrases with simple melodies. Everyone is welcome.

**AS WE ARE NOW WELL INTO LENT,** we can take a look at what it means to turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel. A good place to start would be the Ten Commandments. The reading from Exodus presents us with one of the first listings of the Commandments. In this passage, God explains some of the laws to show how serious they are. For the first one, God includes making images to be used for worship.

In the days of Moses, people of other cultures made images of their gods and declared that the image was the god, and so should be worshipped. The LORD wanted his people to remember that God cannot be limited to an image or idea. That is still true today. Our images and statues are meant to help us pray to God, not to that work of art. On the other hand, some people give a superstitious meaning to religious articles. Burying a statue to help sell your house could be one example. If you want to ask for a favor from God, just ask Him. God is much more likely to listen to a sincere prayer than a superstitious action.



God also emphasizes some commands by duplicating them. He tells us not to steal from others, and also not to plan to steal from our neighbor. The same with adultery: Planning it is just as bad as doing it.

Jesus simplified all these commands when he reminds us to love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. Let's remember that as we turn away from sin to serving God better during Lent. Tom Schmidt, © J. S. Paluch Co.