

I will place my law within them
and write it upon their hearts;
I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.

JEREMIAH 31:33

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THROUGH SUFFERING

The prophet Jeremiah, in today's first reading, is looking beyond the often-messy history of Israel and Judah to a time when the people will no longer be disobedient to God, because God's law will be "written on their hearts"—that is, their natural inclinations and desires will be oriented toward God's will. The psalmist gives voice to the sorrow that Israel and Judah experienced in their separation from God "Have mercy on me, O God . . . A clean heart create for me." According to Saint Paul, the earthly Jesus, "son though he was," like his ethnic ancestors, he "learned obedience from what he suffered." The Gospel reading is part of Jesus' discourses not long before the Last Supper. Instead of a social encounter with Philip's friends who had come to see him, Jesus is grappling with his approaching death and its ultimate meaning for the world.

JEREMIAH: LOOKING BEYOND EXILE AND SUFFERING

The readings today remind us how close we are to Easter—only two weeks from now. They also remind us that the path to resurrection and Easter always includes suffering and death. The prophet Jeremiah spent his whole life proclaiming the word of God to kings who would not listen. As an old man, he saw Jerusalem defeated and the inhabitants taken into exile. Jeremiah himself suffered in being left behind, but in today's reading, he is looking beyond those sufferings to a time when the previously disobedient people would be transformed and live in harmony with God's law.

LOOKING FOR JESUS, FINDING THE CROSS

In the Gospel reading, friends of Philip come to him and ask about meeting Jesus. When Philip and Andrew take the request to Jesus, he begins a cryptic discourse on discipleship, transformation, and divine judgment. We never hear whether Philip's friends got to personally meet Jesus. Perhaps they simply blended in with the crowd.

Jesus says, "[W]hen I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." The narrator says that Jesus' words indicate how he will die; the readers already know Jesus will be crucified. Jesus also speaks of divine judgment driving out the world's rulers and of the need to be transformed, like a seed growing into a productive plant. He warns about loving our life and losing it. Unlike Jeremiah's detailed vision, Jesus only hints at what kind of transformed life his death will bring.

What if we, like Philip's friends, want to get close to Jesus? Does that mean that the discourse on death and judgment is addressed to us? If Jesus will draw everyone to himself as he is "lifted up," does being closer to him mean joining him on his cross? (Do we want to be that close to Jesus?) Do we want to be transformed? If we say "yes," the liturgy these next two weeks can show us the only way the Church knows to get closer to Jesus: to be willing to be "lifted up" with him in his suffering—and in our own.

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Fifth Sunday of Lent; 3rd Scrutiny

Monday: Lenten Weekday

Tuesday: St. Turibius of Mogrovejo

Wednesday: Lenten Weekday

Thursday: The Annunciation of the Lord

Friday: Abstinence

FIFTH LENT
SUNDAY OF
MARCH 21, 2021

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.iccjimthorpe.org
St. Joseph Rectory: 570-325-3731 • stjosjt@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; 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.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sat. March 20

4:30 pm (ICC) **Mary Agnes McElmoyle** (Ned)

Sun. March 21

9:00 am (SJC) **Emil & Leo Bechtold** (Charlie)

Mon. March 22

(private) **Mildred Boyle & Colin O'Shaugnessy** (Cathy & Ed Hawk)

Tues. March 23

8:00 am (ICC) **Albert & Joyce Helmer** (Susan Schatz & Family) /
Kathy Reihman (Joe & Sally & Kenny Bott)

Wed. March 24

(private) **Mark Kelley** (Ken & Rose McArdle) / **All Parishioners, Living & Deceased**

Thurs. March 25

8:00 am (SJC) **William Alvin** (Teresa Ferry & Family) / **Mary C. Elliot** (Jack & Rita Mroz)

Fri. March 26

(private) **Bernie Gillespie** (Thomas & Kathleen Straubinger)
6:00 pm (SJC) *Stations of the Cross*

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Sat. March 27

9:00 am (SJC) *Rosary for Life*

4:30 pm (ICC) **Francis Dougher** (Sue & Anne)

Sun. March 28

9:00 am (SJC) **Tracy McElmoyle** (Mom & Dad)



RESPONSORIAL PSALM ~ CREATE A CLEAN HEART IN ME, O GOD.

ST. JOSEPH CHURCH CANDLES

SAINT JOSEPH: In Memory of *Charlie & Evelyn Schweibinz* (requested by John & Patty Martino & Family)

SAINT FRANCIS: In Memory of *Francis "Fritz" Martino* (requested by John & Patty Martino & Family)

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH CANDLES

BLESSED MOTHER CANDLE burns in Thanksgiving & for Continued Health & Welfare for *Nicholas Teichert* (Love, Grandma & Aunt Lori)

PARISH STEWARDSHIP: 2/28/21: \$ 4,894.00
Thank you for your continued support & generosity.

REST IN PEACE: Kindly pray for the soul of **John Francis Kattner**. Please remember him and his loved ones in your prayers. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

EARLY BULLETIN DEADLINES: Due to our bulletin company printing deadlines, any information for the Easter Sunday, April 4th issue is due by Thurs., March 25th.

CANDLE REQUESTS: Anyone wishing to have candles lit in St. Joseph Church for Easter Sunday week, please note the cut-off time to submit your request will be Wed., March 24th. Please call St. Joseph rectory, 570-325-3731. Thank you.



A FEW STRONG HELPERS are needed after the ICC 4:30pm Mass today, Sat. 3/20 to help bring Holy Week/Easter decorations down from storage. If you can stay after Mass the Decorating team would really appreciate it!

MEN'S MISSION: You are making a difference with your donations!! You are invited to be part of our mission to help the children of Tanzania with food, uniforms, & the expansion to existing buildings. The collection cans will be at the doorways to St. Joseph Church this Sunday.

LOOKING FOR A FEW VOLUNTEERS:

We will be starting up our Garage Sales at SJC next month and are looking for a few extra hands to help sort and display items before we open the doors for the sale. If anyone is interested, please call the rectory office at 570-325-3731 for more details.



MEMORIAL FUND: We would like to acknowledge donations made: In Memory of **Kathleen Reihman** from M/M Mike Sofranko, Fran & Nancy Schlenner, Jim & Sherry McHugh & Family; In Memory of **Elizabeth Bach** from Vic & Paula Ferrante.

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 22nd** to be included in the booklet.



SAINT JOSEPH ECUMENICAL FOOD PANTRY: Located on the corner of 6th & North St will be open Wed, March 24 & Sat, April 3 from 9am-11am.



HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Tuesday, 3/30: Mass @ ICC, 8:00 a.m.
Private Confessions following Mass

Wed. 3/31: Confessions @ ICC, 6:30 p.m.

Holy Thursday, 4/1:

Mass of the Lord's Supper, @ SJC 7:00 p.m.;
Adoration following Mass until 10:00 p.m.

Good Friday, 4/2: Churches Open for Private Prayer;
Liturgy of the Lord's Passion @ ICC, 3:00 p.m.;
Stations of the Cross @ SJC, 6:00 p.m.

Holy Sat. 4/3: Blessing of Baskets @ SJC 10:30 a.m.

Easter Vigil @ ICC, 8:00 p.m.
(reservations needed)

Easter Sun, 4/4: Mass @ SJC, 9:00 a.m.
(reservations needed)



EASTER MASS RESERVATIONS

Due to our capacity limits we are requiring reservations for the Easter Vigil (ICC), and Easter Sunday (SJC) Masses so that people do not have to be turned away at the door. Please call the respective Rectory to reserve a seat, ICC: 570-325-2791, SJC: 570-325-3731.

COMMUNITY IN MADAGASCAR Poor nutrition can lead to devastating long-term consequences for individuals, communities and entire countries. That's why communities must work together to ensure that all children have access to better food and nutrition. New planting and cooking techniques are helping many communities in Madagascar improve the health and wellbeing of their children. How does your community work together for the good of others? Visit csrricebowl.org to learn more.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CEMETERY AND ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY SPRING CLEAN-UP:

With warmer temperatures on the horizon and the Easter holiday fast approaching, please take the time to clean away any flowers, decorations, Christmas wreaths, etc. from your family plots no later than March 23rd. After that date, our maintenance staff will remove what is left and discard it. Please be aware that during the regular maintenance of the cemetery (grass cutting/trimming) we will remove any flowers, fresh or artificial, that are unsightly, dead or damaged. Any items placed on the lots that are broken or not appropriate will be removed. Remember, there is no garbage pickup at the cemetery. Please take all debris with you. Thank you.

