

Fr. Dave's Den: "In those days, in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, 'Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die here of thirst with our children and livestock?'" These words from today's first reading from the Book of Exodus illustrate the very human tendency of complaining. When things do not go our way, what do we do? While there are many possible responses, more often than not in our humanness we complain. And sometimes like the Israelites we wonder, "Is the Lord in our midst or not?"

For whatever reason, during the months of January and February our tendency to complain intensifies. And yet, where does our complaining get us? The good news is that not only is February almost over, but also, God is always with us, particularly in the person of Jesus. And Jesus loves us so much that he takes on the cross for us, facing suffering and death. What is more, Jesus does not complain, he simply says, "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." The next time we feel a desire to complain, perhaps we should look at the cross and think of Jesus.

Tomorrow, February 28, 2005, at 7:00 PM our second graders from school and our CCD program will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Congratulations to those little ones who are so excited. Their names appear in another part of this bulletin. And thanks to their parents, guardians, and teachers, Miss Diane Begley and Sister Mary Ann.

Speaking of Sacraments, our eighth graders from school and our CCD program will participate in a Day of Recollection this Friday, March 4, at St. Susanna's Church. Confirmation will take place Thursday, April 21, 2005, at 7:00 PM in St. Susanna Church with Bishop Donald W. Wuerl. Please pray for our confirmation candidates. And thanks to their parents, guardians, and teachers, Mrs. Linda Pricer, Mrs. Jill Smith, and Mr. Joe Vento. Because I will be at the retreat, the Stations of the Cross on Friday, March 4, at 2:00 PM will be led by Mr. Larry Lucas. The evening Stations will be held at St. Joseph's in Verona at 7:00 PM.

While we are speaking about Sacraments, I am happy to announce the promulgation of a new Marriage Policy for our parish which was approved by our Pastoral Council. All couples engaged to be married this year at St. Bart's will receive this policy at a special meeting in Church on Sunday, March 13, 2005, at 6:30 PM. The meeting will include a presentation by our wedding

coordinators (Tilda and Melissa Merola, Cheryl Richards, Joan Filipich, and Ramonda Stitzel), information on music selection by our music director, Will Smith, and some comments by me. This is a mandatory meeting. Thanks to everyone who assists with the Sacrament of Marriage at our parish.

Please remember in your prayers all of those who will be attending the Day of Recollection at Mt. Nazareth Center on Saturday, March 5, 2005. Since I will be celebrating Mass for this group at 4:00 PM, Fr. Edward Yuhas will celebrate the 5:00 PM Mass at St. Bart's.

The annual St. Patrick's Day party will be held on Saturday, March 12, in Helzlsouer Hall from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. This year we are asking for a \$3.00 donation from each attendee to cover an array of costs. This fee is not to make money, but simply to break even. If you are interested in attending, please call Sister Dorothy at 412-242-7357.

Have you made your Lenten confession? In addition to regularly scheduled confessions every Saturday from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the communal celebration of Reconciliation will take place on Tuesday, March 15, 2005, at 7:00 PM in St. Bart's Church.

By now everyone should have returned their pledge card for the 2005-06 Parish Share Campaign. Thanks for your generosity.

Also, if anyone is interested in becoming a lector, please call me at 412-242-3374.

Have a grace-filled week!

St. Bartholomew's Semi-Annual Blood Drive
St. Bartholomew Parish will again sponsor a blood drive for the Central Blood Bank on Sunday, March 13, 2005. If you wish to donate blood, please contact Mrs. Marsha Irr at 412-731-0639.

World Day of Prayer

The Church Women United, of the U.S. National Committee for World Day of Prayer, is holding a social and worship for the World Day of Prayer on Friday, March 4, 2005, at Hebron United Presbyterian Church. The social will begin at 10:00 AM and will be followed by worship at 11:00 AM. Please call 412-371-2307 if you wish to attend and will require child care.

School News with Mrs. Fleet

Congratulations to our second graders who will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Monday evening at 7:00 P.M. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

Our monthly envelope is scheduled to be distributed on Monday, February 28.

All signed progress reports are due back by Tuesday, March 1. Please keep our eighth graders and their teachers in your prayers as they attend a Confirmation retreat at St. Susanna on Friday, March 4.

You are welcome to join us for the 10:00 mass on Friday, March 4. Mrs. Gravina, Mrs. Dolan, and our third graders will help to plan our liturgy.

Have you tried the delicious fish sandwiches available in the cafeteria every Friday during Lent? Our PTG is sponsoring this delicious event from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. on March 4, March 11, and March 18. Please take advantage of the quick and easy way to feed your special loved ones. Thank you for your support.

As always, we continue to save Campbell product labels, Box Tops for Education, and Shop n' Save receipts. Please deposit them in the church vestibule or drop them off at the school office. We appreciate all that you always do for us. God bless you.

BINGO

St. Bart's Bingo is held this and every Monday at 7:00 PM in Helzlsouer Hall.

St. Patrick's Day Luncheon Party

All senior citizens, Golden Agers, and elderly people of St. Bartholomew's are invited to a St. Patrick's Day Party on Saturday, March 12, 2005, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM in Helzlsouer Hall. Come and enjoy Irish step dancers, games, food, friends, and a sing-along. The luncheon party is sponsored by the seventh and eighth graders and CCD of St. Bartholomew School and the Parish Social Ministry. We are asking for a donation of \$3.00 per person. For reservations, call Sr. Dorothy by Monday, March 7, at 412-242-7357. Hope to see you there!

Golden Agers

There will be a meeting of the St. Bartholomew's Golden Agers on Friday, March 4, 2005, in Helzlsouer Hall. See you there!

Religious Education News with Arlene Golden

Jesus said, "Anyone who drinks from the water I give will never be thirsty again." We are called to share the life-giving water of Jesus with others.

Religious Education Classes: Children in grades K-8 meet Sunday mornings, 9:00 to 10:15 AM, in the school. Parents/guardians are reminded to call the catechetical office if their son or daughter will be absent.

Class Cancellations: In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies, parents/guardians are reminded to tune to KDKA, WPXI-TV, or WTAE-TV for cancellation information.

First Reconciliation: First Reconciliation is this Monday, February 28, at 7:00 PM in the Church. Families are requested to be there by 6:45 PM and return the workbooks if they haven't already done so.

First Communion: There will be a meeting on Monday, March 7, at 7:00 PM, in the Church, for parents/guardians of students who will be receiving their First Holy Communion. At this time the particulars of the Sacrament will be discussed. At least one adult per family is requested to attend.

Confirmation: Candidates will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on April 21, 2005, at St. Susanna Parish. A retreat is being planned for Friday, March 4, at St. Susanna's. Candidates will have an opportunity to offer service on March 12, at the St. Patrick's Day Party. The permission slips for both of these events are due in the catechetical office by this Monday, February 28.

Please call Arlene Golden in the Catechetical Office at 412-242-7207 if you have any questions or concerns.

A Respect Life Moment

(Stem Cell Research and Human Cloning, copyright 2004, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC) Why is the Church opposed to stem cell research using the embryo? Because harvesting these stem cells kills the living human embryo. The Church opposes the direct destruction of innocent human life for any purpose, including research.

Life Teen - Leading Teens Closer to Christ

If you have missed any of the other Life Nights, next week is a good chance to come back! We are having a guest speaker, so here's your chance to hear someone besides the "Core" talk. Join us for Mass and stay for the Life Night! To all you soon-to-be freshmen (that would be the current eighth grade), you are welcome to join us for Life Teen on Saturday, March 5. Hope to see you there!

Congratulations to First Penitents

Garrett Anderson, Patrick Anderson, Kurt Baurle, Alexander Brewton, Kailyn Chicilla, Taylor Delval, Luke Dymerski, Zane Gates, Gina Gionta, Lawrence Gyles, Baylee Haddad, Tyler Hajduk, Madison Hintemeyer, Kathalyn Howard, Janine Jelinek, Nicole Jones, Natalie Karpinski, Katelyn Kelley, Courtney Kozel, Katelyn Macioce, William Navari, Jasmyn Nguyen, Brendan Persichetti, Kaylie Rypcinski, Gretchen Shepard, Hannah Socash, Aliyah Tullis, and Stephanie Vigliotti.

Congratulations to Honor Students

Mt. Alvernia: High Honor - Stephanie Ranallo and Amy Yonick. Honor - Jessica Hon.
Central Catholic: High Honor - Anthony Angiulli, Aric Bush, Andrew DeRubeis, Daniel Donahoe, Joshua Martin, David Pina, Andrew Pirolo, Joseph Ranallo, Chad Restori, and Andrew Thornburg. Honor - Gene Cahill and Ryan Kovacs.

Thirsting for Unity

In today's Gospel, Jesus is thirsty and goes to the well for a drink of water. He meets a Samaritan woman, who expects him to treat her like dirt. But surprise! He talks to her like a fellow human being, treats her with respect and interest. And what happens? Why, pretty soon the whole town turns out to hear him.

Centuries earlier, the Israelites, wandering in the desert, were thirsty. They had no water. All they had was an attitude problem. They growled at Moses, "Why did you ever make us leave Egypt?" But surprise! God gave them water from the rock. No questions asked.

All the peoples of Earth are travelers on this planet together, all thirsting, all harboring our own fearful expectations of each other. But God, as a loving parent, treats us all with generous care and compassion. We are one family. We could surprise each other. We could remember we are one.

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Mass Intentions



MON., February 28 - Lenten Weekday

10:00 A.M. Maureen Chianese (Husband)

TUES., March 1 - Lenten Weekday

10:00 A.M. Rita Schaltenbrand (Daughters)

WED., March 2 - Lenten Weekday

7:00 P.M. Holy Hour

THURS., March 3 - St. Katherine Drexel

10:00 A.M. Frank R. Rauch (Family)

FRI., March 4 - St. Casimir (World Day of Prayer)

10:00 A.M. Albert Murray & Louis Anselm (Wife & Friend)

2:00 P.M. Stations of the Cross

7:00 P.M. Stations of the Cross (St. Joe's)

SAT., March 5 - Lenten Weekday

10:00 A.M. Leon Welgs (Family)

11:00 A.M. Confessions

5:00 P.M. Secrist & Yanis Deceased Family Members (Eleanor & Richard Amato)

SUN., March 6 - 4th Sunday of Lent

8:00 A.M. People of the Parish

10:30 A.M. Dorothy M. Smith (Son Dave & Family)

Please remember in your prayers the sick, shut-ins, and hospitalized members of the Parish.

Prayers are also requested for the faithful departed:

Gilda Coluccio and Rita Sheran

This weekend's second collection is for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development/Catholic Home Missions Appeal/National Collection for Black & Indian Missions

Stations of the Cross

A further reminder that this Lent, we will be sharing evening Stations with St. Joseph Parish every other week. It will be announced in the Mass Intentions portion of the bulletin where Stations will be held each week. You may contact St. Joseph Parish for directions at 412-795-5114.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

If anyone has not been receiving their monthly collection envelopes, you are asked to contact the rectory with your name, address, and telephone number so that we may pass the information on to our envelope distribution company. Thank you!