

FEBRUARY 28TH 2021

St. Thomas More Parish with St. Bernadette Mission



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PASTOR: FR. ANTONIO BAROL

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Those who are sick, especially:

Erica Perk/Bernie Durand/Shirley Kloefer/Dolores
Flood/Josef and Hermie Jandristis,

MASS SCHEDULE: MARCH 3RD - 7TH

WEDNESDAY : 5PM, THURSDAY 9AM (CHAPEL)

ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH

FRIDAY: 5PM—STATIONS OF THE CROSS
FOLLOWED BY MASS

SATURDAY 4:00PM

SUNDAY 9:00AM.

ST. BERNADETTE, NESTLETON

SUNDAY 11:00AM

(MAX ATTENDANCE IN THE CHURCH - 37)

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FR. ANTONIO BAROL'S MESSAGE - THE 2ND SUNDAY IN LENT

Sisters/brothers, parishioners of St. Thomas More and St. Bernadette,
Hello everyone and I hope and pray that you are well and in the best of health. Allow me to use the entrance antiphon of the mass from the Book of Psalms, "Remember your compassion, O Lord, and your merciful love for they are from of old. Let not our enemies exult over us. Redeem us, O God of Israel, from all our distress." In this time of our pandemic journey, there is no better way to call on the Lord by addressing His mercy and compassion, for this is what he had done in all generations when calamities fall on His children. Therefore let us not fall into despair but with faith and confidence in God, let us see the bright side of this pandemic and let us put our doubts in the God's hands.

On the first week of Lent, Jesus started his ministry with the call, "Repent and believe in the good news." Let us focus this Lent on our relationship with God, his call for us to be reconciled to Him, to others and also to ourselves so that we make ready to renew our baptismal covenant during the Easter vigil. During the 40 days of Lent, like Jesus we must go to the wilderness of life where we find peace and quiet to be able to commune with God. We are blessed that during the pandemic, we have all the time to be alone and spend more time in prayer and meditation nourishing our spirit. We are aware that the more we spend time with God the more temptations will come to us, especially the temptation to move away from our spiritual plan. Let us call on our guardian Angel to guard and protect us from all spiritual harm. Pray the St. Michael and the Angel of God prayers daily, upon rising in the morning and before going to bed and there is no other protector for us than our guardian Angels. The church is very rich in traditions especially prayers that were composed and prayed by so many saints in the past. Let us make use of these traditional prayers to guide us to make our own personal prayer. During Lent I highly recommend that we pray the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy daily, especially at 3:00 PM which is considered by St. Faustina as the hour of great mercy. You will find copies at the entrance to the church and maybe at the end of Lent we will know it by heart.

Cont'd

St. Thomas More Parish offers eGive. Enroll: <https://www.peterboroughdiocese.org/en/get-involved/donate.aspx>

This week the theme of listening is in the heart of our readings, starting from the Book of Genesis when God called Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac. We learn from the story that Abraham and Sarah were childless and God promised Abraham to become a father of a great nation whose offspring will be as numerous as the stars in heaven and as the sand in the shore. God blessed them a son, Isaac, and now God asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son as a burnt offering, which in the Old Testament was practiced. Abraham listened to God without questioning as to why he had to sacrifice his only son. Abraham believed in God that he obeyed God and we all know when Abraham was about to sacrifice Isaac, an Angel prevented him and then he saw a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. Then, he remembered what he had said to Isaac when the boy was asking, where is the animal for sacrifice, and he said, God will provide. It can happen to us also that in life in times of need, we ask where is God during our times of need. We just have to remember Abraham's response, "God will provide." Jesus in last Thursday's gospel of Matthew said, "Ask and it shall be given you, search and you will find, knock and the door will be opened for you." We just have to be a good listener to God's ways of handling things.

The gospel narrates the Transfiguration of Jesus that tradition and the Eastern Church puts it at Mt. Tabor which is no more than 1,000 ft. high. And in the time of Jesus there was a fortress on the top and it is south of Galilee which is far from Caesarea Philippi. It is more likely that it happened at Mt. Hermon which is 9,200 ft. high and much nearer Caesarea Philippi since the event took place few days after the confession of Peter. The event was majestically described by the three synoptic gospel writers and the presence of the two Old Testament figures, Moses and Elijah. It has a double significance. (1) It did something very precious for Jesus. It showed an approval of his going to Jerusalem for his passion. As if Moses representing the law and Elijah representing the prophets were saying to Jesus, "Go ahead, you have made the right decision and you going through your passion will make the prophecies come true." It is as if at that moment Jesus was assured that he was on the right way because all history had been leading up to the Cross. (2) It did something very precious also to the disciples. They could not comprehend Jesus words about suffering and dying because they were waiting for a liberator Messiah who will lead them to fight against the Roman domination. What they saw in the mountain would give them something to hold on, even when they could not understand. Cross or no Cross, they had heard God's voice acknowledge Jesus as the Son. The disciples saw the glory of God. We too once in a while have some doubts about God and our faith tested, but if we have had an intense experience of God in our life, we can go back to that experience and can hold on to it that God is really here with me. In this season of Lent try to revisit those holy moments and thank God for such special grace from Him.

That is why St. Paul, with his life experience of being a persecutor to being persecuted when he listened to God's call to be an apostle said, "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." Maybe we can add, will this pandemic separate us or make us doubt about God's love? I hope and pray that our answer is NO, because we believe that God is making a special plan for us after this pandemic. We know that bad things happen in order that better things will come out of it. God is asking us to be patient and to put our trust in Him. Let us therefore, go another mile this lent, in prayer, fasting and abstinence and works of mercy, especially let us give generously to the Development and Peace program of the church.

We will be turning another page in our calendar and in March the prayer intention of Pope Francis is the Sacrament of Reconciliation: "Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God."

Every year on the first Friday of March is the World day of Prayer. It is an invitation for Christians to pause and pray together ecumenically. This is sponsored by the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada and its national counterparts around the world. It is celebrated in approximately 165 countries. For more information, our St. Thomas More Women's and Men's Council has given us more about the event. Let us join them on Friday by watching the video.

Quote of the week: "We need to find God, and God cannot be found in noise and restlessness." (St. Teresa of Calcutta)

N.B. To give you an opportunity for a quiet time with the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, I will plan to open the church every Friday afternoon from 12:00 noon until end of the 5:30 mass.

May God bless and protect us at all times.

Stay safe and healthy. Fr. tony

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