

MARCH 27TH, 2022 – FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

St. Thomas More Parish with St. Bernadette Mission



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stthomasmillbrook.ca



PASTOR: FR. ANTONIO BAROL

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Those who are sick, especially:

Erica Perk, Vern Menzie Fr. Clare Hickson, Rita Lockhart,
Peter Conlin, Augustine Shepard, Cory Wanjon,
Maureen O'Grady

THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

ST. THOMAS MORE RECTORY CHAPEL

WEDNESDAY: 5:30 PM, THURSDAY: 10:00 AM,

ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH, MILLBROOK

FRIDAY: 5:00 PM, Followed by Stations of the Cross

SATURDAY: 4:00 PM

For the People of the Parish

SUNDAY: 9:00 AM (Rosary at 8:45AM)

For Peace in Ukraine

ST. BERNADETTE, NESTLETON

SUNDAY: 11:00 AM

For the sick, the homebound and the lukewarm in faith.

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FR. ANTONIO BAROL'S MESSAGE FOR SUNDAY – MARCH 27TH, 2022

Dear sisters/brothers, parishioners of St. Thomas More and St. Bernadette,

As our greeting let us listen to the Psalmist's cry: "I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them, and I will be their Lord forever." For the past two years we have been crying out to the Lord from fear of the Coronavirus and we have waited for an end of this pandemic. Our prayers and supplications have been heard and that we are confident that we are at the end of the dark tunnel, and we are now seeing the light; but we should continue our journey of being vigilant especially in protecting one another that even if the wearing of mask is lifted we have to continue to respect those who are still using them. Let us continue to pray that a complete healing of the world will happen soon and that we will be able to go back to our normal way of living especially as we enter the holiest week of the year.

As we continue our Lenten journey, let us try to have a little review of what we have done this Lent. The key words that were given to us since we started on Ash Wednesday were from prophet Joel, "Return" - lent is about returning to the Lord. Like the people of Israel, we too have wandered away from our destination in pursuit of, wealth, power, and glory. During the first Sunday in Lent, the word to focus on is "Believe" - have faith in God like Abraham and have faith that we can conquer temptations if we put our trust in God and many times, we put our trust in material things and we know that these will never satisfy and make us happy in eternity. On the second Sunday about the Transfiguration, God the Father is asking us to "Listen" to his only Son Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life. In our journey to eternal life whose voice are we listening to - the voice of the world or to the voice of the Lord? Last Sunday, Jesus addressed to all of us to "Repent," or else we will also perish and lose our heavenly inheritance. God in his love and mercy does not want any of his children to be lost, but he is giving us another chance like the fig tree to bear fruit. It is never too late to make a change if in case we have not done any of our Lenten tasks of Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

Cont'd/

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The word we have to focus on this weekend is "Forgiveness," as shown to us by the parable of the loving father. No matter how the youngest son had hurt him, he still night and day was looking at the horizon wishing that the son will come back soon; and when he was back the father did not even care to listen to the son's explanation because of the joy that he felt that his son is back alive. Sometimes, because of our focus to the younger son, we lost sight of the older brother who also had committed a sin of not forgiving and not even recognizing the younger brother. Both have sinned and both were forgiven by the loving father. Indeed, this is a picture of all of us that each time we sin, we hurt our heavenly Father and we left his loving presence in pursuit of our own happiness. We know that if we seek happiness with material things, we will never find complete happiness and usually we end up miserable and restless, as St. Augustine said, "my heart is restless oh God until it finds rest in you." The younger son asked for his share of the inheritance with the hope that he will be able to live by himself independently and be happy. We all know that life can never be happy apart from our loved ones. We are a social being and we need one another to be able to journey life with meaning and purpose. We need to connect our lives to those who love and care.

The younger son, who relied on his material wealth at first had a life but not for long. This was because material wealth is temporary and can run out easily, especially if we do not know how to handle our God given gifts when we use them for selfish reason to satisfy our human hunger. Many times, when we are in abundance, we do not think of the source of the blessings. It is only when we ran out that we think of the value and the source of the blessing. It is a lesson to learn from the younger son that we should always be grateful for all our blessings and to take care of our blessings that others may also benefit from them; and that it is not all about us but gratitude to the source and our blessings should become a blessing to others too. We should also learn the lesson of not running away from the source but be nourished so that the blessing will multiply a hundredfold and not run dry easily. As St. Francis in his prayer said, "It is in giving that we received." Another lesson to learn from the younger son is to repent and return to the source of the blessing believing that the giver is loving and merciful ready to forgive and forget the past. We can also learn from the older brother that we should be more accepting of others especially those who have wronged us and also not to expect praise from our sacrifices done for others. In this Lenten journey, as Jesus said in the gospel of St. Matthew on Ash Wednesday, "Beware of practicing your piety before the people in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven."

Forgiveness is in the heart of Lent and in the heart of every Christian, for that is the very reason why Jesus came to the world to forgive us of all the wrongs that we have done to our heavenly Father and he paid the price by dying for us on the cross. He taught us to pray the Our Father prayer and put the line, "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," giving us the importance of forgiveness before we can ask forgiveness from our heavenly Father and while hanging on the cross, the first of the seven words that he uttered is about forgiveness.

This Lent let us try to examine if we have some issues on forgiveness, if we are withholding some forgiveness to others or if we have some issue of asking forgiveness of some wrongs we have done. It is time to repent and return to our loving and merciful God who everyday is giving us a chance to change our hearts of stone into a heart of flesh. Quote of the week: "Confession heals, confession justifies, confession grants pardon of sin. In confession there is a chance for mercy. Believe it firmly. Hope and have confidence in confession." (St. Isidore)

Mass Intentions: Saturday March 26 @4 PM – for the people of the Parish; Sunday March 27 @ 9:00 AM - for Peace in Ukraine; and 11:00 AM at St. Bernadette, in Nestleton - For the sick, the homebound and the lukewarm in faith.

Holy Week is fast approaching (Monday April 11 to Sunday April 17). . Please refer to my email. Times are also posted on the parish website: <https://www.stthomasmillbrook.ca/>

Prayer for the sick: Erica Perk, Vern Menzie, Fr. Clare Hickson, Rita Lockhart, Augustine Sheppard, Cory Wanjon, Maureen O'Grady

Contact Fr. Tony for details about arranging baptisms, marriages, birthday or anniversary announcements or blessings, or mass devotions.

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