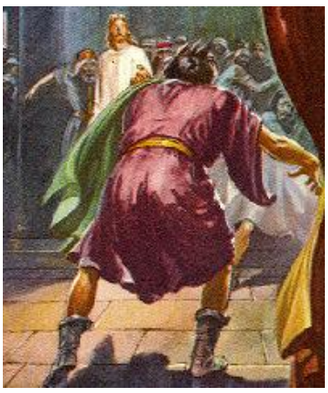


Sacred Heart Parish
Bulletin

Mass: 9:30 am – Sunday
Fr. John Yake, I. V. Dei
(902) 535-2053

January 28, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time

The **First Reading** is taken from the *Book of Deuteronomy 18:15-20.* This central section of this book describes the various offices and officers of the theocratic society which Yahweh, through his servant Moses, is setting up for the Chosen People.

The **Second Reading** is from the *First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 7:32-35.* He devotes chapter 7 to answering questions concerning marriage and virginity. In today's extract he emphasizes freedom to serve God fully, freedom from earthly cares which those who choose a life of celibacy have.

The **Gospel** is from *St. Mark 1:21-28.* St. Mark makes it clear that, from the very first day of Christ's public ministry, his messianic power began to be manifested to those who saw and heard him. The Jews of Capernaum were "astonished" at his teaching and "amazed" at his power over the evil spirits. "What is this," they asked one another, "a new teaching and the unclean spirits obey him!" But they were still a long way from recognizing him for what he was, the Messiah and Son of God. This is as might be expected, the astounding mystery of the incarnation was way beyond human expectation or human imagination. And it was our Lord's own plan to reveal this mystery, slowly and gradually, so that when the chain of evidence had been completed by his resurrection, his followers could look back and see each link in that chain. Then they would be ready to accept without hesitation the mystery of the incarnation and realize the infinite love and power of God that brought it about. We look back today through the eyes of the Evangelists, and, like them, know that Christ was God as well as man—two natures in one person. We should not therefore be "amazed" at the teaching of Jesus or at his power over the unclean spirits. What should amaze us really is the love that God showed mankind in becoming one of our race.

We are creatures with nothing of our own to boast of. We were created by God, and every talent or power we possess was given us by God. God's benevolence could have stopped there and we would have no right to complain. But when we recall the special gifts he gave man, which raise him above all other created things, we see that he could not, because of his own infinitely benevolent nature, leave us to an earthly fate. What thinking man could be content with a short span of life on earth? What real purpose in life could an intelligent being have who knew that nothing awaited him but eternal oblivion in the grave? What fulfillment would man's intellectual faculties find in a few years of what is for the majority of people perpetual struggle for earthly survival? No, God created us to elevate us, after our earthly sojourn, to an eternal existence where all our desires and potentialities would have their true fulfillment. Hence the incarnation, hence the life, death and resurrection of Christ, who was God's Son, as the central turning point of man's history.

Today, while amazed at God's love for us, let us also be justly amazed at the shabby and grudging return we make for love. Many amongst us even deny that act of God's infinite love, not from convincing historical and logical proofs, but in order to justify their own unwillingness to co-operate with the divine plan for their eternal future. This is not to say that their future, after death, does not concern them; it is a thought which time and again intrudes on all men, but they have allowed the affairs of this world which should be stepping stones to their future life, to become instead mill-stones which crush their spirits and their own true self-interests.

While we sincerely hope that we are not in that class, we can still find many facets in our daily Christian lives which can and should make us amazed at our lack of gratitude to God and to his incarnate Son. 'Leaving out serious sin which turns us away from God if not against him, how warm is our charity, our love of God and neighbor? How much of our time do we give to the things of God and how much to the things of Caesar? How often does our daily struggle for earthly existence and the grumbles and grouses which it causes, blot out from our view the eternal purpose God had in giving us this earthly existence. How often during the past year have we said from our heart: "Thank you, God, for putting me in this world, and thank you a thousand times more, for giving me the opportunity and the means of reaching the next world where I shall live happily forevermore in your presence"? If the true answer for many of us is "not once," then begin today. Let us say it now with all sincerity, and say it often in the years that are left to us.

—Excerpted from *The Sunday Readings* by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.

Support: If you want to support Sacred Heart Parish, through your envelopes or just a donation, we are now set up for e-transfer: Please e-transfer to sacredheartjohnstown@gmail.com. Please include your envelope number. If you do not currently have a church envelope, please include your civic address. Receipts will be issued.

Bulletin: If you want to add a notice to the bulletin, please send an email to louisecampbel@gmail.com

Collection

January21, 2024

Envelopes	**$190.00**

Notices:

1: Statement: The 2023 financial statement will be available at Mass this weekend.

2: Community Drop-in All are welcome on Wednesday mornings 9:00 am - 11:30 am at the District 10 Volunteer Fire Department for a social gathering. The coffee pots will be hot and the conversation will be flowing. Sponsored by the Bras d'Or Lakers Club.

3: Breakfast: The Bras d'Or Lakers will be hosting another Breakfast on Wednesday January 31st, at the District 10 Fire Hall. Time: 9:00 am – 11:30 am. The menu will be a Framers Casserole, cinnamon rolls, tea and coffee

4: COMFORT TEA ... Come For Tea: We all experience many types of losses throughout our lives. You are invited to stop in for a beverage and sweets. You may bring a friend, photo, memento, memory, or experience to share or just be with others who understand. 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm on Wednesday, February 7th, 2023 at the Louisdale Lions Hall, 3128 Whiteside, Louisdale, N.S. Sponsored by the Strait Richmond Palliative Care Society as part of our 30th anniversary and Richmond County Winter Festival. All are welcome. Weather cancellation will be posted on www.1015thehawk.com

5: Outdoor Skating Party: Behind the Fire Hall, 14799 Highway 4, Red Islands Saturday, February 10, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Sponsored by: District 10 Volunteer Fire Dept. Contact: Debbie Johnston, 902-304-0558 grammiedebbie1998@hotmail.com

6: Lenten session: You are invited to join us for a Lenten session on prayer and exploring spiritual conversation as a way to deepen our relationship with God, and with each other.

You may choose any of the following:

Saturday, February 17, 2024 from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm at **St. Leonard Pastoral Centre**
Saturday, March 2, 2024 from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm at **Our Lady Of Fatima Church Hall**
Saturday, March 16 from 10:00am until 1:00pm at Bethel Presbyterian Church Hall, Brookland St, Sydney.

Sessions are facilitated by members of the Cape Breton Local of the Atlantic Association of Spiritual Directors. There is no fee, but registration is required.

To register, please contact: Winnie Odo (twinnieodo@seaside.ns.ca) (902-862-2330) or
Gary Fancey (gafancey@netscape.net) (902-862-7580) or
Julia Townsend (juliat@eastlink.ca) (902-562-8423)

7: In the Diocese
Monastery to serve as winter shelter for homeless
Extreme weather events are occurring with increasing frequency and people experiencing homelessness are at risk of suffering the negative effects of these events due to a lack of shelter. The Counties of Antigonish and Guysborough represent an area of the Province lacking in safe and secure temporary accommodations for persons and even families sleeping in the rough. In response to this urgent need, A Roof Over Your Head Society and Our Lady of Grace Monastery Foundation have entered into a partnership arrangement to address this challenge. The Monastery will be responsible for the provision of dormitory style rooms and hot meals. A Roof Over Your Head Society will be responsible for all intake, administrative, transportation and other support services in collaboration with community partners. The Monastery location is well situated to serve the expansive geographic area of Antigonish and Guysborough Counties. Read more here: https://www.antigonishdiocese.com/monastery-to-serve-as-winter-shelter-forhomeless/