

*For to us a
Child is born,*

*to us a Son
is given.*

- Isaiah 9:6

Church of St. Edward the Confessor

Rev. Timothy Hayes, Pastor

Dcn. John Barbour; Dcn. Adrian Kyambadde

785 Newark-Granville Road, Granville, Ohio 43023 | 740-587-3254 | www.saintedwards.org



785 Newark Granville Road
Granville, Ohio 43023
saintedwards.org | 740-587-3254

Pastor
Rev. Timothy M. Hayes

Deacons
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Dcn. Adrian Kyambadde

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church@saintedwards.org

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Steven Arias, Coordinator
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Bulletin
Katie de Arias, Digital Media
& Engagement Coordinator
bulletin@saintedwards.org
Bulletin submission deadline
is Monday at 12:00 p.m.

 /SaintEdwardsChurch

Mass Schedule

Mass Schedule
Saturday 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 8:15 & 10:45 a.m.
Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.
*Holiday schedules TBA

Confessions
Saturday 4:00-4:30 p.m.

Adoration
Mondays 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Mass Intentions

Sunday, January 11 | The Baptism of the Lord

8:15 a.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of the Parish
10:45 a.m. For Mark Overman (RIP) by Lauren Kerr

Monday, January 12

9:00 a.m. For Luis Carlos Rodriguez (RIP) by Paul & Teresa Jakob

Tuesday, January 13

9:00 a.m. For Teresa Contini (RIP) by Steve & Teresa Contini

Wednesday, January 14

9:00 a.m. For Margaret Petryk (RIP) by Thomas & Amy Petryk

Thursday, January 15

9:00 a.m. For Robin Dolin (RIP) by the Office of William Heyer Architect

Friday, January 16

9:00 a.m. For George David Douglas (Conversion to the Catholic Church)
by Jesse Douglas

Saturday, January 17 | Saint Anthony, Abbot

Second Collection for the Propagation of the Faith

5:00 p.m. For Mike Watson (RIP) by Pattie Herr

Sunday, January 18 | Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Second Collection for the Propagation of the Faith

8:15 a.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of the Parish
10:45 a.m. For Edison, Mickey, & Brian Smith (RIP) by Anita Smith



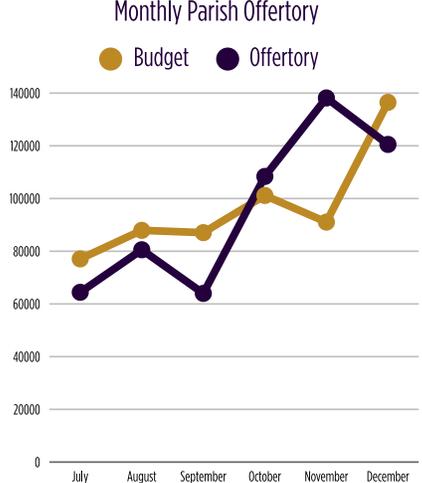


Scan to Give

Thank you for your continued generosity to St. Edward the Confessor! To make giving even easier, scan the QR code to enroll in EFT—an automatic, secure way to give at your preferred amount and frequency. We can help you through the process, just give us a call!

	Actual	Budget	Variance
Dec. Offertory	\$120,530	\$136,490	(\$15,960)
YTD Offertory	\$584,624	\$590,743	(\$6,119)

Monthly Parish Offertory



Month	Budget	Offertory
July	~75,000	~65,000
August	~85,000	~80,000
September	~85,000	~65,000
October	~100,000	~105,000
November	~90,000	~135,000
December	~135,000	~120,000



Prayer to St. Michael

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do Thou O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the Divine Power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits that prowl around the world seeking the ruin of souls.



Sunday 1.11	Monday 1.12	Tuesday 1.13	Wednesday 1.14
8:15 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 9:00 a.m. – Santa’s Attic Collection in Enke Parish Hall 9:30 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal in the Choir Loft 9:30 a.m. – PSR in Classrooms & Enke Parish Hall 10:45 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 12:00 p.m. – Baptism of Tinashe Kylie Bote 1:00 p.m. – Confirmation Sponsor Meeting 6:00 p.m. – Youth Group Meeting in the Youth Room	9:00 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Ghiloni) 9:30 a.m. – Adoration 7:00 p.m. – That Man Is You! Meeting in the Lounge	9:00 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 9:30 a.m. – Right to Life Committee Meeting in the Meeting Room 11:00 a.m. – Funeral Mass for James Schwarm (Msgr. Enke)	7:00 a.m. – Men’s Fellowship Breakfast 9:00 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 6:00 p.m. – Strategic Plan Steering Committee Meeting in Enke Parish Hall 7:00 p.m. – Men’s Rosary Prayer Group in the Church

Thursday 1.15	Friday 1.16	Saturday 1.17	Sunday 1.18
9:00 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 7:00 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal in the Choir Loft 7:00 p.m. – Knights of Columbus Social in Enke Parish Hall	9:00 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes)	Second Collection for the Propagation of the Faith 7:00 a.m. – Men’s Fellowship in Enke Parish Hall 4:00 p.m. – Confessions 4:00 p.m. – Knights of Columbus Spaghetti Dinner in Enke Parish Hall 5:00 p.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes)	Second Collection for the Propagation of the Faith 8:15 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 9:30 a.m. – Choir Rehearsal in the Choir Loft 9:30 a.m. – PSR in Classrooms & Enke Parish Hall 10:45 a.m. – Mass (Fr. Hayes) 6:00 p.m. – Youth Group Meeting in the Youth Room



WELCOME
to our community

Visitors, you are known and loved by our Lord, Jesus Christ. We pray you find peace, hospitality, and friendship here. Children are always welcome! To join St. Edward Parish, stop by the church office or call 740-587-3254.

Low-gluten hosts are available. Please join one of the center Communion lines and inform the Eucharistic Minister.



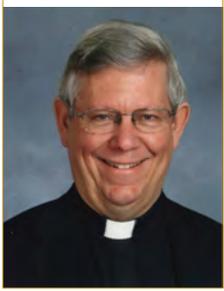
“Serving God is the greatest adventure in the world.”
 -St. Tarcisius

Answer the call to serve! We are looking for young people to serve God as Altar Servers. Open to Students in Elementary, Middle School, High School, and College. Training is simple and informative and is held once a month in the Youth Room, on the second Sunday of the month after the 10:45 AM Mass.

Contact: Steven Arias
youth@saintedwards.org
(740) 587-3254 ext.25

Note: Servers must be baptized Catholics who have received First Communion.





January 11, 2026

Dear Parishioners:

The Baptism of the Lord is the close of the Liturgical celebration of the Christmas Season and the opening to the first weeks of Ordinary Time. Advent and Christmas have reminded us of the Mystery of the Incarnation. Week by week in Ordinary Time, the celebration of the Liturgy unfolds the Mysteries of the Lord that flow from the

Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery, the Suffering, Death, and Resurrection of the Lord, that will be celebrated in the Lent and Easter Seasons.

All of the Church's Liturgy is the act of worship that Jesus Christ performs in His identity as the Son of God Who became one of us through the Incarnation. We enter into that reality through our own Baptism and the flow of baptismal grace that accompanies us through our earthly journey, all the way to Eternity. Baptism is not a "once and done" reality; it is a living reality that opens us to the Sacramental Life. All of the Sacraments flow from Baptism and deepen our relationship with God along a path of holiness. We have been plunged into Christ through Baptism and all that is His belongs to us, by His Gift.

Confirmation is closely associated with Baptism. In the early centuries, and still in some Eastern Rites of the Church, both Baptism and Confirmation, as well as the Eucharist, are given at once, whether the one entering into the Mystery is an adult or an infant. At Baptism, we are given freedom from original sin, and the reality of sanctifying grace, God's very Life, is poured into our human nature. Confirmation strengthens this grace in us and opens us to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit Who is an indwelling presence in us. Eucharist is the ratification of the Covenant through the Paschal Mystery, a sharing in the very Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

In January, February, and March, as we have announced, we are entering into a "listening phase" of our work of strategic planning for the future and spiritual growth of Church of St. Edward the Confessor. Please keep this effort in your prayers as we embark on this new journey together. Thank you for your response so far. Let's hold steady and keep our hearts open to the Lord Who calls us to share His glory!

Today is a good day to reflect on the Baptismal Promises we have made and renewed many times. How is the Lord inviting you to let the grace of Baptism and the other Sacraments flow through you into the world?

Do you reject Satan? R. I do.

And all his works? R. I do.

And all his empty promises? R. I do.

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth? R. I do.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father? R. I do.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting? R. I do.

God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever. R. Amen.

Rev. Timothy M. Hayes

Rev. Timothy M. Hayes
Pastor

Notes from the Loft



Notes from the Loft

Prelude

On Jordan's Bank (arr. R.E. Smith, 2012)

Introductory Rites

Opening: O God, Almighty Father (#706)

Gloria: Mass in Honor of St. Benedict
(text on inside front cover)

Liturgy of the Word

Responsorial Psalm: Ps. 29: The Lord will bless... (p. 60)

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia (p. 60)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Offertory: O Breathe on Me, O Breath of God (#651)

Holy, We Proclaim, Amen, Lamb of God:

Mass in Honor of St. Benedict

Communion: I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light (#467)

Communion 2: TBD

Concluding Rite

Closing: Shall We Gather at the River (#602)

Postlude

Cantors

5:00 p.m.: Kevin Skinner

8:15 a.m.: Jim Bidigare

10:00 a.m.: Kayce Long

Notes from the Loft

♪ *Christus natus est!* Christ is born! As we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord today, we pray that God will indeed—in the words of our Responsorial Psalm—"bless his people with peace."

♪ As we recall how John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, today's closing hymn is "Shall We Gather at the River." It was composed in 1864 by Robert Lowry, a minister who also wrote "How Can I Keep from Singing" and other hymns. The dominant image in the text is the heavenly river. This image comes directly from Scripture, as it appears in both Psalm 46 and Revelation 22. The refrain joyfully anticipates the time when we hope to gather with the saints in the kingdom of heaven.

- Paul Radkowski, music@saintedwards.org, 740-587-3254

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE: LISTENING SESSIONS

The Catholic Foundation graciously hosted our Strategic Planning Steering Committee as we learned the ins and outs of conducting effective listening sessions and focus groups. Our first official focus group was held this past week with members of the Knights of Columbus and the Saturday Morning Men's Group. We piloted our four guiding questions and discussion format and will continue refining our approach to ensure future sessions are engaging and provide every participant the opportunity to share what is on their hearts.



We are also grateful to share that we have received the checks for two recent grants awarded to our parish: \$30,000 in support of our Strategic Planning process and \$5,000 toward the March for Life trip happening later this month. We are deeply thankful for this generous support, which strengthens both our planning efforts and our commitment to witness for life.



Church of St. Edward the Confessor Providing A Safe Environment

At Church of St. Edward the Confessor, we are focused on improving our practices and ensuring full compliance so that every young person in our care is protected. This renewed effort reflects our commitment to responsibility, vigilance, and caring for God's children. We understand these expectations may feel new or may be different from past practice. Even so, our shared mission remains clear: to provide a safe, holy, and trustworthy environment for all ages, and to look out for one another as a parish family.

Because our parish provides many opportunities for youth to volunteer and participate, it is essential that every adult involved in these settings is in full Safe Environment compliance.



Scan the QR Code or visit virtusonline.org to register for a session. Virtual training available.

Upcoming Sessions:

Thursday, Jan. 22 | 7 - 9pm
PGC Training & Fingerprints,
Please arrive 30 minutes early

Saturday, Jan. 31 | 8:30 - 10:30am
PGC Training only
**Listing of fingerprint locations provided*

Let us do the Cooking!



**KNIGHTS
OF COLUMBUS**
IN SERVICE TO ONE. IN SERVICE TO ALL.

**Dine-In or
Drive-Thru**

Spaghetti DINNER

January 17, 2026 4:30pm to 7pm

Youth Meal

DINE-IN ONLY

\$8

**Single
Meal**

\$15

**Senior
Meal**

\$14

4 Meals
Family Pack

DRIVE-THRU ONLY

\$48

**Drive-Thru Meals include Spaghetti, Garlic Bread,
and Choice of Meat or Marinara Sauce.**

**Dine-In Meals also include Salad, Tea/Lemonade &
Dessert Bar. Bring your own bottle of wine to enjoy
with dine-in friends.**

ALL proceeds benefit St. Edward's MAINTENANCE FUND

**Individual orders of Sweet Italian sausage are \$2.00 extra.
Pay at door; credit card or cash. Pickup at St. Edward the Confessor**

Church of St. Edward the Confessor 785 Newark Granville Rd, Granville, OH



SVdP Food Pantry Update: This week, the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry has requested donations of tuna and Chunky brand soup. Thank you for your continued support of our neighbors in need, and for contributing to well-being in our community!



WWP Winter Book Club: Every new year, many of us make resolutions. They may look different, but one desire unites them all: to live a more fulfilling, more perfectly ordered life. This January, join a small group of women for weekly Zoom meetings to dive into **Walking with Purpose: Seven Priorities That Make Life Work**, by Lisa Brennickmeyer—a book designed to help bring balance, peace, and purpose to your everyday life. Women of all ages and stages are welcome! Scan the QR code to register.

March for Life – Washington, D.C. Trip: Travel to Washington, D.C. to march for the protection of all human life! Tickets are \$40 each (scholarships available), and include chartered bus rides to the March, a sack lunch, and a pizza dinner. **The March takes place on January 23, 2026, and the bus leaves the evening before at 10:00 p.m. from St. Edward Church.** The trip is sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 10876. Thank you to The Catholic Foundation for their financial assistance! **Please register by Wednesday, January 14** to Paul Gassman at 740-334-8898 (Text/Cell) or Scoutmaster4Life@gmail.com.

Around the Diocese



Live the Beatitudes in Our Community: OpenDoor Women's Recovery Alliance is looking for volunteers to accompany women rebuilding their lives after addiction, trafficking, or incarceration. Volunteers serve in small teams and meet weekly with a woman in recovery for one year. No clinical skills are required—just compassion and reliability. For details, contact Tammy at tammy@opendoorwomensrecovery.org.

Nominate the 2026 Catholic Man of the Year: The Catholic Men's Luncheon Club (CMLC) is accepting nominations for the 2026 Catholic Man of the Year. Nominees must be laymen who, through their daily actions, words, and prayers, exemplify the "good and faithful servant." The award recipient is given the opportunity to share his personal testimony during an award ceremony with the Bishop at the CMLC luncheon meeting on Friday, March 6, 2026 at St. Patrick Parish in Columbus. Additional information and requirements can be found on their website. **Nominations are due by midnight on January 15, 2026** and can be submitted at catholicmensministry.com/man-of-the-year.



Enrich Your Marriage: Attend a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend and gain the tools you need for a stronger and more loving marriage! *"But some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."* Help your marriage be like the rich soil by attending an upcoming Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience **on February 6-8, 2026 at Procter Camp and Conference Center in London, OH.** Early registration is recommended, and other dates are available on the website. Scan the QR code or visit WWME.org to sign up and get away from jobs, kids, chores, and phones, and spend time focusing only on each other!



We welcome and celebrate the newest member of our Catholic family, baptized into the life of Christ and the love of our faith community:

Tinashe Kylie Bote,
daughter of
Josiah and Farayi.

In Loving Memory

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the family of parishioner James Otto Schwarm. Please keep Jim and his family in your prayers.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.




Thank You!

We are sincerely grateful to all parishioners who took time to complete the Disciple Maker Index survey. **We are excited to share that we received responses from MORE THAN 40 PERCENT of our parish community!**

Your insights are vital to future direction of our parish, and we are thankful for such a strong response. We encourage you to remain engaged and continue to provide your input as we move forward together in our Strategic Planning process.

St. Edward Church Presents
A Night Under the Stars
Couple's Night Out
January 31 | 6:30 p.m.
Enke Parish Hall
\$70 per couple, BYOB
Join us for dancing (mini lesson included), heavy hors d'oeuvres and prizes



<http://kofc10876.square.site>

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling.”

Eph 4:4



Scan the January Focolare Word of Life above or visit focolaremedia.com

FOCOLARE MEDIA
Word of Life



LOOK TO HIM AND BE RADIANT

Psalm 34:6



COLUMBUS CATHOLIC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

February 21, 2026

8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Ohio Expo Center - Kasich Hall

FEATURED SPEAKERS:



MOTHER NATALIA



MEG HUNTER KILMER



FR. JOHN LOCOCO



ST. MARY GRACE



RACHEL MUHA



MASS CELEBRANT:
BISHOP FERNANDES



Stay in Touch!

Our Flocknote email is the way to stay up-to-date on happenings at St. Edward Church.



Scan the QR code to join, or register online at StEdwardChurch.flocknote.com

Ministry Schedule



January 17-18 | Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

	Eucharistic Ministers:	Lectors:	Altar Servers:
Saturday, 5:00 p.m.	Lisa Cannon Adrienne Carter Ava Vadala Mandy Vadala	Bill Hoekstra	Kevin Bollo Arianna Carter (sub req.) NOT FILLED
Sunday, 8:15 a.m.	Cindy Barbour Jane Dougan Lisa Sloan Kris Whiting	Michael Whiting	Francis Aransky Brooklyn Aransky Daphne Harms
Sunday, 10:45 a.m.	Von Downing Margo Downing Emily Dunbar Annie Lach Gail Perks Peter Thomas	Mindy Skeldon	Katelyn Shaw Anna Beth Zigan Evelynn Zigan

Please check in sacristy for current list of weekend volunteers.

Sponsors of the Week



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Gifts for Baby Jesus

Bring gifts for baby Jesus as the wise men did! Donate care items for newborns and young children in the Gathering Space during the month of January. Donations support the work of Heartbeats, assisting young parents in need. Thank you for your generosity!

Most Needed Items:

- Winter outfits & pajamas for 6 month - size 3T (boys & girls)
- Winter outfits sizes 0-3 month (girls)
- Winter coats & boots
- Baby bath towels
- Crib sheets
- Sippy cups
- Sensory toys & books
- Toddler eating utensils & bowls
- Diaper bags
- Diaper wipes
- Diapers sizes 4,5 & 6 & 3-4T Pull-ups
- Crocheted or knitted baby blankets in neutral colors

Note: Baby shampoo/lotion or wash, pacifiers, and newborn and size 1 diapers are NOT needed.

Organized by St. Edward Respect Life Committee



ST. EDWARD
YOUTH GROUP
7-12 GRADE
SCHEDULE
2026

JAN 11 YOUTH GROUP MEETING
6:00- 8:00 PM, YOUTH ROOM

JAN 18 YOUTH GROUP MEETING
6:00- 8:00 PM, YOUTH ROOM

JAN 25 YOUTH GROUP MEETING
6:00- 8:00 PM, YOUTH ROOM

FEB 1 YOUTH GROUP HOMELESS OUTREACH
2:00-6:00 PM, ST. ED KITCHEN

FEB 8 YOUTH GROUP MEETING
6:00- 8:00 PM, YOUTH ROOM

QUESTIONS? CONTACT
STEVEN ARIAS | YOUTH@SAINTEDWARDS.ORG

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM
[@ST.EDWARDS_YOUTH_MINISTRY](https://www.instagram.com/ST.EDWARDS_YOUTH_MINISTRY)

SEEK

We are deeply grateful to the generous parishioner whose gift made it possible for several members of our Parish Staff to attend SEEK 2026. Throughout the conference, participants listened to inspiring keynote speakers, engaged in meaningful sessions, and shared prayer and fellowship that ignited their faith and drew them closer to our Lord. The experience also fostered valuable connections with others from across the Church. We pray that this powerful faith experience continues to enrich their hearts and equips them to serve and support our parish community with renewed energy and hope as we move forward together.





Sunday, January 11 | The Baptism of the Lord

First Reading: Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10

Second Reading: Acts 10:34-38

Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

Monday, January 12

First Reading: 1 Samuel 1:1-8

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 116:12-13, 14-17, 18-19

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

Tuesday, January 13

First Reading: 1 Samuel 1:9-20

Responsorial Psalm: 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Wednesday, January 14

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-20

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40:2 and 5, 7-8a, 8b-9, 10

Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Thursday, January 15

First Reading: 1 Samuel 4:1-11

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 44:10-11, 14-15, 24-25

Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

Friday, January 16

First Reading: 1 Samuel 8:4-7, 10-22a

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 89:16-17, 18-19

Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

Saturday, January 17 | Saint Anthony, Abbot

First Reading: 1 Samuel 9:1-4, 17-19; 10:1

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 21:2-3, 4-5, 6-7

Gospel: Mark 2:13-17

Sunday, January 18 | Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Isaiah 49:3, 5-6

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:1-3

Gospel: John 1:29-34

Pope Leo XIV Intentions of the Month: January

For prayer with the Word of God

Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

REDEEMED

Restoring Your Masculine Identity in Christ

MEN – It is time to reconnect with your purpose & identity.

Every man needs the opportunity to step away from the noise, busyness, and relentless expectations of daily life and be reminded of his purpose & identity. This 3-day retreat is that opportunity.

Come receive authentic & relatable testimonies from men who found strength, direction, and freedom by surrendering their lives to God. Enter into personal reflections, good discussions, and fraternal community with men seeking virtue & restoration.

Rediscover your identity as a son of God and walk back into your life with clarity, peace, and purpose.

Come as you are. Leave as who you were created to be.

January 29-31, 2026

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Learn More at
jpiihealingcenter.org
Registration Now Open

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Lectio Divina

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“What page, what passage of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not the truest of guides for human life?” +Saint Benedict, from the Rule of Saint Benedict (73:3)

The month of January is dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus

“Pay attention to what I tell you: whoever you may be, always have God before your eyes, whatever you do, do it according to the testimony of the Holy Scriptures; in whatever place you live do not easily leave it. Keep these three precepts and you will be saved.” +SAINT ANTONY, ABBOTT (-AKA- OF EGYPT, OF THE DESERT, FATHER OF MONKS)

Monday, January 12 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:14-20 After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the Gospel of God: “This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel.”

As he passed by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting their nets into the sea; they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Then they left their nets and followed him. He walked along a little farther and saw James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They too were in a boat mending their nets. Then he called them. So they left their father Zebedee in the boat along with the hired men and followed him.

Meditation: When Jesus preached the gospel message he called others to follow as his disciples and he gave them a mission – “to catch people for the kingdom of God.” What kind of disciples did he choose? Fishermen! In the choice of the first apostles we see a characteristic feature of Jesus' work: he chose very ordinary people. They were regular folks, non-professionals, had no wealth or position. They were chosen from the common people who did ordinary things, had no special education, and no social advantages. Jesus wanted ordinary people who could take an assignment and do it extraordinarily well. He chose these individuals, not for what they were, but for what they would be capable of becoming under his direction and power. When the Lord calls us to serve, we must not think we have nothing to offer. The Lord takes what ordinary people, like us, can offer and uses it for greatness in his kingdom. Do you believe that God wants to work through and in you for his glory? Jesus speaks the same message to us today: we will “catch people” for the kingdom of God if we allow the light of Jesus Christ to shine through us. God wants others to see the light of Christ in us in the way we live in witness to the gospel.

Prayer: Almighty ever-living God, who through your Only Begotten Son have made us a new creation for yourself, grant, we pray, that by your grace we may be found in the likeness of him in whom our nature is united to you. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: In announcing the good news, Jesus made two demands: repent and believe. Repentance requires a life change, a change of mind, sorrow for sin and its consequences, a hatred of sin and a firm resolution to avoid it in the future. The Lord gives us grace to see sin for what it really is -- a rejection of his love and wisdom and a refusal to do what is good and in accord with his will. His grace brings pardon and help for turning away from everything that would keep us from his love. To believe is to take Jesus at his word and to recognize that God loved us so much that he sent his only begotten Son to free us from bondage to fear and sin. God made the supreme sacrifice of his Son on the cross to bring us back to himself. God loved us first and he invites us in love to surrender our lives to him. Do you believe that the gospel has power to free you from bondage to fear and sin?

Tuesday, January 13 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time **Saint Hilary of Poitiers, Bishop and Doctor of the Church**

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:21-28 Jesus came to Capernaum with his followers, and on the sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. In their synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” Jesus rebuked him and said, “Quiet! Come out of him!” The unclean spirit convulsed him

and with a loud cry came out of him. All were amazed and asked one another, "What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him." His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of Galilee.

Meditation: Saint Augustine once remarked that the "devils confessed Christ, but lacking charity it availed nothing. ..They confessed a sort of faith, but without love. Hence they were devils." Faith is mighty, but without love it profits nothing (1 Corinthians 13). True faith works through love (Galatians 5:6) and abounds in hope (Rom. 15:13). That is why faith is both a free gift of God and the free assent of our will to the whole truth that God has revealed. To live, grow, and persevere in the faith to the end, each of us must nourish it with the word of God. The Lord gives us his Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds that we may grow in his truth and in the knowledge of his great love for each of us. If we approach God's word submissively, and with an eagerness to do everything that the Lord will and desires of us, we are in a much better position to learn what God wants to teach us through his word. Are you eager to be taught by the Lord and to conform your life according to his word?

Prayer: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we may rightly understand and truthfully profess the divinity of your Son, which the Bishop Saint Hilary taught with such constancy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: God's word has power to change and transform each of our lives. Are you eager to hear and believe the word of God? When Jesus taught he spoke with authority. He spoke the word of God as no one had spoken it before. When the Rabbis taught they supported their statements with quotes from other authorities. The prophets spoke with delegated authority - "Thus says the Lord." When Jesus spoke he needed no authorities to back his statements. He was authority incarnate - the Word of God made flesh. When he spoke, God spoke. When he commanded even the demons obeyed. Will you obey his commands, his teachings?

Wednesday, January 14 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:29-39 On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him.

Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Meditation: Who do you take your troubles to? Jesus' disciples freely brought their troubles to him because they found him ready and able to deal with any difficulty, affliction, or sickness which they encountered. When Simon brought Jesus to his home, his mother-in-law was instantly healed because Jesus heard Simon's prayer. Saint Jerome, an early church bible scholar (c. 347-420), reflects on this passage: "Can you imagine Jesus standing before your bed and you continue sleeping? It is absurd that you would remain in bed in his presence. Where is Jesus? He is already here offering himself to us. 'In the middle,' he says, 'among you he stands, whom you do not recognize' (Cf. John 1:26) 'The kingdom of God is in your midst' (Mark 1:15). Faith beholds Jesus among us. If we are unable to seize his hand, let us prostrate ourselves at his feet. If we are unable to reach his head, let us wash his feet with our tears. Our repentance is the perfume of the Savior. See how costly is the compassion of the Savior."

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Do you allow Jesus to be the Lord and healer in your personal life, family, and community? Do you approach him with expectant faith? God's healing power restores us not only to health but to active service and care of others. There is no trouble he does not want to help us with and there is no bondage he can't set us free from. Do you take your troubles to him with expectant faith that he will help you?

Thursday, January 15 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 1:40-45 A leper came to him and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched the leper, and said to

him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. Then he said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

Meditation: Do you seek the Lord Jesus with expectant faith? No one who sought Jesus out was refused his help. Even the untouchables and the outcasts of Jewish society found help in him. Unlike the people of Jesus' time who fled at the sight of a leper, Jesus touched the leper who approached him and he made him whole and clean. Why was this so remarkable? Lepers were outcasts of society. Their physical condition was terrible as they slowly lost their limbs and withered away. They were not only shunned but regarded as "already dead" even by their relatives. The Jewish law forbade anyone from touching or approaching a leper, lest ritual defilement occur. This leper did something quite remarkable. He approached Jesus confidently and humbly, expecting that Jesus could and would heal him.

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: In ancient times a leper normally would be stoned or at least warded off if he or she tried to come near anyone. Jesus not only grants the man his request, but he demonstrates the personal love, compassion, and tenderness of God in his physical touch. The medical knowledge of his day would have regarded such contact as grave risk for incurring infection. Jesus met the man's misery with compassion and tender kindness. He communicated the love and mercy of God in a sign that spoke more eloquently than words. Have you given any thought as to how do you approach the untouchables and outcasts, and those you find difficult to love. Do you offer them mercy and help as Jesus did? The Lord is always ready to show us his mercy and to free us from whatever makes us unclean.

Friday, January 16 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 2:1-12 When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to him, "Child, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" -he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

Meditation: Do you know the healing power of forgiveness? Jesus' treatment of sinners upset the religious teachers of the day. When the paralytic was brought to Jesus because of the faith of his friends, Jesus did the unthinkable. He first forgave the man his sins. The scribes regarded this as blasphemy because they understood that only God had authority to forgive sins and to unbind a man or woman from their burden of guilt. Jesus claimed an authority which only God could rightfully give.

Prayer: Attend to the pleas of your people with heavenly care, O Lord, we pray, that they may see what must be done and gain strength to do what they have seen. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Jesus not only proved that his authority came from God, he showed the great power of God's redeeming love and mercy by healing the cripple of his physical ailment. This man had been crippled not only physically, but spiritually as well. Jesus freed him from his burden of guilt and restored his body as well. The Lord is every ready to bring us healing of body, soul, and mind. Do you allow anything to keep you from Jesus?

Saturday, January 17 ~ First Week in Ordinary Time
Saint Antony of Egypt, Abbott; "The Great", "The Father of Monks"

Holy Gospel: Mark 2:13-17 Jesus went out along the sea. All the crowd came to him and he taught them. As he passed by, he saw Levi, son of Alphaeus, sitting at the customs post. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed Jesus. While he was at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners sat with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many who followed him. Some scribes who were Pharisees saw that Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors and said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" Jesus heard this and said to them, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Meditation: When the Pharisees challenged his unorthodox behavior in eating with public sinners, Jesus' defense was quite simple. A doctor doesn't need to visit healthy people; instead he goes to those who are sick. Jesus likewise sought out those in the greatest need. A true physician seeks healing of the whole person – body, mind, and spirit. Jesus came as the divine physician and good shepherd to care for his people and to restore them to wholeness of life. The orthodox were so preoccupied with their own practice of religion that they neglected to help the very people who needed care. Their religion was selfish because they didn't want to have anything to do with people not like themselves. Jesus stated his mission in unequivocal terms: I came not to call the righteous, but to call sinners. Ironically the orthodox were as needy as those they despised.

Prayer: O God, who brought the Abbot Saint Antony to serve you by a wondrous way of life in the desert, grant, through his intercession, that, denying ourselves, we may always love you above all things. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Many people were drawn to Jesus, including the unwanted and the unlovable, such as the lame, the blind, and the lepers, as well as the homeless such as widows and orphans. But public sinners, like the town prostitutes and corrupt tax collectors, were also drawn to Jesus. In calling Matthew to be one of his disciples, Jesus picked one of the unlikeliest of men – a tax collector who by profession was despised by the people. Why did the religious leaders find fault with Jesus for making friends with sinners and tax collectors like Matthew? The orthodox Jews had a habit of dividing everyone into two groups: those who rigidly kept the law and its minute regulations and those who did not. They latter were treated like second class citizens. The orthodox scrupulously avoided their company, refused to do business with them, refused to give or receive anything from them, refused to intermarry, and avoided any form of entertainment with them, including table fellowship. Jesus' association with the latter, especially with tax collectors and sinners, shocked the sensibilities of these orthodox people.

About Saint Antony: Saint Antony (251-356), the Patriarch of all monks, was born at Coma in upper Egypt, at the age of 20 he gave away his property (which was considerable) to the poor and lived as a hermit near his native place. About the year 305 he established a community at Fayum and another shortly after at Pispir. Thus he was the first to establish the religious life as we know it today, by gathering together large groups of hermits into loose communities. Soon he became famous throughout Egypt and beyond, and was in great demand as an advisor by people of every rank. He was a personal friend of Saint Athanasius and his staunch supporter against the Arians, whom he arraigned as heretics in a public sermon preached at Alexandria at the invitation of Athanasius, when he was ninety years old. Athanasius himself became St. Antony's biographer. St. Antony died in his hermitage on Mt. Kolzim, near the Red Sea. In art he is frequently shown with a T-shaped cross and a pig. The latter, perhaps originally the symbol of evil, became associated with a privilege of the Hospital Brothers of St. Antony founded in the 17th century. St. Antony's fire was apparently and epidemic form of erysipelas against which the saint's intercession was invoked.

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