

The Revelation of Mercy in the Old Testament

"I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you" (Jer 31:3). "For the mountains may depart...my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed" (Is 54:10). When we put together the image of God in the Old Testament, one of the outstanding features is God's merciful love. This is the theme of the encyclical *Rich in Mercy (Dives in Misericordia)*, n.4, from John Paul II, which we present again this week.

Mercy and fidelity are at the very core of God's covenant with Israel, "a covenant that it broke many times." "Whenever [Israel] became aware of its infidelity—and in the history of Israel there was no lack of prophets and others who awakened this awareness—it appealed to mercy" (DM 4). "The Lord loves Israel with the love of a special choosing, much like the love of a spouse, and for this reason He pardons its sins and even its infidelities and betrayals. When He finds repentance and true conversion, He brings His people back to grace" (DM 4).

Therefore God's mercy is related to those in need and affliction, but above all to sinners because sin, too, constitutes man's misery. "The people of the Old Covenant experienced this misery from the time of the Exodus, when they set up the golden calf. The Lord Himself triumphed over this act of breaking the covenant when He solemnly declared to Moses that He was a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. It is in this central revelation that the chosen people, and each of its members, will find, every time that they have sinned, the strength and the motive for turning to the Lord to remind Him of what He had exactly revealed about Himself and to beseech His forgiveness" (DM 4).

Considering the story of Israel's covenant is a way to understand how deeply God is gentle and merciful towards each of us. The experience of God's mercy in my life allows me to understand how I must be merciful towards others: the driver cutting me off on the road (haven't I done the same, and God has been patient with me?), my spouse (hasn't God forgiven my own transgressions towards my spouse?), my children (didn't I have a rough day and God consoled me?), my relative or neighbor, and so on.

May the story of Israel in the Old Testament teach us more about God's mercy, and may we heed the even greater challenge that Jesus then gives us: "As many as seven times? ...I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times" (Mt 18:21-22).

Nourishing Our Souls with Holy Scripture

Readings for Next Week:

Third Sunday of Lent

Ex 3:1–8a, 13–15 1 Cor 10:1–6, 10–12 Lk 13:1–9 (30)



Second Sunday of Lent Masses this Week

Monday, February 22: The Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle

6:30 am +Agnes Cope
9:00 am +George Davis

Tuesday, February 23: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am (L) Meskerem Girma
9:00 am +William Swartworth

Wednesday, February 24: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am +Carolina Salang
9:00 am (L) John Motola

Thursday, February 25: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am +John M. Perkins
9:00 am +Josephine Gamera

Friday, February 26: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am Priest Intentions
9:00 am (L) Moira Quinn Leite

Saturday, February 27: Lenten Weekday

8:00 am +Mary F. Lyons
5:00 pm +Robert and Charlotte Davies
7:00 pm +Margarita Illanes

Sunday, February 28: Third Sunday of Lent

7:30 am +Luis Baez
9:00 am +Harold Baker
10:30 am +Living and Deceased Parishioners
12:00 noon +George Davis

Heads of Ministry Meeting, Feb. 22 This Monday, **Feb. 22**, we will hold our quarterly heads of ministries meeting at 7:00 pm in Hannan Hall. All ministry coordinators are encouraged to attend. These meetings serve as an opportunity for ministry coordinators to get to know one another more intimately, to collaborate on the major events and activities of our parish, and to provide catechesis and support for their calling to leadership and discipleship.

Did you know that since our last meeting in November, we have added 7 new ministry coordinators? In total, our parish now has 48 active ministries and 60 ministry coordinators. We are so grateful to all our ministry heads for their servant leadership, and for all our parishioners who provide support and life to these activities. Learn more about our ministries at www.queenofapostles.org/ministry.

"This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" If, in your listening to the Lord, you are sensing the invitation to follow Christ as a priest, deacon, sister, or brother, contact Fr. Juan, general@queenofapostles.org, or Fr. J. D. Jaffe, (703) 841-2514, or j.jaffe@arlingtondiocese.org.

Second Sunday of Lent—February 21, 2016 That all our priests, who bring us to the mountain of Christ at every Mass and feed us with His transforming love in the sacraments, will be strengthened in their life and mission, we pray to the Lord.

Please pray for the members of our parish who are ill

Kathleen Donohoe, Clarissa Trono De Guzman, Lyda Tanco, Mark Bush, Joseph Covas, Luta "Cornie" McGrath, Margaret Peiffer, David Stemcosky, Irma Mori, Rita Sulit, Jason Banis, Emma Collins, Teresa Sabina Piecyk, Bridgetta Jenkins, Juana Mejia, Lisa Nyce, Monique Brooks, Debby Sprah, Consuelo Jocson, Cheryl McGlynn, Teresa Subalusky, Theresa Corcoran, Cordelia Carcamo, Donna Smith, Andres Encinas Fernandez.

This Week in Our Parish

Sunday, February 21:

School 9:00–10:15 am Religious Education
Hannan Hall 2:00–5:30 pm Ghana Group

Monday, February 22:

Hannan Hall 7:00–8:30 pm Heads of Ministries Meeting
Parish Office 7:00–8:00 pm RCIA

Tuesday, February 23:

Hannan Hall 10:00–11:30 am Bible Study
Hannan Hall 7:30–9:30 pm Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, February 24:

Hannan Hall 5:30–6:30 pm Lenten Soup Supper
Hannan Hall 6:00–7:00 pm TFFP Talk: William McKenna
Parish Office 8:00–9:30 pm Saint Joseph Men's Group

Thursday, February 25:

Hannan Hall 6:30–8:00 pm High School Bible Study
Parish Office 6:30–8:00 pm Legion of Mary
Church 7:30–8:30 pm Holy Hour

Friday, February 26:

Adoration Chapel 11:00 am–12:00 noon Children's Adoration Hour
Church 2:20–3:00 pm Stations of the Cross
Adoration Chapel 3:00–4:00 pm Divine Mercy Chaplet
Cupertino Room 7:00–9:00 pm Hispanic Legion of Mary

Saturday, February 27:

Parish Office 9:00–11:00 am Financial Peace University
Parish Office 1:00–3:30 pm Stephen Ministry
School 4:00–6:30 pm Spanish Prayer Group
Hannan Hall 7:00–9:00 pm Ghana Choir Rehearsal

Sunday February 28:

School 9:00–10:15 am Religious Education
Hannan Hall 2:00–5:30 pm Ghana Group
Adoration Chapel 6:00–8:00 pm Prayer Group

RE Student Confession Near the end of class time every Sunday, Religious Education students from a certain grade level are invited to go to Confession before the 10:30 am Mass. As a family during the Jubilee Year of Mercy, consider receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation. During Lent, QofA has added times to the Confession schedule: www.queenofapostles.org/reconciliation/.



First Scrutiny/Presentation of Creed The First Scrutiny and Presentation of the Creed for our Elect are scheduled during Masses on **Feb. 27 and 28**. The Elect, formerly known as catechumens, and their godparents are invited to participate. RCIA-Spanish is at 7:00 pm on **Feb. 27**; RE students and RCIA-English are at 10:30 am on **Feb. 28**.

Men's Discernment Retreat Could Christ be calling you to the priesthood? Take a step to find out. A vocation-discernment retreat for men (ages 17–55) will be held **Mar. 18–20** at the San Damiano Retreat Center. Registration is \$60; assistance is available. For details or to register, contact Fr. J.D. Jaffe at (703) 841-2514 or vocations@arlingtondiocese.org.

Diocesan Men's and Women's Conferences All men of the parish are invited to the Diocese's annual men's conference on **Mar. 5**, at All Saints, Manassas. Speakers include Damon Owen, executive director of the Theology of the Body Institute; Fr. David Pignato, theology professor at St. John's Seminary, Boston; and Dr. Michael Horne, director of clinical services for Catholic Charities. For more details visit www.arlingtondiocese.org/men.

All women are encouraged to attend the annual women's conference on **Mar. 12** at St. Joseph's, Herndon. Speakers are Kathleen Beckman, author of *God's Healing Mercy*, and Sr. Clare Hunter, director of Respect Life for the Diocese of Arlington. For more information, visit www.arlingtondiocese.org/women.

Lenten Activities

Feb. 24 Lenten Soup Supper and Talk

This Wednesday's Lenten Soup Supper, beginning at 5:30 pm, will feature Dr. William McKenna of the Diocese of Arlington Catholic Charities. His talk is entitled *Marital Communication: The Psychology of Communio Personarum*. This talk will help identify negative communication and how to correct it so that your marriage can be the communion of persons that God desires it to be.



Sunday Confessions Beginning this Sunday, **Feb. 21**, and continuing each Sunday moving forward, our parish will offer the Sacrament of Confession from 10:00 am until the last penitent. Our priests will use the confessional behind the choir loft. Please take advantage of this grace-filled sacrament, which is now offered every day of the week at our parish. Consult the bulletin front cover for a listing of Confession times.

Stations of the Cross Stations are held every Friday during Lent at 7:00 pm in the Church. QofA School will also hold Stations on **Feb. 26** and **Mar. 4** and **11** at 2:20 pm in the Church.

English Classes at QofA School Hogar Immigrant Services offers English classes on Mondays and Wednesdays, 7:00–9:00 pm, at Queen of Apostles School. For the next three weeks late registration for classes will be offered only on Monday from 7:00–9:00 pm. There are six levels of classes. Cost is \$60 for the semester and includes the textbook. Cash or money orders only. For more information, call Hogar at (571) 208-1572.

40 Days for Life You are invited to join other Christians **Feb. 10–Mar. 20** for



40 Days for Life, forty days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion. You may also stand and pray peacefully during a forty-day vigil in the public right-of-way outside 101 S. Whiting Street, Alexandria. For more information or to volunteer, please email prolife@queenofapostles.org.

Pauline Books and Media Catholic Book Fair The Daughters of St. Paul, from Pauline Books & Media in Old Town, will have a book fair in the vestibule at QofA after all Masses the weekend of **Feb. 27–28**. The sisters will have a variety of biographies of saints, books for children and teens, Catholic fiction, Bibles, DVDs, music, and more.

Saint Faustina—Messenger of Mercy, a one-woman drama, comes to Holy Spirit Catholic Church on **Mar. 3**, 7:00–8:30 pm This internationally acclaimed presentation is based on Faustina's published diary. All ages welcome. No tickets needed; a free-will offering will be collected. Performance is in the church; ample parking, wheelchair accessible. 5121 Woodland Way, Annandale.

Evening of Recollection for Doctors The Catholic Medical Association invites medical doctors and their spouses and families to an evening of recollection on **Mar. 10** at St. Ambrose Church, 3901 Woodburn Rd, Annandale. Confessions are at 6:00 pm, followed by a conference and Mass. For more information, contact Fr. James Gould frgould@gmail.com.

Thank you for your generous contribution to the Poor Box. This weekend, the collection will go toward **Christ House**. Next weekend, the collection will go toward the **Poor Sisters of St. Joseph**.