

Mercy Restores Dignity

Today's Gospel is the most beautiful parable of the prodigal son. It is a remarkable coincidence that the section of St. John Paul II's encyclical *Rich in Mercy (RM)* for this week's article is precisely his commentary on this parable (*RM*, 5–6).



For the great pope, the point of the parable is that the real drama of the son is not having squandered his material goods, but something much more essential and precious: his dignity as son. "More important than these goods was his dignity as a son in his father's house" (*RM*, 5). As a consequence, the pardon the father offers is pointing to that dignity.

In the logic of justice, the son would only expect to be treated as a servant. However, the father welcomes him as his son and makes merry. Last week we learned that mercy is expressed as fidelity and compassion. Mercy is revealed because "The father of the prodigal son is faithful to his fatherhood, faithful to the love that he had always lavished on his son" (*RM*, 6). The son "who is the object of mercy does not feel humiliated, but rather found again and restored to value" (*RM*, 6).

The eyes of mercy can see the dignity of the person despite his needs or the evil he has done. Mercy never humiliates the one receiving it. "At times it happens that [...] we see in mercy above all a relationship of inequality between the one offering it and the one receiving it. And, in consequence, we are quick to deduce that mercy belittles the receiver, that it offends the dignity of man. The parable of the prodigal son shows that the reality is different" (*RM*, 6).

Jesus has these eyes of mercy when he approaches the sinner, and he asks us to have that same sight of mercy toward others, especially those close to us. Recognize the dignity my spouse has and honor it. Recognize, like the father in the parable, the son's dignity, which can never be negated. And the same with our relatives, neighbors, coworkers, etc. "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

Nourishing Our Souls with Holy Scripture

Readings for Next Week:

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Is 43:16–21 Phil 3:8–14 Jn 8:1–11 (36)



Fourth Sunday of Lent Masses this Week

Monday, March 7: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am +Mary Tsakanikas
9:00 am +George Davis

Tuesday, March 8: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am +Norman Bickart
9:00 am +Lance Atiyeh

Wednesday, March 9: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am +Joan Vargas
9:00 am +George Davis

Thursday, March 10: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am (L) Gerard Christman
9:00 am +George Davis

Friday, March 11: Lenten Weekday

6:30 am +Julia Toro
9:00 am +Estela Opena

Saturday, March 12: Lenten Weekday

8:00 am +George Davis
5:00 pm +Kathryn Yates
7:00 pm +Ramon Velez

Sunday, March 13: Fifth Sunday of Lent

7:30 am +Rosemary Byrne Greenbaum
9:00 am +Michael Krescanko
10:30 am Living and Deceased Parishioners
12:00 noon +Ed Wholey Jr.



Bishop's Lenten Appeal (BLA) Update

As of Feb. 25, our parish has reached 72% of our goal of \$180,000! Thank you for your generosity in supporting the many fruitful activities of our Diocese and Parish. Among the direct beneficiaries of the BLA are our two Parish seminarians, as well as many students in our school. 27% of our registered households have contributed to the 2016 BLA thus far.

Visit www.arlingtondiocese.org/giving/lenten_appeal.aspx to make your pledge online if you haven't pledged already. Once again, thank you for your generosity in supporting the Church and her local missionary activities.

"God is making His appeal through us." Does a life dedicated to furthering the grace of reconciliation in Christ for others appeal to you? Consider a vocation as a priest, deacon, or in the consecrated life. Contact Fr. Juan at general@queenofapostles.org, or Fr. J.D. Jaffe at (703) 841-2514, or write: j.jaffe@arlingtondiocese.org.

Fourth Sunday of Lent—March 6, 2016 For the faithful response of all persons now being called to seek out those who are lost and bring them back to life in Christ by serving Him and His Church as priests, deacons, sisters and brothers, 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, March 6:

Hannan Hall 8:30 am–2:00 pm Rome Pilgrimage Pancake Brkfst
 School 9:00–10:15 am Religious Education
 School 10:30 am–1:30 pm QofA School Open House
 Hannan Hall 2:00–5:30 pm Ghana Group

Monday, March 7:

Parish Office 7:00–8:00 pm RCIA

Tuesday, March 8:

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

Wednesday, March 9:

Hannan Hall 5:30–6:30 pm Lenten Soup Supper
 Hannan Hall 7:00–9:00 pm Ghana Prayer Group

Thursday, March 10:

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

Friday, March 11:

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
 Hannan Hall 6:00–7:30 pm Talk on Parenting
 Church 7:00–8:00 pm Stations of the Cross
 Cupertino Room 7:00–9:00 pm Hispanic Legion of Mary

Saturday, March 12:

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, March 13:

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

Lenten Activities This Week

This Friday, **Mar. 11**, from 6:00–7:30 pm in Hannan Hall, our parish will host the next in our series of Lenten talks: on *Parenting*. Our speaker is Sara June Carroll, Resident in Marriage and Family Therapy for the Center for Connection, Healing, and Change.

Weekly Lenten Activities will continue as scheduled, including the Lenten Soup Supper on Wednesday, **Mar. 9**, at 5:30 pm; Stations of the Cross at 2:20 pm and 7:00 pm on Friday, **Mar. 11**; and daily Confessions as listed on the front cover of the bulletin.

All Saints Car Raffle Thanks to all who have returned their car raffle tickets. Special thanks to those who have picked up extras to sell to relatives, friends, co-workers, and others. So far, your efforts have helped to contribute more than \$3,000 to our youth ministries and school! Stop by the parish office during the week to replenish your supply of tickets!



Holy Land Carvings During the weekend of **Mar. 12–13** there will be a sale of hand-made olivewood carvings from the Holy Land in the vestibule. These carvings, made by Christians in Bethlehem, provide a valuable source of income. You

can support our brothers and sisters in faith by purchasing some of these beautiful carvings after Mass.

VIRTUS Training On Saturday, **Apr. 1**, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, our parish will host a VIRTUS training session in Hannan Hall. This training is mandatory for any adult, age 18 or older, to volunteer in activities at Queen of Apostles Church and School where the activity in question will involve substantial contact with minors. If you have any questions about the training or whether you need to attend, call Maria Fox at the parish school at (703) 354-0714. If you are ready to enroll for the Apr. 1 training session, you can do so online by going to www.virtus.org.

Queen of Apostles School will host an open house this Sunday, **Mar. 6**, from 10:30 am–1:30 pm. Come learn more about registering your child in our parish school for the next school year. For more information, you can contact the school at (703) 354-0714 or visit www.queenofapostlesschool.org.



School Accomplishments In February, eight QofA students represented the school at the MathCounts competition at George Mason University. These students competed with 47 other schools in one of the largest math events in the country. A seventh grader was the high scorer for QofA. Congratulations to all of these Mathletes!

Religious Education (RE) Registration

for the 2016-2017 RE school year will open in April. Classes begin in September. For new students, a birth certificate, baptismal certificate (if applicable), and tuition must be submitted at the time of registration. Students over the age of seven must attend and participate in RE classes for two consecutive years before receiving a Sacrament. In general, baptized students receive First Confession and First Holy Communion in second grade or higher; baptized students receive Confirmation in eighth grade or higher. The QofA RE program is designed so that each year builds on the next.



A Mandatory Confirmation Meeting with Fr. Juan will be held Sunday, **Mar. 13**, from 9:00–10:15 am for parents of students who desire and are preparing for Confirmation. The meeting will take place in the multipurpose room at QofA School.

Church Pilgrimage Young adults (20s & 30s) are invited to join seminarian Stephen Vaccaro on a traditional Holy Thursday devotional pilgrimage. Meet at St. Michael's church in Annandale immediately following the 7:30 pm Holy Thursday Mass on **Mar. 24**. If interested, please RSVP to Mary at St. Michael's parish office, (703) 256-7822.

¿Necesita ayuda para completar su aplicación de ciudadanía? Catholic Charities Hogar Immigrant Services será el anfitrión de un taller de la ciudadanía el 19 de marzo en Queen of Apostles Catholic School—4409 Sano Street, Alexandria, VA 22312. La inscripción será desde las 10 de la mañana a 1 de la tarde. Por favor llame a (571) 208-1572 para preguntas o más información sobre qué documentos debe traer. Habrá un cargo de \$120 para una consulta con un abogado, ayuda con su aplicación de ciudadanía y fotografías. Vamos aceptar efectivo o tarjeta de crédito.

Thank you for your generous contribution to the Poor Box. This weekend the collection will go toward **Parish Needs**. Next weekend the collection will go toward **ACCA** and the **Missionaries of Charity**.