



**St. John Baptiste de LaSalle Catholic Church**

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**St. Stephen Catholic Church**

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**Rev. Mr. Harold Markle** 336-466-4173  
**Sister Janis McQuade, S.S.J.** 336-835-4542  
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**Mr. Cuauhdemoc (Temoc) Herrejon** 828-773-2353

**St. John**

**Mary Buran, Karen Huffman** Music Ministry  
**Sabrina Caudill** Parish Accountant  
336-957-1295  
**Laura Yanas** Bookkeeper, Census  
**Ann Stone** RCIA

**St. Stephen**

**Theresa Martin** Music Ministry  
**Natalie Lopez** Youth Faith Formation  
**Peggy Reikowsky** Youth Faith Formation  
**Phillip Parriah** RCIA

**Worship Times**

**Saturday Vigil Mass**, 4:00p  
**Sunday Mass 11:15a**; En español, 1:00p  
**Daily Mass, Holy Days** Consult bulletin  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
Saturdays, 3:00-4:00p

**Sunday Mass** 9:00a  
**Communion Service** Tuesdays, 12:15p  
**Holy Days** 7:00p  
**Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
By appointment

**Welcome, New Parishioners**

*We are a Stewardship Community, sharing our time, talent, and treasure, in the most life-giving ways possible. Parishioners are expected to participate in weekly worship, in our community life, and in our service among our dear neighbors.*

**Sacramental Life ~ Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Matrimony**

*For Sacrament preparation, you must be a registered, active member and attend preparation sessions.*

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)**

*For those who desire to explore the Catholic Faith, spirituality, customs, and practices.*

**Anointing of the Sick**

*For those with chronic illness or who are pre-surgery, contact Father John or Sister Janis*

**Fifth Sunday of Lent**  
**March 17, 2023**

*Morning Church!*

Tell me: What did you give up for Lent? Chocolate, swearing, time on your phone ... The list is endless. Or maybe, you are someone who took something on. Are you practicing patience? Trying out a new prayer practice? Giving money to a favorite charity?

Whatever way you choose to mark this sacred season, there is something to be said for the ways in which we travel through the season of Lent. Lent, after all, is not about a destination. It is about intentionally making our way deeper into the heart of Jesus through the pathways of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

These practices are the routes that draw us deeper by bringing us into contact with God, ourselves and our neighbors. Prayer, fasting and almsgiving, when practiced with intention, are meant to free us, lightening our load and directing our path. Yet, without a keen eye toward intention, it is these same practices that can easily devolve into an obstacle course of instructions and restrictions: "You can do this and you can't do that."

What if this Lent, instead of holding tight to a roadmap marked with tasks or rules, the invitation was to a more free-range traveler's point of view, to explore the art of accompaniment as it plays out in our everyday lives?

As Pope Francis writes in *Fratelli Tutti*, "we want to be a Church that serves, that leaves home and goes forth from its places of worship, goes forth from its sacristies, in order to accompany life, to sustain hope, to be the sign of unity... to build bridges, to break down walls, to sow seeds of reconciliation." If this is the church we want, then we must learn to be pilgrims who journey with others, who allow the spirit of the tasks we undertake — the spirit of the law — to draw us deeper into relationship with God and our neighbors.

A friend and canon lawyer once advised me, "Before anything else, consider the people before you. Get to know them. Come to love them. And then, walking with them, you will be able to find a way forward." In essence, he was saying that people have stories and it is only by entering into their stories and intertwining our own with theirs that we can truly serve the people of God. The law, it would seem, seeks to serve the Gospel and not the other way around.

This fact becomes readily apparent when we turn to Jesus' interactions with rule sticklers throughout his ministry. These are the ones who were diligently trying to find a way to the final destination (or in some cases trying to trip Jesus up on the law of love he was proposing).

They are like the scholar of the law who asks, "Who is my neighbor?" after clarifying the call to love God fully and your neighbor as yourself (and prompts the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 29-37)). These folks want to know the parameters of following Jesus; they are the ones who find comfort in the security of details. They are the dear hearts that seek a plan even when it means missing the details of the important paths that guide the way in between.

In the same category is the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18-30), who seems to have everything and to have done everything right and yet, still feels the absence of something more. When this pilgrim asks Jesus what more they must do, Jesus' reply is succinct: Sell everything and give it to the poor.

*Blessing the Seed*

<p>I should tell you at the outset: this blessing will require you to do some work. First you must simply let this blessing fall from your hand, as if it were a small thing you could easily let slip through your fingers, as if it were not most precious to you, as if your life did not depend on it. Next you must trust that this blessing knows where it is going, that it understands the ways of the dark, that it is wise to seasons and to times. Then— and I know this blessing has already asked much of you—</p>	<p>it is to be hoped that you will rest and learn that something is at work when all seems still, seems dormant, seems dead. I promise you this blessing has not abandoned you. I promise you this blessing is on its way back to you. I promise you— when you are least expecting it, when you have given up your last hope— this blessing will rise green and whole and new.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">~ Jan Richardson</p>
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*...unless the grain  
of wheat falls...*

*(How is that for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving?)*

As we journey through the wilderness this Lent, we must realize that we cannot journey alone.

Considering a call to accompaniment this Lent, it is the latter part of this command — "give it to the poor" — that piques my interest. Selling everything is a big ask. It requires complete and total surrender, but what's more is Jesus' call to give it to the poor. That act is the very first step in true following. It is more than making a donation — it is a call to accompaniment.

Take all that is yours and make it ours, Jesus is instructing. In this context, "giving" is an invitation to relationship, to search out those most in need and to join them in their poverty, to give oneself to accompany and be accompanied in the act of giving that lies at the root of genuine relationship.

In this way, those in need (and really anyone we truly accompany) become our teachers and our companions. Opening ourselves to their need exposes our own neediness and at the margins of our meeting we are pushed not just to reach out but to unite our story with theirs.

Unified in this way, we mourn and laugh together, we seek justice and hunger for what will nourish together, and ultimately, we follow Jesus and find renewed hope and strength in the promises of God together.

In this togetherness, we accompany one another. We realize that the aid we offer one another is not a one-way street, just as no relationship can be. "True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness," Pope Francis reminds us in *Evangelii Gaudium*. Tenderly walking with one another, we are evangelizers ever in need of evangelization.

Good News, it turns out, is for all. No one has exclusive rights as giver or receiver. In fact, if we see ourselves as both, we may just find that as we open ourselves to one another, we are more naturally open to God's activity in us and around us.

Such openness brings forth a vulnerability, equanimity and humility that predisposes us to mercy and grace. These qualities bond us together. They require us to take a long hard look at our motivations and intentions. As Australian artist and activist Lilla Watson famously attests, "If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." Truly, our salvation is bound up together.

As we journey through the wilderness this Lent, we must realize that we cannot journey alone. As sure as we are called to accompany others, God is accompanying us. God listens and loves us, as my lawyer friend would say, intertwining the story of salvation with our own personal narrative. After all, we follow the Way of Jesus not just in reflecting on the stories of his life, death and resurrection, but by sensing that the Way — Jesus Christ — walks with us. Every step that we take in accompaniment with others is a step we take with Jesus. And just as we are one with others, we are invited into greater oneness with Jesus — coming to know God and know ourselves more fully in the holy act of accompaniment.

While accompaniment is meant to be part of our everyday lives, the 40 days of Lent give us a concentrated time to practice what we preach: to meet our neighbors, to put aside our ego and to unite with others in our need for and dependence on God.

At the end of these days, we will not have reached a destination, but with any hope, we will find ourselves further along the Way, more deeply embedded in grace and more fully disposed to give everything that we are and everything that we have to God and our neighbors. Ultimately, this is the call of accompaniment: that we might follow Jesus wherever he calls, giving all that it takes and taking on all that it requires, so that we might find our hearts walking hand in hand toward the transformative new life of Easter.

In CommUNITY,



*This reflection is by Colleen Gibson, SSJ, who ministers in Wellesley and Newton, MA at St. John and St. Paul Churches*

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 **HEARTwork**

*~ Reflecting and Acting on The Word ~*

*Who do you know is a "grain of wheat"? When I think of those who give their lives for others, I think of... because...*

**Readings <https://bible.usccb.org/>**

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<b>MARCH</b>	
17 	5th Sun Lent RCIA Rite of Scrutiny III Family Faith Formation, 10:30-12N
18	SSJA Gathering 10a 
19	Happy St. Joseph Day ~ SSJ Mass, WS Ministerial Assoc., 12N Communion Service, 12:15p EMPTY BOWLS Yadkin Christian Ministries
	20 RCIA, 6p; Choir, 7p 
21	Wise Ones, Shiki's Restaurant, 1p Barbara & Bob DeJohn, (336) 737-4056 SSJ ZOOM 6:30-8:30P 
22	Stations of the Cross, 6p
23	<i>Memorial Mass: + Clyde Colwell, 11a</i>
24	<b>Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion</b> NO Family Faith Formation
Ministerial Association <b>Holy Week Service &amp; Luncheon</b> Monday ~ Friday 12N-1p First United Methodist Church, Elkin	
26	NO Communion Service
31	Easter Sunday, 9a NO Family Faith Formation



...Danny Kerr for crafting and donating a safety grate for the spill pipe on the side lawn of the church.....TYVM!

...we received a thank you letter from the Feed the Elderly's Interim director, Jane Motsinger, for a gift that provided 204 meals for the homebound of our community...in the name of the parish, thank you to the donor...

...Arelis, Lee, and Michael Hadfield, who donated and replaced ALL of the lightbulbs in church...thank you all for your generosity and love!



### *Easter Flowers*

If you wish to honor or memorialize a loved one, you can make an Easter flower donation using the envelope in the pew.

PRINT your name on the front, the amount enclosed, and your envelope # on the front.

Put the names of those you wish to remember on the back. Put the envelope in the collection basket.

<b>☘ Mass Intentions</b>	
17	Kate Delaney; Larry Liss
24	+Michael A. Garwood, Sr.; +St. Oscar Romero
28	+Clyde Colwell r/b Ladies Guild
30	Stephen Faust, Jacob Wagoner, Ethan VanHorn, John Orta, Phillip Parrish

### *Birthdays & Anniversaries*



- |                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 16 Cathy King                    | 23 Cindy Whitley    |
| 16 Karen Rodriguez               | 23 Yovanni Martinez |
| 22 Margarita Serafin & Memo Lara |                     |
| 19 Ericka & Ruben Ramirez        |                     |
| 24 Jane & Rob Worley             |                     |



<b>March 24</b>	Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion
<b>March 28</b>	Holy Thursday, 7p
<b>March 29</b>	Woman of Jerusalem, 5:30p Celebration of the Lord's Passion, 7p
<b>March 30</b>	Holy Saturday, Easter Vigil, 8p
<b>March 31</b>	Easter Sunday, 9a

### *Pope Francis Walking the Word:*

Jesus brought new hope into the world...  
 he did so in the manner of the seed:  
 he became very small, like a grain of wheat;  
 he left his heavenly glory in order  
 to come among us: he "fell into the earth".  
 Yet this still was not enough.  
 In order to bear fruit, Jesus experienced love  
 to the fullest, allowing himself to be split open  
 by death as a seed lets itself split open  
 under the ground.  
 Precisely there, at the lowest point  
 of his abasement - which is  
 also the loftiest point of love  
 - *hope flourished.*  
 Should one of you ask:  
 How is hope born?  
 ~ *from the Cross.*



# Praying the Stations of the Cross



Jesus, make my faith stronger. Help me to trust you more.



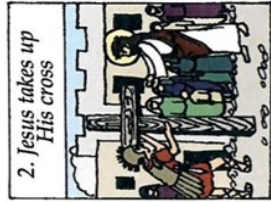
Jesus, give me strength to help and love all who are in need.



Jesus, give me a strong heart to follow you every day.



Jesus, help me to be loving and tender with those who are in pain, sick or dying.



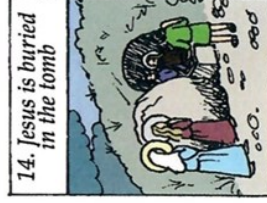
Jesus, help me accept and do what is hard to do.



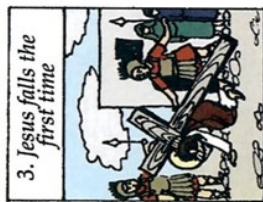
Jesus, give me courage to do what is loving, kind, and brave.



Jesus, help me to stay strong when others make fun of me.



Jesus, you kept every promise you made to us. Help me keep my promises.



Jesus, help me say I'm sorry when I make an unloving choice.



Jesus, when I fail to love as you did, Help me apologize and do better.



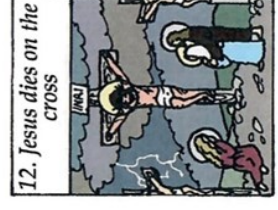
Jesus, when I experience pain or hurt, help me to be brave and face it.



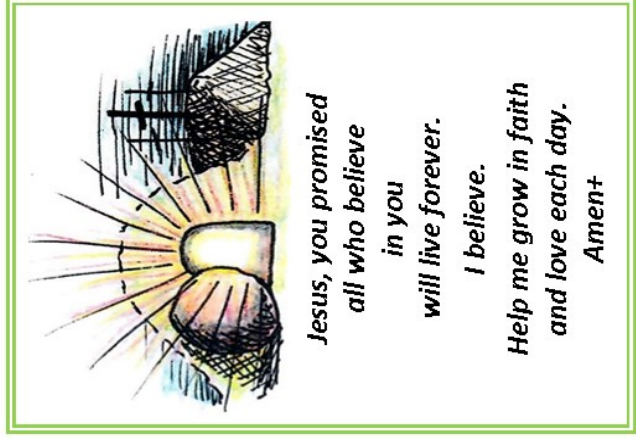
Jesus, help me to see my parents' loving help as your love



Jesus, help me to be loving with those who are sad or lonely.



Jesus, you loved us and sacrificed your life for us. Help me to be generous with my life, too.



Jesus, you promised all who believe in you will live forever. I believe. Help me grow in faith and love each day. Amen+



# *Unless a grain falls to the ground and dies...*



Jesus knew He was going to die soon. It made Him sad, but He knew that He had to do it. He told the apostles, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." Because Jesus died, we can be freed from our sins and live!

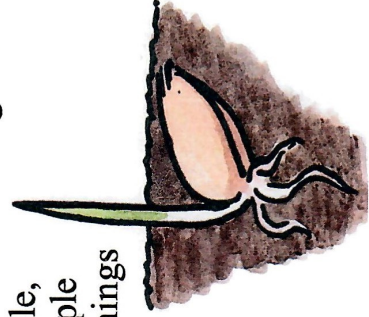
Have you ever tried planting seeds? The little seeds are hard and dry and seem to be dead. We put them into some damp soil, and cover them up. After a few days you can see little sprouts coming out of the soil, and soon there are little plants growing! Maybe your Mom or Dad can help you plant some seeds this spring.



Our Lord was telling His friends that He had to be like a seed. He would die and be buried, and then after a few days, come back to life! And like a plant that grows and produces more seed, the Church would grow from Jesus and bring other holy people, saints, into the world. Saints are people that are ready to give up their good things and even their lives for love of God, just like Jesus.

Are you ready to be a saint?

Answer to Word Find:  
Salvation.

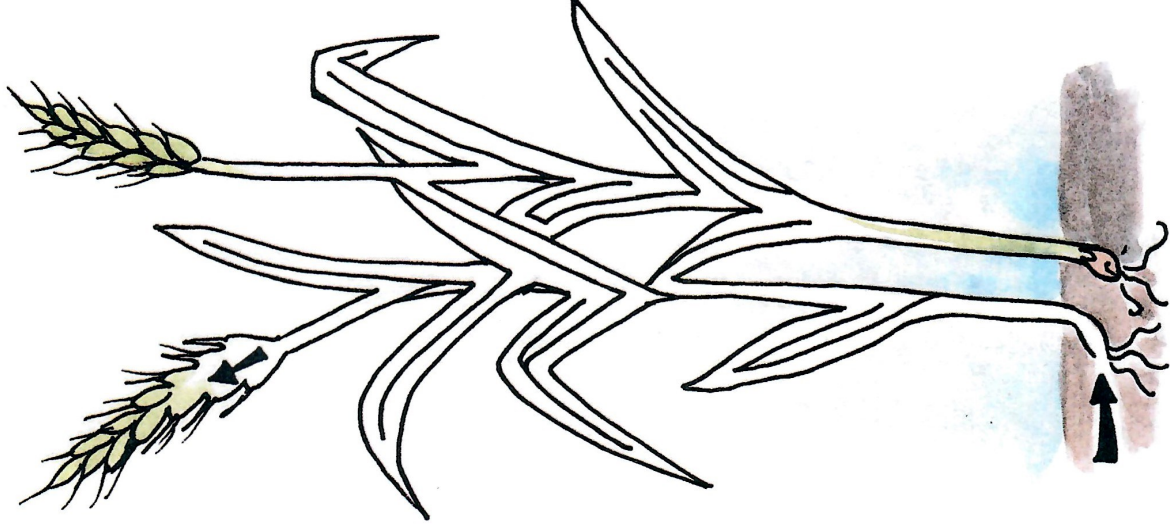


# The Kids' Bulletin

Fifth Sunday of Lent  
March 17th, 2024

In today's Gospel reading Jesus says, "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

Can you find your way from this grain of wheat to the new seeds at the top?





# Saint Joseph

## March 19

JOSEPH WAS A HOLY JEWISH MAN BETROTHED TO THE VIRGIN MARY WHEN SHE BECAME THE MOTHER OF JESUS. AN ANGEL TOLD HIM THAT HER SON WAS FROM GOD.

SAINT JOSEPH WAS HONORED TO CARE FOR THE SON OF GOD AND HIS MOTHER MARY.

HE WAS FAITHFUL IN HIS DUTIES TO GOD AND HIS FAMILY.

The evil king won't be able to find us in Egypt...

WHEN THERE WAS DANGER HE PROTECTED JESUS.

JOSEPH CARED FOR JESUS AS IF HE WAS HIS OWN SON.

JESUS GREW UP IN A LOVING FAMILY AND LEARNED TO WORK WELL FROM JOSEPH'S EXAMPLE.

SAINT JOSEPH SPENT HIS LIFE IN A HIDDEN WAY, PROVIDING FOR MARY AND JESUS BY HIS WORK. HE DIED WITH JESUS AND MARY AT HIS SIDE.

SAINT JOSEPH HAD ONE OF THE BEST JOBS THAT ANYONE COULD POSSIBLY HAVE: TO LOOK AFTER GOD THE SON! STILL, HE LIVED A QUIET AND HUMBLE LIFE, JUST DOING HIS WORK AND BEING A GOOD AND JUST MAN. SAINT JOSEPH IS READY TO CARE FOR US AS WELL- WE JUST NEED TO ASK HIM FOR HELP!

# Psalm 51 Word-Find

S A G R E A T N E S S  
 S C O M P A S S I O N  
 T E I U N C L E A N  
 E A L T S C R E W S  
 D F A O S T R E A T I N C  
 T H A S T R E W S I N C  
 I Y E

See if you can find the words from today's Psalm that are in CAPITALS in the puzzle!

The leftover letters tell what the author of the Psalm was asking God for!

Have **MERCY** on me, O **GOD**,  
 in your **GOODNESS**;  
 in the **GREATNESS** of your **COMPASSION**  
 wipe **OUT** my **OFFENCE**.  
**THOROUGHLY WASH** me from **MY GUILT**  
 and of my **SIN CLEANSE** me.

A clean **HEART CREATE** for me, O **God**,  
 and a **STEADFAST spirit RENEW** within me.  
**CAST** me not out from your **PRESENCE**,  
 and your Holy Spirit **TAKE** not from me.