

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - Season of the Year

## **MASSES & INTENTIONS**

### **SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 2018**

**4:30 P.M. MASS** – Bernice Vidrine, Donald Fontenot, Deloise DeVille, Souls in Purgatory, Jeremy Rider, Fran Meaux, Rose, Houston & Gladys Ardoin, Joseph Fontenot, Keith LeJeune, John, Willie & Edith Spears, Willie, Allie, Larry & Raymond Lanthier, Paul & Rose Frank

### **SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2018**

**7:30 A.M. MASS** – *Pro Populo* (For the People)

**10:00 A.M. MASS** – Marvin Banks, Carol & Keith Deshotel, Errol Deshotels, M/M Frank Fontenot, M/M Shannon Mancil, M/M Todd Manuel Fly., Melca Manuel, Dean Manuel, Edward Maddox, Henry Heinen, Leonard Beaubouef & Sons, Angelle L. Durio & Linda LeJeune

### **MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2018**

**NO MASS**

### **TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2018**

**5:30 P.M. MASS** – Raymond Cardinal Burke

### **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2018**

**6:30 A.M. MASS** – Walter Deshotel, Sr.

### **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2018**

**6:30 A.M. MASS** – George & Clara Schneider

### **FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2018**

**6:00 P.M. MASS** – Hunter Carmouche

### **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2018**

**8:00 A.M. MASS** – Sr. Zélie Thérèse of the Redeemer

**4:30 P.M. MASS** – Donald Fontenot, Deloise DeVille, Jeremy Rider, Fran Meaux, Sox Gordon, Keith LeJeune, Helin & Glenn Sonnier, Anne Hance Guidry, M/M Willard Picard, Barbara Murray Fly., Liv. & Dec.

### **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2018**

**7:30 A.M. MASS** – *Pro Populo* (For the People)

**10:00 A.M. MASS** – Juan H. Lucero Castellano, Juan H. Lucero Ruiz, Milagros Castellano Perez, Guihermo Consuegra Garcia, Manuela Travieso Rodriguez, Marvin Banks, Carol Deshotel, Errol Deshotels, Leonard Beaubouef & Sons, Savannah & Curley Gradney, Sr., Kashmira & Antonio Cart, M/M Scott Thibodeaux

**Last Week's Collection**

**\$4,664.00**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Collection – Church in Latin America**

#### **PRAYER LIST**

Amy Bairnsfather, Phil Beard, Charles Beaubouef, Quintan Bell, Jocie Bergeron, Joan Bertrand, Alvin & Sonja Billodeaux, Pauline Boudreaux, Bruce & Diana Brakel, Brandon Bridgwel, Douglas Briscoe, Lincoln & Louise Briscoe, Margaret Briscoe, Ambrose Bushnell, Bernice Bushnell, Helen Bushnell, Steve & Roxane Campbell, Kristin Carlton, Hunter Carmouche, David & Natalie Carrier, Rosabelle Carrier, Megan Cart, Linda Beaubouef Cazes, Ailene Chapman, Paula Chaumont, Vivian Cole Fly., Florence Comeaux, Richard Cooper, Larry Cormier, Virginia Cottongin, Jay Crittle, Aiden Darbonne, Rynree Darbonne, Shaun Darbonne, Jackie Deville, Cindy Dowies, Jabe Doyle, Donna Dunnahoo, Amy Duplechain, Bryker Fontenot, David Fontenot, Mary O. Fontenot, Paul Fontenot, Steven Fontenot, Verlis Fontenot, Roy Frank, Zaylen Frank, Tim Germany, Daniel Goodley & Fly., Mary Ann Goodley, Phielomone Goodly, Freddy & Becky Gorman, Bruce Granger, Jr., Jennifer Granger, Linda Green, Victoria Guillory, Bob Haas, Harrison Harmon, Joseph Harmon, Mildred Harmon, Ester Harmon, Sunni Hurst, Charlene Ireland, John, Shenita & Perella Jackson, Grady Johnson, Joey James, Brayden Johnson, Joyce Johnson, Colt Laborde, Paul LaFleur, Kristen Labauve, Charles Lacey, Rene Lambert, Essie Langley, Grayce LaRacca, Dwain LeBleu, Tina Lantier, Lou, Joseph, & Adam LeJeune, Willie Mae LeJeune, Doc Lowe, Benny Manuel, Kevin Manuel, LuLu Manuel & Fly., Pat Manuel & Fly., Louana McGee, Reed McIver, Bonnie McNabb, Patricia Mikas, Rita & Billy Miller, Ray Marcantel, Trista Marler, Brandy McCarty, Christina McNutt, Ronald Meaux, Russell Meaux, Clifford Montou, Glen Morgan, Carolyn Morgan, Frank

Mougeot, Andrew Norwood, Nicholas Odum, Debbie & Phil Owen & Fly., Joey Owen, Martel & Gabriella Papillion, Howard Patin, Hannah Popillion, Linda & Don Potier, Jimmy Prudhomme, Ena Prudhomme Fly., Erin Ramos, Renaldo & Kathy Ramos, Ashton Read, Reid Redlich, Ann Reed, Cheryl Reed, Dora Reed, Gary Reed, Lynda Reed, Irving Reed, Sandra Reed, Octavia Reeves & Fly., Will Reid, Sharon, Richard, Jonathan, Hayley, Jayden, Ryleigh, Skylie, Jackson, Martha, Rusty, and Patsy Rider, Janice Rider, Salis Rider, Vera Ross, Fr. Fred Russi, Evelyn Sandell, Tina Sapienza, Quentin Savoie, Sister Ann Margaret Savant, Tucker Scimemi, Aerial Storer, Celeman Thomas, Matthew Truman, Dollyanna Victorian, Dana Vidrine, Steve Vidrine, Joseph Vizena, Linda Voeller, JoAnn Welch, Odelia & Ernest Wilson, Nicole Young, Theresa Young

**Vocations Candle and Cross** – Mr. & Mrs. Bobby Brandon

#### **Knights of Columbus Dues**

It's that time of year again. KC dues are \$25 and may be paid at the meetings or by mailing to Craig LeJeune at 9842 Hwy 165, Oberlin, LA.

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#### **This Week @ SJoA**

- ❖ Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup> – NO MASS
- ❖ Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup> – MASS at 5:30 P.M.
- ❖ Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> – Adoration 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.; CCD and Youth Group

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#### **THE SAINTS TEACH ABOUT CHASTITY**

##### **St. John Paul II**

- "Chastity is a difficult, long term matter; one must wait patiently for it to bear fruit, for the happiness of loving kindness which it must bring. But at the same time, chastity is the sure way to happiness."
- "Deep within yourself, listen to your conscience which calls you to be pure . . . a home is not warmed by the fire of pleasure which burns quickly like a pile of withered grass. Passing encounters are only a caricature of love; they injure hearts and mock God's plan."
- "Only the chaste man and chaste woman are capable of love."
- "[God] has assigned as a duty to every man the dignity of every woman."

##### **St. Augustine**

- "Lust indulged became habit, and habit unresisted became necessity."

##### **St. Jose Marie Escriva**

- "'Purity?' they ask. And they smile. They are the ones who go on to marriage with worn-out bodies and disillusioned souls."
- "Don't say, 'That's the way I am—its my character.' It's your lack of character. *Vir esto!* – Be a man!"
- "To defend his purity, Saint Francis of Assisi rolled in the snow, Saint Benedict threw himself into a thornbush, Saint Bernard plunged [himself] into an icy pond ... [and] You ... what have you done?"
- "When you decide firmly to lead a clean life, chastity will not be a burden on you: it will be a crown of triumph."

##### **St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

- "A clean heart is a free heart. A free heart can love Christ with an undivided love."

##### **St. Leonard of Port Maurice**

- "If you desire to be chaste, be retired, be modest, be mortified."

##### **Our Lady of Fatima**

- "More souls go to hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason."

##### **God**

- "My son, take My words to heart and you shall live." (cf. Proverbs 4:10)

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - Season of the Year

A frugal farmer was on his way to market one day when he saw a piece of string lying on the road. He thought it might come in useful, so he bent down to pick it up...just as a passerby saw him put it into his pocket.

Later a man's wallet containing several hundred dollars was reported lost in the same spot, so the police asked the farmer what he knew about it. They didn't believe him when he told them he'd only picked up a piece of string. Indeed, the entire town laughed at the farmer's explanation. He tried to tell everyone around town the true story of what happened, but nobody believed him. He couldn't sleep that night and was absolutely miserable over everyone thinking he was a thief.

The next day the wallet was found lying empty on the road. The farmer happily told everyone this new detail, but by now he'd been judged guilty by common consent of all the town's people. They decided this latest detail was just a clever trick by the farmer so he could keep the money.

His reputation ruined, the farmer returned home. He brooded over the incident until it drove him to a nervous breakdown and mental illness. He kept babbling over and over to himself, "A piece of string. It was only a piece of string." He died soon after that.

As we complete our examination of the 8th Commandment, this story touches on so much of what we've already learned. It also covers some of what we'll look at today—calumny, contumely, libel, secrets, and reparation for sins against the commandment.

Calumny is probably a new word for some of you. Calumny, which we commonly call slander today, is the making of "remarks contrary to the truth [which harm] the reputation of others and give occasion [of] false judgment concerning them."(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2477) Calumny is gravely immoral, as everyone has a right to a good reputation.

If calumny was a new word for some of you, I suspect contumely is a new word for most of you. I know I didn't know either word when I first started studying Catholicism, but they really are words that were at one time common in our language. Anyway, contumely is showing contempt for a person by unjustly dishonoring him. It may be committed by ignoring the person, refusing to show him the proper signs of respect, or through ridicule. Not only is this a sin against the 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment, but it tempts the person being disrespected to anger, revenge and other sins.

Libel is any false or malicious written or printed statement or any sign, picture, or effigy tending to injure a person's reputation in any way. We commonly see this today when a political cartoonist abuses his liberty in favor of license to harm a political enemy. I'm not saying all political cartoons are libelous. I'm merely saying that they often go too far.

We also see violations of the 8th Commandment regarding secrets. We're obliged to keep secrets if we have promised to do so, if our office requires it (lawyers, doctors, priests, etc.), or if the good of others demands it.

Covered under this prohibition against revealing secrets extend to reading the private letters and writings of others. We may never read such letters or the private writings of others (diaries, etc.) without the person's permission, unless the motive for reading them is to prevent grave harm to oneself, another, or

society. For example, say your friend has been very depressed and you're concerned about him. You can't find your friend one day, but do find a letter he's written and left on his desk. Should you look at that letter? If you're concerned it could be a suicide note then you can look at it. If it is a suicide note, you're morally obligated to do something about it. If, however, it becomes apparent that the letter isn't a suicide note, then you're morally obligated to stop reading it and to keep to yourself the content of that part of the letter you've already read.

This indirectly leads us to the seal of confession. The vast majority of people believe the seal of confession applies only to priests. That simply isn't the case. "The secret of the sacrament of reconciliation is sacred, and cannot be violated under any pretext." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2490) Therefore, if you somehow gain knowledge of matter for someone's confession you must never reveal that knowledge to anyone.

This extends to seeing or becoming privy to someone's sin that hasn't yet been confessed, as it is potential matter for confession—whether the person confesses it or not. The only exception to that is in the case of a felonious act. But even if you come to know of a felonious act because you may have overheard a sacramental confession, you are obliged to keep that information to yourself. It is gravely immoral to violate the seal of confession...even if you merely overheard a confession. I know I've overheard several confessions while waiting to see the priest myself, because the person ahead of me speaks too loudly. What I've overheard will die with me...as it should you.

Reparation for sins against the 8th Commandment is absolutely necessary, and making reparation one time will keep you from ever committing that particular sin again. "Every offense committed against justice and truth entails the duty of reparation, even if its author has been forgiven. When it is impossible publicly to make reparation for a wrong, it must be made secretly. If someone who has suffered harm cannot be directly compensated, he must be given moral satisfaction in the name of charity. The duty of reparation also concerns offenses against another's reputation. The reparation, moral and sometimes material, must be evaluated in terms of the extent of the damage inflicted. It obliges in conscience."(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2487) Following is an example of reparation.

Let's say Deacon John owns a plumbing business, and you see his truck outside a known brothel at two o'clock in the morning. Your first obligation is to view that situation in the best possible light—he may be there on an emergency call to fix a busted water pipe. But rather than doing as you ought, you instead tell other people you saw his truck outside the brothel. Later, when you discover that he was indeed repairing a busted pipe, you must make reparation for telling others about what you saw. How is that done? You must go to everyone you told and correct what you told them. You must also find out who they told and go to them as well. You must also find out who *they* told and *go to them too*. **You must carry this reparation as far as is possible in the name of justice and charity!** So you can see it's much easier to learn to tame the tongue rather than let it move freely. I think St. James gives us the best advice in his epistle: "Wherefore, it is better to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath" (James 1:19). In other words, you have two ears and one mouth, so use them proportionately.

# Considerations at the Outset of Lent 2018 - Part I

- **“For I tell you, you will all perish, if you do not have penance.” (cf. Luke 13:4)**
- Penance, as we can infer from Our Lord’s words just cited, is necessary for salvation. Lent is a period of 40 days of required penance. During this holy season, we give up *good* things in order to find proper detachment from creaturely comforts. Note that I said “good” things, because we don’t give up bad or sinful things for Lent. We give them up *for life*.
- Below are a few suggestions of some good things you *might* consider parting company with for Lent. Since Lent is not far off, we should begin forming a “game plan” for it soon. To assist with this, I have offered several suggestions below. The list is not exhaustive, but it does contain things that, if “given up”, could be of tremendous spiritual and moral benefit. Initially, you may be surprised by some of them. I wouldn’t be shocked if some felt that they are heroic or even impossible. To me, when I think of the nature of sin and the holiness of God, these (and similarly difficult) penances simply seem “proportionate.” Here’s what I mean by that. It is not enough for us to give up *small conveniences* in Lent. The purpose of our penances is, *inter alia*, to make satisfaction for our sins. But what sacrifices should we make in order to repair the damage our sins have caused to our relationship with God or heal the misery our sins have introduced into the world? Speaking personally for my own sins, I know with certainty that giving up a small piece of chocolate doesn’t equate. *The remedy must in some way be proportionate to the offense.* In the days leading up to Lent, my mind naturally turns to the sinful woman shriven by Our Lord. His words to her should serve as our motivation for carefully selecting our Lenten disciplines: “Your sins, which are many, are forgiven, for you have loved much; but he who loves little is forgiven little.” (cf. Luke 7:47). Love and sacrifice are one and the same thing. Our sins require much of both if we expect to atone for them.

## 1. TELEVISION:

- a. TV isn’t bad but it does come with some risks. Did you know that the Saints have urged caution regarding TV?
- b. **St. John Bosco**, founder of the Salesian Religious Order and Patron of the Youth, once had a mystical vision of a black box looking thing. From his vision, he learned that it would corrupt the family. Since he died in 1888, that is, nearly 50 years *before* television was invented, St. John didn’t identify the object as a TV (how could he?), but his vision has proved prophetically true.
- c. Living in the age of the television, **St. Mother Teresa** of Calcutta referred to a TV as the “*devil’s tabernacle*.” She also said, “My television is the tabernacle.”
- d. Is the TV bringing you and your family *closer* to God? If not, isn’t it unreasonable to maintain the status quo? Does your TV lead you *away* from God? If so, why would you not change this?

## 2. SOCIAL MEDIA:

- a. Technology requires a high degree of virtue in order to use it well. Social media has a prominent role in the lives of countless people. Is it leading you to greater holiness?
- b. Here’s a *did you know?* In an interview with one of the pioneers of FaceBook, the gentleman spoke openly about how FaceBook was intentionally designed to take advantage of particular psychological flaws in human nature (e.g., the need to be affirmed ... or “liked”). Scary!

## 3. THE “SMART” PART:

- a. Like the first two items above, phones are not bad in and of themselves. It’s how we use them ... and man, do people ever use them ... like *all ... the ... time*. I would encourage you to reflect on how easy it is to spend an inordinate amount of time on these phones. There’s social media, internet, games, etc. Can you control this and keep it virtuous (both *time* and *content*)? If not, you need to grow stronger so that you can. Lent would be an ideal time to turn your phone into ... well, a *phone*. Calls (and maybe texts) only. Think about cutting all the other stuff out of your plan for Lent. (Doesn’t hurt to try.)

## 4. LISTENING TO SECULAR MUSIC:

- a. If we sincerely desire a real relationship with God in prayer, we have to regulate what we consume with our senses (eyes and ears especially). Music is a powerful medium that can either lead us to or away from God. Much of the music we hear popularly today is composed in order to stir up the passions. Some music intentionally conveys subtle or subliminal messages designed to corrupt innocence. Stated another way, not all music is good, even if we enjoy it. We need to be careful about the *type* of music we listen to.
- b. Additionally, are you capable of making a drive, or a run, or exercising, or doing your work, etc. without music? If we can’t handle silence, this usually says something about the state of our conscience. During this Lent, resolve to shut off all the popular music. Make a point to have substantial periods of silence, and, when listening to music, replace the “popular” stuff with music that can lead you to God by its objective beauty. To what am I referring? Well, there are many possibilities: Gregorian Chant, Sacred Polyphony, “Classical” music – Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Schubert, Haydn, Handel, etc. Look, I know what you’re thinking, but what I have recommended here is considered the most basic advice for spiritual direction. (It’s Spiritual Direction 101.) It isn’t “radical.” It’s necessary. And we shouldn’t worry if we aren’t familiar with this kind of music. We’re all capable of learning to appreciate objectively beautiful music. And when we put beautiful music in the soul, we find a peace theretofore unknown.

## 5. ALCOHOL:

- a. Alcohol is *truly* a gift from God (cf. Psalm 104:15). Therefore, it is *good*, but the festive and joyful nature of alcohol makes it ideal to give up during a season of penance.

## 6. CONJUGAL ACTIVITY: (For Married Couples)

- a. Yes, you read that correctly. You may be surprised to learn that one of the things married Catholics have given up throughout history during Lent is the enjoyment of the marital right. “Well,” you say, “thank God that’s *history*.” Perhaps this aspect of Lent is not as familiar to us as it

was to our ancestors, but that in no way diminishes its importance or relevance.

- b. We might simply ask ourselves, why would married Catholics remain continent during Lent? The answer is rather simple. Lent is a time of penance where we're called to give up good and pleasurable things in order to grow in virtue, obtain self-mastery, and atone for our sins. Sexual intercourse, on the other hand, is *highly pleasurable*. By maintaining continence during Lent a couple forgoes this good of marriage in order to accomplish those objectives. If we consider it dispassionately, it is simply putting faith into practice.
- c. Someone might think that observing continence during Lent is outdated, or that the Church would never even hint at something like this anymore. He would be wrong, though, because we find the recommendation in the First Reading from the Mass of Ash Wednesday: "**Let the bridegroom quit his room and the bride her chamber.**" (*Joel 2:16*) Those beautifully chaste words were inspired by the Holy Ghost Himself and have been set before us by the Church in the *modern* liturgy to remind a sex-saturated world of a perennial truth: everyone, even the married, must live chastely. Practicing periods of continence is one of the surest ways for the married to realize this. At least that's what St. Paul says in *1 Corinthians 7*, where he recommends that husbands and wives mutually agree to forgo the conjugal right for a "season" in order to grow closer to God. Now, doesn't it seem foolish to contradict an Apostle?

## 7. BATHING WITH HOT WATER

- a. *Yikes!!!* This one is *real* penance...but it makes for powerful expiation of sin. It is also a *REAL SAINT MAKER*. Did you know that **St. Mother Teresa** never used hot water for bathing? Her example reminds us that tough penances are called for in order to subdue fallen human nature.

## 8. THE SO-CALLED "SUNDAY EXCEPTION":

(*Unlike the others, this one is not a good.*)

- a. Over the years I have heard of Catholics – from both near and far – speak about how they give up things in Lent *except for on Sundays*. This has come to be known as the "Sunday exception." It is only right, however, that we put the words "so-called" in front of it, because it is incorrect to hold that the Sundays of Lent are not days of penance. The origin of this error is unknown to me, but I can tell you that it positively contradicts the clear teachings found in the *Code of Canon Law* and in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- b. Let's take the *Code of Canon Law* first. It clearly identifies the *entire season of Lent* (and *every Friday* of the entire year) as days of penance (cf. CIC 1250). Now, the last time I checked, the Sundays of Lent are actually Sundays of...well... *Lent*. As such, they too are days of penance.
- c. We continue. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* is in perfect agreement. It states that every day of Lent and each Friday of the entire year are "intense moments of penitential practice" (CCC 1438). Therefore, Sundays of Lent are in fact days of penance.

- d. Given these two points ("b" & "c"), there should be no confusion regarding the so-called "Sunday exception." It has a foundation neither in the Church's dogmatic teachings nor in her laws. As such, the so-called "Sunday exception" is **not** of the Catholic Faith. From a moral point of view, Catholics must understand that penance is *required* of them every day of Lent, including Sundays. Moreover, individual Catholics do **not** possess the authority to exempt themselves from penance on days when it is prescribed. (*This means that it is a sin if we do not do penance on a day designated as such.*) Consequently, we may not exempt ourselves from penance on a Lenten Sunday.
- e. Considering the Church's teaching and law, I urge you not to embrace this so-called "Sunday exception" thing. I discourage it for three reasons: **First**, if you break your Lent on Sundays, is it realistic to think that you will take up an alternative penance? Unlikely. But here's the thing: You are *required* to do penance on the Sundays of Lent, so it would be sinful if you failed in that respect. **Second**, there is no theological or historical evidence in support of the "Sunday exception." Even on *Laetare* Sunday in Lent (i.e., the midpoint of Lent), the intention isn't to "break" one's penance completely. Rather, the physical rigor is loosened somewhat so as to make a final charge to Easter. **Third**, we should be honest and admit that the so-called "Sunday exception" is not conducive to growth in holiness. It does not facilitate detachment; rather it encourages dependence on creaturely comforts. What our fallen human nature *really* needs, however, is discipline. *For which will lead us to genuine holiness, sustained prayer and penance or a bowl of ice cream every 7 days?* Sanctity is not to be found in indulgence. The freedom of the children of God comes through prayer and mortification. Therefore I encourage you not to exempt yourself from personal Lenten penances on the Sundays of Lent. What is begun on Ash Wednesday should be continued throughout the Easter Vigil Mass.
- f. As a means of concluding, I would like to anticipate an objection that is sometimes advanced in support of the so-called "Sunday exception." It has been argued that penance on Sundays is not fitting because that is the day of the Resurrection. According to this theory, each Sunday is something of a "little Easter." It follows, we are told, that the observance of penance on a Sunday is not appropriate. While it is true that we do in fact "celebrate the Easter mystery" each Sunday (c.f., *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 106), it does **not** follow that penance should be set aside on the Sundays of Lent. If it did, then both the *Code* and *Catechism* would be in error. This is not possible, however. Additionally, and more importantly, we must recall that each Mass can also be thought of as a "little Easter." For in it, Christ not only dies; He also *rises*. Does this mean that Mass must now be forbidden every day of Lent except Sundays? Must we outlaw Mass every Friday of the entire year? According to the flawed logic of the so-called "Sunday exception," this would be absolutely necessary. Put simply, this theory is absurd.