

Saint Francis Xavier Parish

Fifth Sunday of Lent

April 7, 2019



REV. DENNIS M. DINAN, PASTOR

ABBY RODDEN, PARISH SECRETARY

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:30AM-11:30AM

OR BY APPOINTMENT

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St. Francis Xavier Church

151 Bridge St., Narrowsburg

Masses

Saturday	4:30pm
Sunday	11:00am
Daily (Wednesday & Friday)	8:30am
Daily (Tuesday & Thursday)	6:30pm
Holydays of Obligation	As announced

Confessions

Saturdays	4:00pm
	Or by appointment

Our Lady of the Lake Church

Rt. 52, Lake Huntington

Masses

Sunday	8:30am
Holydays of Obligation	As Announced

Confessions & Daily Mass

At St. Francis Xavier

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT, APRIL 7, 2019

FATHER DENNIS M. DINAN

Dear Parish Family,

When my mother was alive, a place where sometimes she would like to eat was over at Settler's Inn in Hawley, PA. There was a collection of unique drawings then, replete with captions so the artist's meaning was obvious. One that always stood out and many times comes to mind is entitled, "Man Carrying a Grudge." It depicted a man *struggling* to carry this *bizarre* and considerably *weighty* "creature" under his arm. No doubt, the artist wanted us to see how hideous we look like when we act this way. It is also true when carrying any burden from the past. We all have baggage we bring with us. We all have weights on our shoulders that we can't, or refuse to, get rid of.

First, let us consider that Jesus knows us better than we know ourselves. He is the one who made the offer, "*Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light*" (Mt 11:28-30). Have you ever taken Jesus up on this?

Do you live in the past? Do you have a tendency to go back and mull over things of the past? Does the past hinder the present for you? Do you feel a weight from the past? Do you struggle with giving all of this up, laying down your arms—or your baggage—in this regard?

Each week, the Church chooses readings from Sacred Scripture to help us grow truly as we ought. Today, we have a series that can help us deal with "lingerings" from the past. We begin with the prophet Isaiah, his advice, and a case of God's power to transform, "*Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not. See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers*" (Is 43:18-19).

Most of you know the story! In my college year 1972-1973, I was studying psychology for the first time. I can recall the first day, the introduction; because it was one of the first times I had heard human behavior explained in such an analytic way (in a nutshell, basic human psychology is basic human behavior). I also saw something in this I could use to learn more about myself. The time was ripe. I was trying to rebound from a broken relationship that I hoped would lead to marriage. My teacher was not only schooled in psychology. He was also a priest, yes: Father Ed Smith from Bushwick, Brooklyn. I had a good feeling this was someone I could confide in. From the first day of class, I began to have conversations with him. It developed into a friendship from which I profited a great deal. Looking back I realize that many people coming from my background, growing up with an alcoholic, profited greatly from Al-Anon and Alateen. I had no familiarity with these. Luckily, I stumbled onto Father Smith.

Father let me speak freely, unloading my baggage. He corrected my thinking where he considered it necessary. He challenged me where I needed confidence and other things. He risked our friendship many times to tell me things he felt I needed to know. This was good! I was living pretty much as a failure! I remember once, moaning and groaning about how my father hampered my own personal development in my teens, to the point of being expelled from Catholic High School to the disgrace of my family. He had heard me spout out similar strings of complaints before. I guess, now, he had heard enough! He stopped me. He said, "All you are doing is blaming!" I said, "Yeah, OK. I have a right to!" "Sure you do, but do you know that blaming is useless? Blaming is always directed at the past. The past cannot be changed! You are living now! Now is the time you can change things. And so, the next time I see you, if your life is not any better, you have no one to blame but yourself!"

He just blew me away! He took away all my excuses! Up 'til then, I could easily defend my countless bouts of self-pity. But, Father seemed to know my potential, abilities and gifts

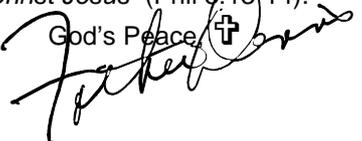
more than I did at the time. In fact, he was the first one to ask me seriously if I ever considered being a priest. He had strong shoulders too, because I simply laughed at him this, and many other times. That day, my life changed! Since then, I could no longer live in the past. I had been carrying things for years that were totally useless, except to blame and to sink into self-pity. For me, this was just feeding the worst of all our emotions.

My friendship with Father Smith did for me what each of us has the opportunity to experience: change! Yes, it had to be the grace of God. Yet, that high school dropout—the failure—took real responsibility for his life for the first time. Seeing the big picture, sixteen years later, before entering the seminary, it was really amazing to see all that had happened. I had a career on Wall Street for nine years, working in computers, developing the technical underpinnings for financial systems, becoming an officer in one of the most prominent banks there. I later had the confidence and courage to leave all that behind and throw myself into Software Engineering in Research & Design of new computer systems. For seven years, the former high school dropout had people with Masters Degrees and PhD's working for him. This was all because Father convinced me to leave the past behind. I suppose it also was the precondition I needed to leave all that behind and later follow what I believed was a call to the priesthood.

We may be oblivious to how powerfully this can work in our lives. We also may fail to recognize the more powerful gift of reconciliation that Jesus gives to each of us in the Church. Look at Saint Paul—his horrible past—how he acted, not only against people, but God himself. He tells all, "*You heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it*" (Gal 1:13). He comes clean, fully, confessing, "*I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and an arrogant man, but I have been mercifully treated because I acted out of ignorance in my unbelief*" (1 Tim 1:13). The reason he could do this is that his encounter with Jesus let him put the past behind. He came to know that, "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,*" and where he stood in this respect, "*Of these I am the foremost*" (1 Tim 1:15). Today, in the Second Reading, he describes his new lease on life, consisting of, "*Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus*" (Phil 3:13-14). Jesus similarly gives a new start to the woman in today's Gospel "*caught in the very act of committing adultery*" (Jn 8:4). Ensuring first, that her accusers cannot condemn her, he adds, "*Neither, do I condemn you*" with the condition, "*Go ... and do not sin anymore*" (Jn 8:11).

This is the miracle gift of Jesus. He gives the opportunity no one else can grant completely: the chance to start over, despite what one has done in the past. Last week, we saw the Prodigal Son learn: that to discard the life offered by the Father to "do it ourselves," is suicide! Devastated, his life in ruins, he saw that even to be a slave or a servant in his Father's house was better than anything he could do for himself. Our Father accepts us back *always*, but not as slaves or servants—or the sons and daughters we are—but raises us to the dignity of royalty, and treats us as such once we return.

This is precisely what Jesus came for! Like Mary, let us say, "*May it be done to me according to your word*" (Lk 1:38). Nothing, past included, is impossible for God. Sin and death, the only real hurdles, Jesus conquered both. Let's allow him to do so in us. Then, we can live like Saint Paul, "*Forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead ... the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus*" (Phil 3:13-14).

God's Peace 


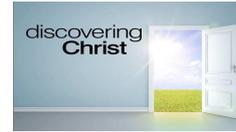
Ecumenical Food Pantry



The Ecumenical Food Pantry is in need of donations for its *Easter Dinner*.

Donations can be dropped off at the back of the church or at the church hall.

Monetary donations can be put in the collection basket or mailed to:
Ecumenical food Pantry
PO Box 54
Narrowsburg, NY 12764



St. Peter's, Liberty
Sunday, April 7 5:00-7:30pm
Join our parish group by calling the Rectory.



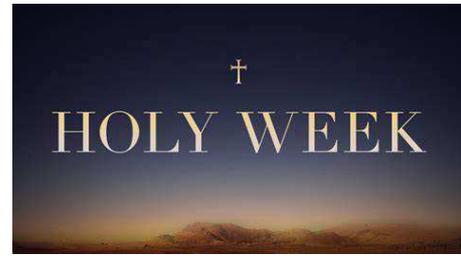
Thank you!

The St. Francis Outreach Program would like to thank everyone who so generously donated to the Toiletry Drive for victims of domestic violence.

Stations of the Cross



Friday evenings during Lent
St. Francis Xavier Church
5:30pm



Palm Sunday Vigil- Saturday, April 13th
St. Francis Xavier at 4:30pm

Palm Sunday- Sunday, April 14th
Our Lady of the Lake at 8:30am
St. Francis Xavier at 11:00am

Holy Thursday- Thursday, April 18th
St. Francis Xavier at 7:30pm

Good Friday- Friday, April 19th
St. Francis Xavier at 3:00pm
(Stations of the Cross at 5:30pm)

Holy Saturday- Saturday, April 20th
St. Francis Xavier at 8:00pm

Easter Sunday- Sunday, April 21st
Our Lady of the Lake at 8:30am
St. Francis Xavier at 11:00am



The Ecumenical Food Pantry is sponsoring a *Spring Dance Fundraiser* at the Tusten Town Hall on Saturday, May 4 from 7-11pm.

DJ, light fair, door prizes!
\$10/person

Tickets will be sold at the back of the church.

For more information, please contact Joanne Letendre at 845-252-3971.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, April 6th

SFX 4:30pm -Lillian Smith
Requested by Al & Linda Smith

Sunday, April 7th

OLL 8:30am -Stan Rembish
Requested by Al & Linda Smith
SFX 11:00am -Martin Ferrick
Requested by Wendell & Lillian Putz

Monday, April 8th

NO MASS

Tuesday, April 9th

(PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE)

SFX 6:30pm -John Obermeyer, William A. Scafidi Sr.,
and Nicole Maitland
Requested by Septemberr Totten

Wednesday, April 10th

SFX 8:30am -Larry Edge
Requested by Paddy McCarthy

Thursday, April 11th

(PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE)

SFX 6:30pm -Sal Indelicato Sr., Helene & Alexander
Luning, and Mary & Ludovico
Indelicato
Requested by Helene Indelicato

Friday, April 12th

SFX 8:30am -Our Families
Requested by Al & Linda Smith

Saturday, April 13th

SFX 4:30pm -Charles F. Davies, Marie F. Davies, and
Joseph Manley
Requested by Elizabeth Baren Klau
-Eugene Harrison
Requested by Bob & Rose Meyer

Sunday, April 14th

OLL 8:30am -Stan Rembish
Requested by Dorothy Schultz
SFX 11:00am -Our Parish Family

Collection

March 30/31, 2019

1st Collection

Our Lady of the Lake \$435.00
St. Francis Xavier \$794.00

Easter Flowers

Our Lady of the Lake \$40.00
St. Francis Xavier \$10.00

Total

\$1,279.00

Thank you!

Parish Heating Costs

2018/19 Season

OLL Church \$5,288.08
SFX Church \$7,265.72
SFX Rectory \$2,714.00

Total

\$15,267.80

5th Sunday of Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21
Philippians 3:8-14
John 8:1-11

Please Pray for our Parish Family

Please see the new prayer list sign-up sheets at the back of the church.

For the Sick: Christina Hubert, Peggy Lee Romano, Barbara Walter, Lydia Newton, Connie Moser, John Werner

For the Deceased: Mary Weiden, Muriel Maers, Stan Rembish, Eugene Harrison

For those Serving in the Military: Justin Warnick