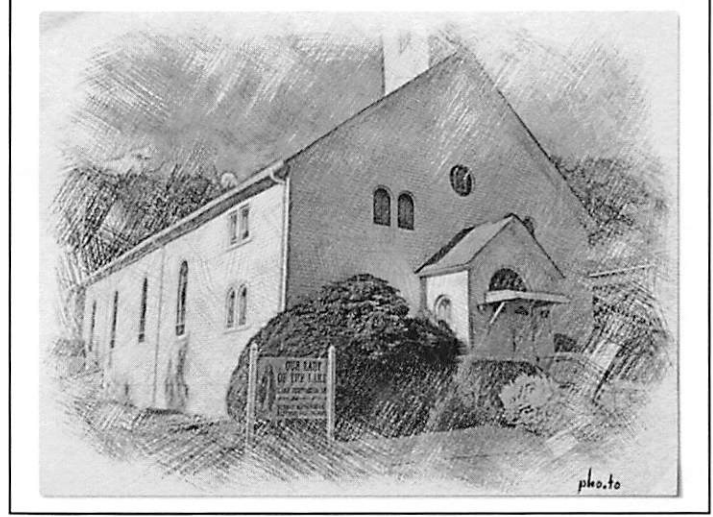


Saint Francis Xavier Parish

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
August 25, 2019



St. Francis Xavier Church

151 Bridge St., Narrowsburg

Masses

Saturday 4:30pm
Sunday 11:00am
Daily (Tuesday & Thursday) 6:30pm
Daily (Wednesday & Friday) 8:30am

Confessions

Saturdays 4:00pm
Or by appointment

Our Lady of the Lake Church

Rt. 52, Lake Huntington

Masses

Sunday 9:00am

Confessions & Daily Mass

At St. Francis Xavier

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Regularly scheduled on available Sundays of each month after our last Mass. Arrangements are made by contacting the Rectory. One Godparent is required and must be 14, confirmed, a practicing Catholic, and obtain a Sponsor Certificate from their parish. Only one male and one female Godparent is permitted. Parents should be registered in the parish and meet with priests.

SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Arrangements should be made at least 6 months prior to wedding date. Marriage Preparation Conferences must be attended. Either the Bride or the Groom must be a registered parishioner or be associated with the parish. They must meet with the parish priest before a wedding date can be scheduled.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Grades K-8 meet Sundays. Contact the Religious Ed Office to register children. We ask families to be registered & involved parishioners. Children must be baptized. Parents & children are expected to attend Mass each week.

REV. DENNIS M. DINAN, PASTOR

ABBY RODDEN, PARISH SECRETARY

**OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00AM-1:00PM
OR BY APPOINTMENT**

TELEPHONE: (845) 252-6681

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE: (845) 252-6681

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Dear Parish Family,

“Lord, will only a few people be saved?” was the question asked of Jesus in today’s Gospel (Luke 13:3). Jesus did not answer the question with a “yes or no”. If Jesus had given such a straight answer, it will imply that he already knew those who were to be saved and those who were to be condemned. Don’t get this wrong; Jesus is all-knowing and all-powerful; he is God. Jesus’ refusal to answer “yes or no” opens up the discussion on what God’s intention is for humanity. Is God willing to save all? Yes! St. John writes, “for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). The question, thus, is not whether God is willing to save us (God so loved the world) but whether we are willing to be saved (whoever believes...[will] have eternal life).

If God loves us this much, why not just impose salvation on us? Brethren, God is not a tyrant; he respects our **Free Will**. The Catholic philosopher of freedom, Maurice Blondel, wrote, “there is no being where there is only constraint. If I am not that which I will to be, I am not” (*L’action*, 1893). This idea of **Free Will** can be deduced in Jesus’ exhortation that his listeners ought to **strive** to enter the narrow door, and that many **will attempt** to enter the narrow door (Luke 13:24). Thus, our salvation is dependent on what we make of God’s gift to us. As St. Augustine once wrote, “God who created you without you, **will not save you without you**” (*Sermo* 169, 13; PL 38,923).

Today’s readings reveal that many, even those who are not descendants of Abraham, **can be saved**. The LORD revealed this plan to prophet Isaiah saying, “I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, (Isa. 66:18). Jesus also says that people will come from the east, west, north, and south and recline at table in the kingdom of God, that is, in the company of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets (Luke 13:28-29). Jesus’ statement is probably to abuse the minds of his listeners that may think they shall be saved because they are **descendants of Abraham**. John the Baptist earlier warned them, “Bear fruits that befit repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘**We have Abraham as our father**’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (Lk. 3:8). Is the door of salvation open to all? Yes! Jesus is the door; he says, “I am the door of the sheep” (John 10:7). He also says, “I am the way...no one can come to the Father except through me” (John 14:6). Jesus is the “narrow door”, the stone rejected by the builders which has become the corner stone” (Psalms 118:22).

Thus, it is not where you come from that matters; where you are heading to and which path you take is more important. Jesus also tries to make it clear that “the end of a matter is better than its beginning” (Ecclesiastes 7:8); hence his conclusion that “some are

last who will be first, and some are first who will be last” (Luke 13:30). This statement is like a coin; it has two sides.

Firstly, it is a warning to those who think they already have God. St Paul will say, “If you think you are standing firm you had better be careful that you do not fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12). As for those who have derailed from God’s plan, Jesus, says,

I know your deeds; you have a reputation for being alive, yet you are dead. Wake up and strengthen what remains, which was about to die; for I have found your deeds incomplete in the sight of My God. Remember, then, what you have received and heard. Keep it and repent. If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know the hour when I will come upon you (Revelation 3:1-3).

The end of the second reading of today says, “so strengthen your drooping hands and your weak knees. Make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be disjointed but healed” (Hebrew 12:12-13).

Secondly, Jesus gives hope to those who may think it’s over. With God it is not over until it is finally over: “Behold, **now** is the acceptable time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation” and “at the acceptable time I [God] have listened to you, and helped you on the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6,2). Because of their rebellion, many Israelites who received the good news were deprived entrance into the rest that God promised them. For you, however, “Today, when you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrew 4:6-7).

Finally, whether you have been a Christian all your life (“the first”) or a latecomer (“the last”), we can all become God’s children; “and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:17). So, God is saying, “my son, do not disdain the discipline of the Lord or lose heart when reproved by him; for whom the Lord loves, he disciplines” (Hebrew 12:5-6). Yes, “at the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it” (Hebrew 12:11). To come through the narrow door is to “take up **your cross** and follow me [Jesus]” (Luke 9:23). Indeed, “if we share Christ’s suffering, we will also share his glory” (Romans 8:17). Jesus is thus saying, “strive [**agonize**] to enter through the narrow gate” (Luke 13:4). It’s not easy but it’s possible; and the end result is worth every effort. “Weeping may tarry through the night but joy comes with the morning” and “He that goes forth weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. ((Psalms 30:5; 126:6).

Like Jesus who went about teaching and like the Israelites who were to proclaim the glory of God even while in exile (moment of sorrow), we ought to share the Good News of God’s kingdom. We should not keep it to ourselves only. Your pain and sorrow can be a gospel for others to learn about God.

Mass Intentions

Saturday, August 24th

SFX 4:30pm -Our Parish Family

Sunday, August 25th

OLL 9:00am -Ray Ritz

Requested by The Manaseri Family

SFX 11:00am -Mr. & Mrs. F J Smith Jr.

Requested by The Smith Family

-Robert Johnson

Requested by Eleanor Johnson

Monday, August 26th

NO MASS

Tuesday, August 27th

SFX 6:30pm -Dolly Marinelli

Requested by The Rodden Family

Wednesday, August 28th

SFX 8:30am -Alyssa Oxenfeld

Requested by Helen Barr

Thursday, August 29th

SFX 6:30pm -Our Parish Family

Friday, August 30th

SFX 8:30am -Frederick Barr

Requested by Helen Barr

Saturday, August 31st

SFX 4:30pm -Our Parish Family

Sunday, September 1st

OLL 9:00am -Our Parish Family

SFX 11:00am -Martin Ferrick

Requested by Helen Barr



Catholic EDUCATION



The 2019-20 Religious Education year is upon us. Please register your children, grades K-8, using the registration forms found in the back of the church. If your children were enrolled last year, please use the Returning Enrollment form. Forms may be dropped in the Weekly Collection or submitted September 8th. Please do not submit payment until September 8th. Classes will begin September 8th at St. Francis Xavier Parish Hall and run from 9:50-10:50 at which time there will also be a Parent Meeting.

We are in need of Religious Education Teachers. So, please consider helping us so we can continue the Religious Education Program. Contact Paddy McCarthy (845-932-8639) if you are interested.

Readings

Isaiah 66:18-21

Hebrews 12:5-7, 11-13

Luke 13:22-30

Please Pray for our Parish Family

For the Sick: Christina Hubert, Lydia Newton, Kenneth "Boomer" Meyer, Jane Cutita, Bonnie Feeler, Judy Tufo, Connie Moser, Elizabeth Stoddard, Pam Kocher, Vincent Gentile, Kathleen Jamieson, Peter O'Leary Jr.

For the Deceased: Mary Weiden, Muriel Maers, Stan Rembish, Eugene Harrison, Terry McCarthy, John Werner, Lillian Yacino, James Lingle, Patricia Lyons, Peggy Lee Romano, Emory Robert Kaub, Muriel F. Edwards, Andrew Casimir, Barbara Walter, Jessica Hartley, Eileen Dempsey, Christopher Kells

For those Serving in the Military: Justin Warnick, Joseph A. Choffo IV, Carmen Hamstrom, Joseph R. Gonzalez