

**Sunday, January 26, 2014**  
**3rd Sunday after Epiphany**



- Sun. 26 Jan. 3rd Sunday after Epiphany, II Class**  
 8:30 am Tish Gallagher  
 10:30 am Pro Populo  
 1:00 pm Christina Nicolini & family  
  
 3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction
- Mon. 27 Jan. St. John Chryostom, Bishop, Confessor, & Doctor, III Class**  
 7:00 am John & Maureen Abdo  
 12:15 pm Fr. Simon Slana
- Tues. 28 Jan. St. Peter Nolasco, Confessor, III Class**  
 7:00 am †Carl Fredrick Becker  
 6:30 pm Kyle Beebee & family
- Wed. 29 Jan. St. Francis de Sales, Bishop, Confessor & Doctor, III Class**  
 7:00 am Kathleen & Mike DeSantis  
 12:15 pm Patrick Risse
- Thurs. 30 Jan. St. Martina, Virgin & Martyr, III Class**  
 7:00 am Priests & Parishioners of St. Stephen  
 6:30 pm Louis G. Solton
- Fri. 31 Jan. St. John Bosco, Confessor, III Class**  
 7:00 am Holy Souls in Purgatory  
 12:15 pm Leila Fowler  
 6:30 pm Joseph McDonough
- Sat. 1 Feb. St. Ignatius, Bishop & Martyr, III Class**  
 7:00 am †Christine Allen  
 9:00 am Doug McNeely
- Sun. 2 Feb. Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, II Class**  
 8:30 am Pat & Ana  
 10:30 am Pro Populo  
 1:00 pm Michele Mielson & family  
  
 3:00 pm Vespers & Benediction

**Sick Calls**

If anyone is in need of the Sacrament (i.e. homebound) please call the parish office. If it is an **emergency**, outside of office hours, dial (916) 455-5114, then press 1, and the priest-on-call will be paged immediately.

**...In Memoriam**  
 †Charles Cantoni

**Important Upcoming Dates**

- Feb. 2—Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
 Feb. 16—Septuagesima begins  
 Feb. 22—Chair of St. Peter  
 March 5—Ash Wednesday  
 March 26—Confirmation  
 April 13—Palm Sunday  
 April 18—Good Friday  
 April 20—Easter Sunday  
 May 3—May Procession & Solemn Mass at the Cathedral  
 May 10—First Holy Communion  
 June—21-28—Camp Sacred Heart

**Jesus Welcomes Everyone**

Today's Gospel (Mt. 8, 1-13) places before us two miracles of Jesus, two profound lessons in humility, faith, and charity.

Observe the humble faith of the leper: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." He is so certain that Jesus can heal him that he feels nothing else is necessary for his cure other than the Lord's will. Christian faith does not wander about in subtle reasonings; its logic is simple: God can do all that He wills; therefore, His will alone is necessary. Yet the leper does not insist; one who lives by faith knows that God always wills whatever is best for him, even if it brings him suffering. Therefore, instead of insisting, he prefers to abandon himself to God's good pleasure.

Next comes the centurion. The strong, proud Roman soldier is not ashamed to personally beg Jesus, a Galilean, to help his paralyzed servant. Our Lord is touched by this humble, charitable act, and says at once, "I shall go and heal him!" But the centurion continues, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed." At this point humility becomes still more profound, and faith reaches its maximum: it is not necessary for the Lord to go; His power is so great that a word spoken from afar suffices to perform any miracle. Jesus Himself "marveled and said: 'Amen I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel!'" Is this not a complaint against those who live so close to Him, who perhaps live in His own house, receiving constant favors from Him, while their faith remains very weak and therefore inefficacious?

According to Jewish law, lepers were kept apart from society and no one was allowed to go near them; likewise, the pagans were to be shunned because they did not belong to the chosen people. Jesus goes beyond the old law and in the name of universal charity He welcomes and heals the leper, listens to the foreign centurion and cures his pagan servant. Thus Christ teaches us to make no distinction of persons, not to despise sinners and infidels, but to welcome all with loving kindness. He does not wish the good to enclose themselves in a little circle, but to open the doors to everyone, doing good to all without concerning themselves about the traits and opinions of others. This is the dominant thought of today's Epistle where St. Paul exhorts us to practice charity, especially toward our enemies. "To no man rendering evil for evil... If it be possible, as much as in you, have peace with all men. Revenge not yourselves...but if thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat... Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good."

Jesus conquered evil, both physical and moral evil, by His mercy and love. This must be our strategy too. Whatever the evil around us, whatever the suffering it may cause us, we shall never overcome it by arguments and discussions or by taking a stand and adhering rigidly to it. This can only be accomplished by a delicate charity which understands intuitively the mentality, the tastes, and the needs of others, and which knows precisely when to intervene, to condescend and to sacrifice itself for the good of another, even if that other is unfriendly toward us—only such charity can triumph over evil.

"Divine Intimacy" by Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, (OCD)

**The Costliness of the Oblation Offered up in Holy Mass**

All that has been said of the excellence of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is inadequate to express the worth of the Victim which is offered up to the Most Holy Trinity in the Mass. St. Paul says: "Every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices." (Heb. 8:3). Therefore, as Christ has been anointed high priest by His Father, He must of necessity have a victim to sacrifice. The Apostle does not go on to say what Christ has to offer upon the altar; he leaves us to reflect upon it. Let us therefore ask what is the victim which Christ, in His character of high priest, immolates to God the Father.

The victim must be no mean oblation, but one of immense and priceless value; otherwise, it would not be worthy to be offered to the infinite Deity. For in proportion to the greatness of Him to whom it is presented must be the excellence of the gift that is offered. He who should offer a worthless and contemptible gift for the acceptance of a monarch, far from earning his thanks, would only merit his displeasure. Now we know Almighty God to be the sovereign Lord of Heaven and earth, exalted far above all earthly kings and princes. Hear what the Wise Man says of Him: "For the whole world before Thee is as the least grain of the balance, and as a drop of the morning dew, that falleth down upon the earth." (Wis. 11:23). If the whole world is only as a drop of dew in God's sight, what can be found in the whole wide world meet to be offered to His majesty? What is there in Heaven or on earth that Christ can offer as a worthy and acceptable sacrifice to the Most Holy Trinity, except a victim that is divine?

What then is it, do you imagine, that Christ offers up to Almighty God in the Holy Mass? Listen and marvel! In all the universe, He found but one gift, one alone, meet to be offered up to the infinite Deity, and that was His sacred humanity, holy and immaculate, His adorable Body and Blood, His most pure soul. Concerning this, St. Chryostom says: "Christ was and is both priest and victim; He is the priest according to the spirit, the victim according to the flesh. He is both the sacrifice and the thing sacrificed." St. Augustine says much the same in his commentary on Psalm 26: "Christ alone was a priest in such wise as to be at the same time the victim, for He sacrificed naught else but Himself" since all the treasures of Heaven and earth could furnish no victim fit to be sacrificed to the Most Holy Trinity.

The sacred humanity of Our Lord was the greatest and highest work of divine omnipotence. This the Mother of God revealed to St. Bridget in these explicit words: "Of all things that exist, or that have ever existed, nothing is so estimable and precious as the sacred humanity of Christ." For the bountiful hand of God endowed the human nature of His Son with treasures so rich and so innumerable of grace and virtue, of sanctity and wisdom that nothing more or greater could be added to it.

*The Incredible Catholic Mass* by Fr. Martin von Cochem

**Prayer for Vocations**

Lord Jesus, once You called the first disciples in order to make them fishers of men. Continue to let resound today Your sweet invitation: "Come and follow Me." Grant to young men and young women the grace of responding promptly to Your voice. Sustain our bishops, priests and consecrated souls in their apostolic work. Give perseverance to our seminarians and to all those who are fulfilling an ideal of a life of total consecration to Your service. Enkindle in our communities a missionary zeal. Send Lord, workers into Your fields and do not let mankind be lost because of a lack of pastors, missionaries, and people dedicated to the cause of the Gospel.

Mary, Mother of the Church, Model of Vocations, help us say "Yes" to the Lord who calls us to collaborate in the Divine Design of salvation. Amen. ~Bl. Pope John II~

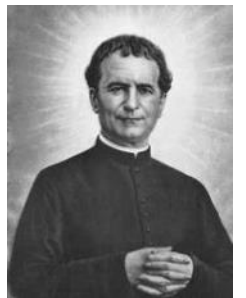
**St. John Bosco**

Saint John Bosco was born in 1815 in Italy. His father died when he was two, leaving his mother to raise three boys. In his youth he worked as shepherd and added any odd jobs he could find to help his family.

John was sent messages about God's will for his life through dreams. He knew through these dreams that God wanted him to work with young, underprivileged children. He attracted hundreds of young people to meet and to pray and to learn the catechism. To keep their attention, John juggled and performed magic tricks. He explained the homilies the priests gave and as word spread of his incredible stories, adults joined to listen to him. He wrote short explanations of the faith and taught the children how to print them.

He began studying for the priesthood and was ordained in 1841. He opened a boarding house with his mother, "Mamma Margaret", including workshops to teach trades such as shoemaking, printing, bookbinding, and iron working. As other priests came to help, the foundation was laid for the first Salesian Home. The importance of John's work spread and resulted in the building of technical schools and workshops. In 1868, he built a church dedicated to Our Lady, Help of Christians. Pope Pius IX approved the Society of St. Francis de Sales, the Salesians, followed by a similar order for women, the Daughters of Our Lady Help of Christians. At the time of his death in 1888, there were nearly a thousand priests working in 250 houses of the Salesian Society all over the world.

**Feast Day:** January 31  
**Name Meaning:** God is gracious; gift of God  
**Patron Saint of:** Apprentices, boys, editors, laborers, students, young people.



*Illustrated Lives of the Saints* ed. by Fr. Michael Sullivan

**Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

If you are interested in buying candles to be blessed on the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary stop by the bookstore and let us know. We will have 100% beeswax candles for purchase, you may also bring your own candles to be blessed. Make sure you bring them early (10:20 a.m. or earlier).

The blessing of candles will take place at the beginning of the 10:30 Mass on Feb. 2nd, we will then process into the church for Holy Mass.

You will be able to pick your candles up following the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

**New to St. Stephen's?**

Please stop by the office or bookstore and pick up a registration form. It is very helpful for us to have contact information for your family, even if you cannot come to St. Stephen's every week.

If you do not have envelopes and would like them you can pick up a box in the bookstore. The use of envelopes is very helpful for our bookkeeping system.

**Please Keep in Your Prayers ...**

Mike Hayes, Jim Carlson, Kaehler Family, Mike McGrath, Barbara Graichen, Munsill Family, Sister Marie Jeanne, Charles Cantoni, Mitzi Vandenburg, John Reyes, Dr. Gerald Foy, Cindy Yumoto, Carlos Aldana, Liliana, Luz & Ceasar Morales, Mark Garcia Family, Richard Corbin, Philip Rutschow, Manuel Nino, Robert Nunez, Renee Burns