

THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

A NEWSLETTER OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER IN THE PHILADELPHIA AREA

WWW.SJBRIDGEPORT.ORG

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March, 2019

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

There seem to be two ways of approaching our self-examination before Confession. One is to focus on the specifics of our actions, our misdeeds. This has the advantage of being concrete and objective. The other approach focuses more on the heart: the various ways in which we have been unfaithful to God. The sins of the heart bear fruit in those sins of word and deed, of course, but the focus of the examination here is on the heart. Our Lord frequently taught His disciples about the centrality of the heart as the seat of virtue and vice. This approach has the advantage of helping us to see (by the light of grace) how we stand in relation to God.

The first approach, in keeping the focus on the concrete and objective, has advantages for those who tend to be scrupulous and find sin in every little fault and everything which is amiss. The second approach is good for those who don't want to get too close to God, and thus try to keep the relation from being too personal. For them, the "objective" can become the enemy of the "personal." God wants both the objective and the personal, of course, being supremely Real, and supremely Personal. It is as Real and Personal, as well as Just, that He encounters us in the sacrament of Confession.

Regular and frequent confession is essential to an efficient Christian life, and a genuine blessing. It is a practical means which God has given us to abide in His love. It helps us to be honest and realistic about who we are. More than that, it brings home to us God's love for us as sinners – that we are ever unworthy of the abundance of the love which He pours upon us. Lent is our penitential season. Our penitence leads us naturally (and supernaturally) to the confessional. We can all benefit from a confession at the beginning of Lent as well as in Holy Week. And in between.

Lent

Don't forget the special opportunities for corporate devotions at St John's. On the Fridays in Lent (except for Good Friday), **Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament** at 7:30 p.m. with Lenten soup supper at 6:30. There will be a **Lenten Quiet Day** with Fr Warren Tange on Saturday, March 30th. I should also note that **Bishop Lopes will be lecturing** on Ecumenism (and aptly so, since the Ordinariate is a significant example of realized ecumenism) at the Aquinas Center at Princeton University on Thursday, March 7th, 4:30 at Julius Romo Rabinowitz building, room A01. While the Bishop will not be stopping by St John's in March, he will be with us on Maundy Thursday in Holy Week.

Visitors have remarked (with some surprise) about people coming in late to the Sunday Mass. In one sense, that they notice is good: it means that we are held to a high standard of devotion. But of the habitual tardiness is not good. There are many reasons to be early: spiritual preparation for Communion, reverence and respect for Christ whom we are here to worship, consideration for others, recollectedness after driving. Of course, there are bound to be times when lateness cannot be avoided – traffic, Septa, the person giving a ride is late, children throwing up in the car on the way to church. But when it is within our control, we should be doing what we can. Perhaps those who are afflicted with habitual tardiness to Mass could make a special effort this Lent to break the habit.

Prayer for a Block in Bridgeport

Since moving to Bridgeport, we have tried to be good neighbors. This is especially important since few of us live here, and since the closing of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was the source of considerable pain and ill feeling. Among other things, we have hosted our neighbors at our annual cookouts, hung door hangers for Christmas and Easter, opened the Thrift Shop, hosted various groups (AA, Rosary Rally, Knights of Columbus, Patricians).

Our next step in this work is to engage in more intentional prayer for Bridgeport. I would invite you each to commit to praying for a specific block in the borough. Bill Finegan has prepared prayer cards with a prayer and a particular block. Hopefully you can also visit the block sometime to get a concrete feel for it to help form your prayers. We pray for God's blessings on everyone who lives on the block: both spiritual and material. Bill will be assigning blocks at coffee hour: please check in with him to get yours.

In June, we plan to take our charity for our neighbors a step further, with door to door visitation. This will help our neighbors to know who we are, and that for Christ's sake, we care about them. We may discover needs that we can help satisfy. We may find people who need Christ and are open to hearing the good news. We may find those in need of healing, whom we can help along the way. We may be able to help clarify that SJB is actually Catholic, and committed to being an integral part of Bridgeport.

Knocking on people's doors is daunting for most of us. Fortunately we have some help here, from the Legion of Mary, for whom door to door evangelism has been part of their work since the beginning of the Legion. We will take advantage of their kind offer of help. Here's the plan. On Saturday, June 1st, we begin with Mass at 9. Then after breakfast, some members of the Legion will offer training to those who have volunteered to visit. This includes very practical advice about how to approach people gently and sensitively, and how to proceed depending on what the response is. The training should help everyone to feel comfortable going out. Then the teams of two – one from the Legion (someone who has done this before) and one from St John's – will go out to call on their blocks, for an hour or so. Everyone comes back for lunch and to share the experience. Notes are made about the homes which need followup, as well as records about where we went and the responses received. The work of the day is done by about 2. I'm grateful to the Legion of Mary (which also sponsors our monthly adult discussion group, the Patricians) for helping us get this off the ground. And I hope many of our parishioners will volunteer. Mark your calendars!

The J. Bennett Hill Memorial Organ

As I wrote last month, a new (if also used) organ is coming to SJB. The three manual Wicks electronic should arrive in mid-March from the Wicks factory in Illinois. The console will be placed in the choir loft where the Rodgers console is now. The speakers for the new organ will be placed in a new shelf to be built along the front of the loft, the acoustically optimal location. The parish architect, Cram & Ferguson, has designed the shelf to complement the exiting interior. This means that there will be some construction going on in the back of the church in March. The hope is that enough of the shelf will be in place by the time the organ arrives that we can install the instrument when it gets here. The decorative front and ends of the shelf may be somewhat later in coming.

The organ should be a major upgrade, allowing us to significantly enhance our music program. I'm excited about it, and I hope you are as well. I'm extremely grateful to Elizabeth Dornberger and Pedie Hill for special gifts which cover the purchase price. The organ will be a memorial to Pedie's husband, Bennett. The total costs should run between \$25,000 and \$30,000, a very modest sum as these things go.

Calendar

There is a new special events calendar now on our website. These are things you'll want to be sure to plan for:

March 7 – Bishop Lopes's lecture in Princeton on *Unity in Diversity: Towards a New Ecu-
menism*, 4:30 at Julius Romo Rabinowitz building, room A101

April 14-21 – Holy Week

April 18, Maundy Thursday – Bishop Lopes visits St John's; Mass is at 7:30 p.m.

May 2 – Paschaltide Evensong & Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, 7:30 p.m.

October 15 – Ordinariate Form Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Ss Peter and Paul in Phila-
delphia

November 8 – Roger Converse's ordination as a permanent Deacon (by Bishop Lopes, at St
John's)

And here's the regular calendar for March:

March 8, 15, 22, 29 – Fridays in Lent: Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacra-
ment, 7:30 p.m.; Lenten soup & bread supper at 6:30

March 9 – Archdiocese of Philadelphia Men's Spirituality Conference, ManUpPhilly, at the Mirenda
Center, Neumann University, Aston; details at www.manupphilly.com

March 9 – Casino Night/Beef & Beer for the benefit of the Gianna Center in Norristown (a most wor-
thy cause), at Ss Peter & Paul Ukrainian Catholic School, Union Avenue in Bridgeport, 6-10 p.m.,
\$45

March 11 – A lecture on the *Relationship between Faith and Science* at St Charles Borromeo Semi-
nary, by Professor Stephen Barr of the University of Delaware and President of the Society of
Catholic Scientists. Details from Matt Hummel.

March 13 – Patricians adult discussion group; this month on Papal Infallibility, 6:45 in the parish hall

March 14 & 28 – Youth Group (on Thursdays during Lent), 7-8:45

March 30 – Lenten Quiet Day with Fr Warren Tange, 9-2

Bishop's Appeal

The 2019 Bishop's Appeal begins this Sunday. As most of you will recall, this gives the individual members of the Ordinariate the opportunity to contribute directly to the mission of the Ordinariate. The monies from this campaign support essentials of our mission, including Bishop Lopes's travel to the parishes (he will be with us twice this year), the publication of the *Ordinariate Observer* (in which SJB is often featured), support for clergy and the Vocations Office, and development of our communities and parishes. St John's benefits in many concrete ways from the

Ordinariate, and our support of the Bishop's Appeal is one way we can express our gratitude for our ecclesial communion with the Church through the Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter.

Practicalities of the Bishop's Appeal: Pledge cards are in the pews. While it starts now, it goes on through the end of 2019. You can make a pledge for the year, and pay it off between now and the end of 2019. Checks should be made to the Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter (these are contributions to the Ordinariate and not to SJB). Contributions can be mailed to the Ordinariate in Houston, or placed in the Sunday collection and we will mail them. Contributions can also be made online at ordinariate.net/bishops-appeal. St John's goal for 2019 is \$10,500 the same as 2018. If the goal is not met by individual contributions, the balance will be paid from our operating budget. Because of your generosity, we exceeded our 2018 goal by some \$900. Well done!

We just had a wonderful Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and hymn sing: many thanks to Wendy Ewing for organizing and cooking (and many others who brought food), and Bill Gatens for leading the hymn sing from the piano in the rectory. It was a great way to say farewell to Pre-Lent.

Yours faithfully,

Fr David Ousley