

*3rd Sunday of Lent*  
*March 23, 2025*



**JUBILEE YEAR 2025**

**WE ARE PILGRIMS OF HOPE**

## From the Gusset—Our Desert Path

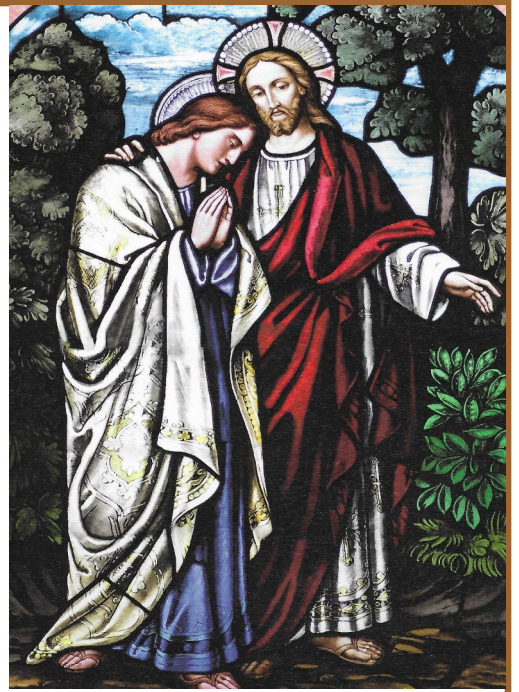
### You are God's beloved One

What does it mean to be called “*God's beloved one?*”

Remember, when Jesus was **baptized** in the Jordan by **John the Baptist** – He rose from **the water** – the Holy Spirit, like a dove, descended upon Him, and then God's voice is heard: **this is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.** (Do you notice the language of **marriage**? The Father calls the Son: **My beloved!**) Jesus immediately goes into **the desert** following His **Baptism**. The purpose of **Lent** is to teach us what it means to be called: **God's beloved one**, and how to become ‘**well pleasing**’ to God. All of us have been **baptized**. God the Father called us: **His beloved one** at our **baptisms**, and now the Holy Spirit has driven us out into **the desert**, so that we can encounter

Jesus, **the Beloved Son**, and Jesus will **teach** us, and Jesus will **feed** us, and Jesus will **challenge** us to confront **the Truth**. What is **the Truth**? **The Truth** is that we all came from God and we will all return to God! This was the purpose of **the Catholic Church** putting **ashes** on our **foreheads** on **Ash Wednesday**: to tap on our **intellect** (our **foreheads** are a symbol of our **intellect**), and remind us (because we forget so quickly – we think we are so great!) – to remind us that we are made out of **the dirt**— “*remember you are dirt and to dirt you shall return!*” God had to get down on **the ground** and form each one of us – not just **Adam** was formed out of **the dust**, but you and I both and everyone else – God formed us out of **the dust**, and one day (after we die) we will all decay back into **the dirt** from which we came. But (and this is the biggest ‘but’ in **Salvation History**) – but, because we were **baptized**, because we are **God's beloved one**, because God wants to give us all of His **love** – we will rise to **eternal life** in **glorified bodies**, because of what the Second Person of the Trinity did for us. **Lent, the desert**, is full of ‘**uncertainty**’: hunger, **cold**, doubts about how much God **loves** us, will the Almighty **feed** us, how long until we experience **glory**, – add your own **uncertainty** to the list.... **Lent** is full of **uncertainties**! We must remember above all that God said, when we came up out of **the waters** of our own **Baptism**, God said, “this is **My beloved one**,” and so we go into **the desert** of **Lent**, because Jesus will show us how to become **well pleasing** to His Dad. Jesus is in **the desert** and that is the only reason we go out into these **40 days**: to be **taught** by the Lord, to let the Lord **feed** us, His **Flesh** and His **Blood**, and to come **to know the Truth** that God **loves**

us so much; that in, **40 days**, God will send His Son to die for you, and **visit the dead**, and rise to **glory** – all to show you that **Lent**, that **the desert**, is not the destination; but only **the path** that leads to your **glory!**      **Yours on the Path**      **Fr. Randy**

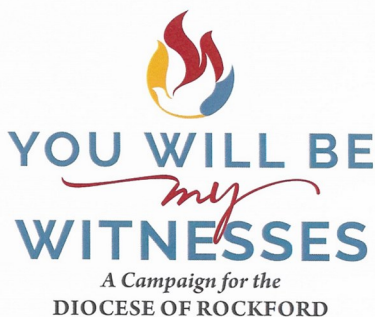




Remember **the BTB Bishop** from **Brownsville, Texas** said, “*God knows only one verb – to pour Himself out.*” No matter how you slice it, **Lent** is all about going to **Confession**. The Lord waits for us out in **the desert**. Yes, Jesus is going **to teach** us (what it means to live a **life pleasing** to His Father), **feed** us (that food we hunger for: **the Eucharist**), and **challenge** us (to **give ourselves** completely over to God); but it is essential that when we meet the Lord in **the desert** for these **40-days** that we **confess** our **sins** and express our **true sorrow** for having offended Him. We have **three great opportunities** coming up to go to **Confession**:

- #1 our **Communal Penance Service** on **April 3<sup>rd</sup>** at **Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Sublette**,
- #2 our **Pilgrimage** for a **Plenary Indulgence** on **April 5<sup>th</sup>** to **St. Mary’s in Sterling**,
- #3 and the **Be Reconciled Day** on **April 9<sup>th</sup>** at **all of our Churches**.

As your **desert shepherd**, I am pushing the **Act of Contrition** by the great **St. Francis de Sales**, which you can find a copy of in this **bulletin**. Why? Because this **Act of Contrition highlights** God’s favorite verb: **to pour Himself out!** All **the Sacraments** are this **generous pouring out** of God’s **love** into the humbled receptacles called our **souls**. Just like **farmers** pray for God to send the **rain** that their **crops may grow** – please, beginning **to pray** that God would **pour** all of His **love** into your **heart** in your **Lenten Confession**, that your soul might begin to grow in magnanimity. May our **humble submission** to God’s **generosity** bring many **souls** into **glory**, when we work a **Plenary Indulgence** for them during this **Jubilee year!**



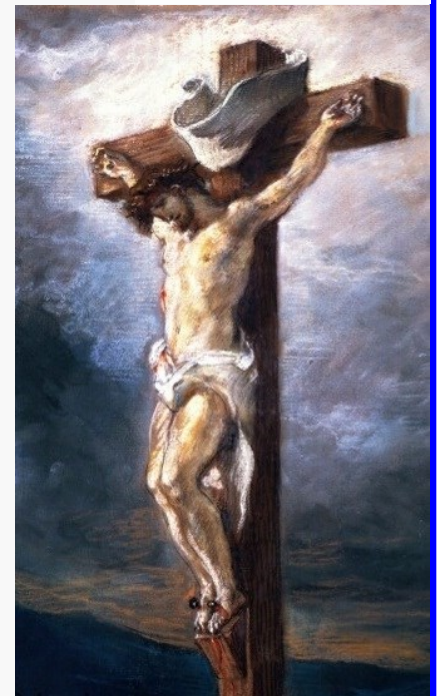
**Bishop Malloy** has a vision for our **Diocese** that involves **evangelization** as its core element. **The Rockford Diocese** is undertaking a **Capitol Campaign** to raise monies to fund this vision and strengthen **the Faith** of the next generation of **Catholics citizens** in Northwestern Illinois. Our Parishes are seeking **Campaign Chairpersons**—volunteers from our three Churches to help **Fr. Randy** meet or exceed our parish assessments. **St. Mary of the**

**Assumption Church** and **St. Patrick’s Church** would receive 55% back of our assessment for **infrastructure repair** and **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church** would receive 40% back. On Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm there is a **Parish Orientation meeting** in Sterling at **St. Mary’s Church** for **volunteers** and their **priest** to learn more details about the **Campaign**. If **the Holy Spirit** is inspiring you to help **the Bishop** and our **Diocese** breathe life into our Parishes lukewarm **Faith**, please contact **Fr. Randy**. **Father** will treat you to dinner at **the Candlelight** restaurant in Rock Falls, before the meeting.



# THE MASS AND THE SAINTS

The **holy oils** that **the priest** carries in his anointing case to **the Hospital** and Nursing home and for **Home visits** have already been blessed by the Bishop at **the Chrism Mass** on **Holy Thursday**; yet, **Fr. Randy** likes to help the sick persons to see the power of Christ's **Cross**. **St. Augustine** says that the **Cross** is the greatest 'sign' of Christ! Listen to this great quote from **the Doctor of Grace**: *for unless that sign (the Cross) be applied, whether it be to the foreheads of believers (Confirmation), or to the very water out of which they are regenerated (Baptism), or to the oil with which they received the anointing chrism (Holy Orders), or to the Sacrifice that nourishes them (the Eucharist), none of the Sacraments is properly administered.* This is why (if time allows), I like to bless **the anointing oil** again and as I say the **Prayer Blessing** to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, I make the sign of the **Cross** over **the oil** – and the people respond: *Blessed be God, who heals us in Christ!* That might be something you could watch out for the next time you witness one of **the seven Sacrament** taking place – watch for the priest to make the sign of the **Cross**. The hand of God is **active** – always touching His **favorite creature** (you and I) – always giving us **blessings**. **St. Albert the Great** says that by the touch of our Lord's holy and Divine hands, Jesus confers on **the matter (the bread)** of **the Sacrament** (of the **Eucharist**) **a power** for all time to be transubstantiated into the Body of Christ; just as, when the Body of Christ went under **the water** at **the Jordan River** – all **the waters** of the Earth became **holy**! See, this is the reason Jesus had to be **baptized** – not because He needed to have His **sins** washed away (Jesus never **sinned**), but because our Lord was **baptizing the waters** – giving water the power to regenerate us, who have fallen into **sin** – we, who inherited **Original Sin**. In **Eucharistic Prayer I** – there is what is called: *a twofold consecration*. The **Cross** is made over the **bread** and **wine** to show the prefiguring of the **Cross** on Good Friday at the Last Supper meal on **Holy Thursday**. And so the sign of the **Cross** is made at the consecration of the **Host** (Last Supper, Bread) and the sign of the **Cross** is made over **the chalice** (the Blood of Christ/ **the bleeding** that took place on the **Cross**). I am personally reminded of this every time I **celebrate** the Mass with my **chalice**; for on the base of the **chalice** is the image of our Lord at the Last Supper Table, and on the cup of the **chalice** is the image of our Lord on the **Cross** of **Good Friday**. They are one and the same **sacrifice** – it is just that the Last Supper Sacrifice is **bloodless** (blessing of **the Host**), while the **Cross** of Calvary is an overflowing of **blood** from **the Sacred Heart** of Jesus (blessing of the **chalice**).



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**Saturday, March 22nd**

(+) Joseph & (+) Mary McCoy/ Barbara Maria McCoy

4:00 pm, **OLPH** (+) Thomas Berry/ Neal Vaessen & (+) Arthur Prendergast/ Family

5:30 pm, **SMA** Pro Populo/ Fr. Randy

**Sunday, March 23rd 3rd Sunday of Lent**

8:00 am, **St. Patrick** (+) Mildred Schneider/ Mr. & Mrs. Ed Klein

10:30 am, **OLPH** (+) Sharon Apple/ Mr. & Mrs. Mark Henkel

**Monday, March 24th**

(+) Mary Zapf/ Leslie Motter

**Tuesday, March 25th Solemnity of the Annunciation**

7:30 am, **SMA** (+) Sr. Chiduwe Oraegbu, (+) Sr. Amabilis Chidowe, &  
(+) Bernard Nnabugwu/ Sister Cornelia

(+) Theodore & (+) Annunziata Farioli/ Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mixa

**Wednesday, March 26th**

7:30 am, **SMA** (+) James W. & (+) Minnie R. Stewart/ Mary Schreiner

**Thursday, March 27th**

7:30 am, **SMA** (+) Floyd Wilson/ Janet Widolff

**Friday, March 28th**

7:30 am, **SMA** (+) Mary Ann Cardot/ Mr. & Mrs. Scott Huffman

5:30pm, **SMA** (+) Rita Haefner/ Mr. & Mrs. Mike Schultz

**Saturday, March 29th**

(+) Marina Roggi & (+) Helen Kolar/ Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mixa

4:00 pm, **OLPH** (+) Thomas Berry/ Neal Vaessen & (+) Arthur Prendergast/ Family

5:30 pm, **SMA** (+) Gilbert Haub/ Fr. Randy

**Sunday, March 30th 4th Sunday of Lent: Laetare Sunday**

8:00 am, **St. Patrick** (+) Charles & (+) Bea Buckley/ Family

10:30 am, **OLPH** Pro Populo/ Fr. Randy



## **Living Mass Intentions:**

**St. Patrick: Marilyn Weeks**      **OLPH: Anita Vaessen, Judy Henkel**

**SMA: Mike & Lisa Jones, Tim & Kathy Burkardt, Val Fischbach, Ray Henkel,  
Paula Pinter, Richard & Lisa Studebaker**

## **Act of Contrition: St. Francis de Sales**



O Lord and Master, I am unworthy both of **heaven** and of **earth**, because I have surrendered myself to **sin** and become a slave of worldly **pleasures**. Yet, since You, Almighty God, **created** me, and since You alone can shape me as You wish, I do not despair of Your **salvation**; but made bold by Your infinite **mercy** and **compassion**, I come before You, You who are **love** Itself. Receive me, then dear Lord, as You received the harlot, the thief, **the tax collector**, and even **the Prodigal Son**. O Lord and Master, You **love** all people, so **pour out** Your **love** upon me, a **sinner**. Lift from me **the heavy burden of sin**, cleanse every stain of unrighteousness from me, and wash me white with **the waters** of **holiness**. **Reign over** me, my God that my will would only be a reflection of Your will. Thy will be done by me on **earth**, O Lord and Master, just as Your **angels** and **Saints** do Your will in **heaven**. Amen.