

*2nd Sunday of Lent
March 1, 2026*



*“Friend and neighbor You have taken away:
my one companion darkness.” Psalm 88:19
This Lent—let us be the companions of our Lord!*

From the Gusset

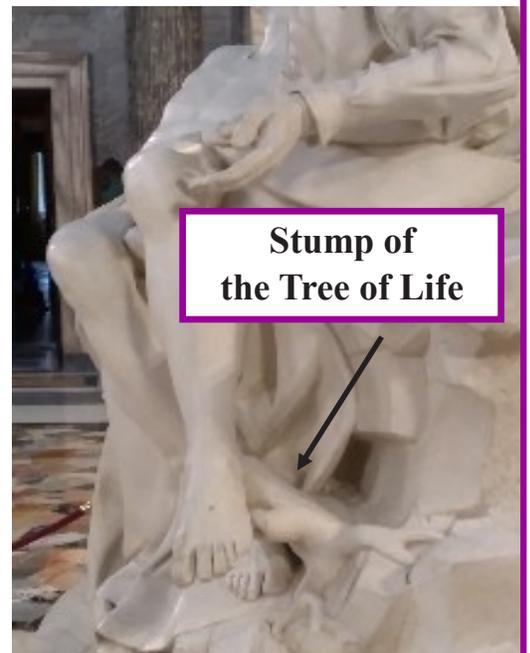
How the Holy Spirit Prompts us to be Contrite

Contrition is an interior sorrow and a hatred of sin coupled with a firm purpose to change our lives. When we receive the grace of God in the Sacrament of Confession, we receive the power of the Holy Spirit to despise our sins even more and have the strength to live a holy life. Just one of the reasons that Michelangelo's *Pieta* is such a Masterpiece is because it has hidden within it the four Supernatural Motives that God gives us (through the Holy Spirit) to be contrite of heart! The four Supernatural Motives of the Holy Spirit to prompt us to be contrite are:



- 1) God's infinite beauty
- 2) The sufferings of Christ, borne for our sins
- 3) The ugliness of sin, itself
- 4) The everlasting joy of being a friend of God!

Art critics say that the Body of Christ in the *Pieta* is perfectly proportioned (Howard McInnis (an artist himself) would tell me how anatomically a person's head is to be 1/8th of their bodies' size). Michelangelo makes the Lord's Body so beautiful that we wonder is our Lord merely sleeping in Mary's arms or has He died?!? The God man is so beautiful in the *Pieta*. Next, the Holy Spirit tries to show us how the sufferings that Christ underwent for our sins ought to make us contrite, and so we can see the wounds of the Lord, the nail marks in His hands and feet – that our sins caused! The third Supernatural Motive the Holy Spirit uses to make us contrite is to show us the ugliness of sin. There is a tradition that Seth asked the Cherubim Angel guarding Paradise with the fiery sword for a sprig of the Tree of Life. That Seth and his descendants propagated and cared for this shoot, which would become the wood of the Cross our Lord was eventually nailed to! Michelangelo has included the stump of this tree in his *Pieta*. It is at the feet of our Lord, and it is indeed ugly: Michelangelo left it covered in chisel marks; instead, of polishing it. Finally, the Holy Spirit tries to show us the everlasting joy awaiting the Friends of God (the Saints) in Heaven. Mary, it turns out, looks not at the Body of Jesus, but our Lady looks over her Son's Body at each of us – the viewer of the *Pieta*. To see the beautiful face of the perfect woman, who never sinned or rather always did the will of God, is a treasure, which we are to want to behold forever in Heaven – and we will – if only we have contrition for our sins! The four Supernatural Motives of the Holy Spirit make our hearts contrite and all four are illustrated for us in the *Pieta* statue.

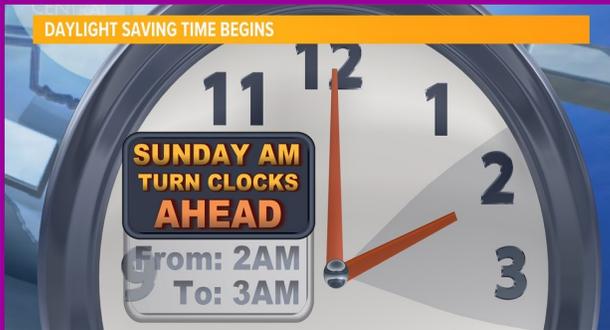


Yours on the Path Fr. Randy



The week of March 3rd, Tuesday through March 6th, Friday—will find us celebrating the Holy Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Sublette. Mass will start at

8:00am each day, and then on Friday, we will also have a Mass at 5:30pm preceded by Confessions at 4:30pm and the Stations of the Cross at 5:00pm.



Just a reminder that we have to change our clocks next Sunday, March 8th; otherwise, we will be coming into Church when the choir is singing the closing song. :)

A number of Penance Services are coming up throughout the Sterling Deanery. If you

would rather not go to Fr. Randy, check the March Calendar for Penance Services at St. Mary's Sterling, St. Mary's Tampico, St. Patrick, Dixon, St. Mary's Morrison, and St. Patrick's Amboy.



Our Communal Penance Service will be celebrated on St. Joseph's Feast Day, Thursday, March 19th at 6:30pm in Sublette.

The Bishop has Be Reconciled Day on Wednesday, March 25th (the Annunciation) - all three of our Churches will have confession times from 9:00am until 8:00pm.





The Pieta

by Michelangelo

There is something quite unique about the art form of **sculpting a statue** – different from all other forms of **art** – a **sculpted statue** is three dimensional – just as we are. This means, we can interact with **a statue** in ways that are not possible with a painting. We can walk around **a statue**, we can touch

it, we can view it from different angles.... **Michelangelo** said it himself: “**marble sculpting is the greatest media, because it will last forever.**” Five hundred years later, we can view the same **Pieta statue** that **Pope Alexander VI** saw! There is the story about **Ted Williams**, the “**Splendid Splinter**,” the last ball player to hit 0.400 – that he would spend half a day crawling through piles of **wood** in a **lumber yard** until he found the perfect piece of **wood** to have made into a **bat**. Well, **Michelangelo** was just as particular about **the marble** he would use for his work. He hired himself out as **a marble cutter** in **the Carrara** marble pits north of Pisa in Tuscany. Years later he could still point out the spot in **the pit** where he cut **the marble block** from which he sculpted **the Pieta**. **Marble** is a difficult media to work with it – it is hard, brittle, and unforgiving – make a mistake with **oil painting**, or **fresco**, or **clay** and it can easily be corrected; but make a mistake with **marble** (a rock) and the work may be unsalvageable. Of course, **the Pieta** is an image of **the 13th Station of the Cross** – when Christ’s lifeless body was taken down from **the Cross** and caressed by **the Virgin Mary** before His burial. Each of us is made in the image and likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so we should imagine ourselves taking the place of Jesus in **the Pieta**. **Mary** is a symbol of **the Catholic Church**, and it is **the Catholic Church** who will present our dead bodies to God at our **Funeral Masses**, when we die; in order to give us **birth** into **Heaven**. Just think God created you from **the dust of the earth**, blew into you the breath of life, and you became a living being; and then God spent your lifetime **sculpting** you! Chipping a little here, a great blow there, a tiny brush stroke in this spot, a glancing sliver in that spot – until we become a finely detailed, smooth, intricate, **beautiful** image of the Son of Man, Jesus Christ, finally worthy to enter back into **Paradise!!** Eons from now – when you are **a Saint** in **Heaven** basking in the glory of God’s **love** – God will tell you the story of how He still remembers the day that He formed you out of the **ground** – God will still remember the spot where He pushed **the dirt** together and then gave you your **spirit!!!** **Our Lady of Sorrows...** pray for us!



Mass Intentions

Saturday, February 28th

(+) Thomas Dvorsky/ Fr. Randy

4:00 pm, **OLPH** (+) Gene Leffelman/ Shawn Leffelman

5:30 pm, **SMA** (+) Rita Haefner/ Cheryl Nauman

Sunday, March 1st 2nd Sunday of Lent

8:00 am, **St. Patrick** (+) Julie Malach/ Mr. & Mrs. Westin Montavon

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

Monday, March 2nd

(+) Robert Bulfer/ Mr. & Mrs. Jeff O'Sadnick

Tuesday, March 3rd

8:00 am, **OLPH** (+) Philip & (+) Pat Hanson/ Janet Widolff

Wednesday, March 4th

8:00 am, **OLPH** (+) Patricia Painter/ Mr. & Mrs. Donald Dinges

Thursday, March 5th

8:00 am, **OLPH** (+) James McCauley/ Mary Kuebel

Friday, March 6th

8:00 am, **OLPH** (+) Martin & (+) Elizabeth Spitz/ Carlene Schuhler

noon, **St. Katherine Hospital** (+) Michael Bradley/ Mr. & Mrs. Patrick O'Connor

5:30 pm, **OLPH** (+) Patricia Painter/ Family

Saturday, March 7th

(+) Thomas Dvorsky/ Fr. Randy

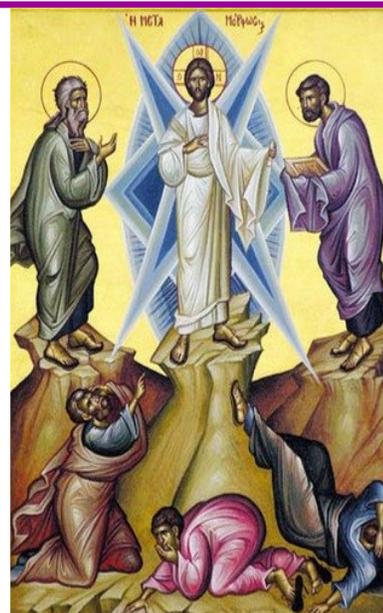
4:00 pm, **OLPH** Pro Populo/ Fr. Randy

5:30 pm, **SMA** (+) Arlene Schmitt/ Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Henkel

Sunday, March 8th 3rd Sunday of Lent

8:00 am, **St. Patrick** (+) Thomas Sharkey/ Diane Pugh

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



Discover an easy way to **memorize** the names of **the Twelve Disciples** and make them your **Prayer Partners** in praying for your **“Spiritual Twelve.”**

- **Last Supper Talk** Tuesday, March 3rd at 6:30pm
St. Mary's / St. Patrick Church 606 W. Main Street, Durand, Ill.

