

# St. Boniface

Catholic Church

stboniface.net

230 1st St. NW - Lidgerwood, ND 58053

Also Serving St. Martin of Tours, Geneseo and Sts. Peter & Paul, Cayuga

## Weekend Mass Schedule

### Saint Boniface

Saturday - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 a.m.

### Saint Martin of Tours - Geneseo

Sunday - 10:30 a.m.

### Saints Peter & Paul - Cayuga

Sunday - 11:45 a.m.

(Even Numbered Months)

## March 26, 2023 - 5th Sunday of Lent

### Offerings

*Offer it up.* My grandmother used this phrase with her children, and my mother, in turn, used it with me. It's a kind of verbal heirloom, a gift of wisdom from a generation that knew suffering all too well.

We know it to be true that God will work through our suffering if we invite him to. We know it and we have seen it — we have only to look at Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary.

But, often, I invite God into my suffering only to tell Him where I want Him to stand. I make an offering of suffering but expect God to do something very specific with it. *Teach me this, please. Give me this specific grace. Show me this specific answer.*

The happy ending in today's Gospel is not the alleviation of the sorrow Martha and Mary feel because it isn't alleviated, Lazarus is still human, and death still awaits him. Someday, his sisters will have to mourn at his tomb. That loss and pain will not be avoided.

The happy ending is that he is resurrected *now*, and in doing so, brings so many to belief. The happy ending is that Martha and Mary do not abandon discipleship because things didn't work out exactly the way that they wanted. They run out to meet Christ, eyes dim with tears. They fling themselves into his company and onto his providence.

They made an offering of their suffering, and their happy ending is that their offering was accepted.

*"You are not in the flesh, on the contrary, you are in the spirit."* — Romans 8:9



## 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT

Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live."  
- Jn 11:25

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

GLPI

**Ezekiel 37:12-14 | Romans 8:8-11  
John 11:1-45**

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of the true and the good and their inseparable relation to one another.” By experiencing the beauty of a catholic church, the faithful are invited to contemplate the transcendent beauty of God, fostering a deeper connection with the divine.

This aesthetic also plays a crucial role in the liturgical celebration. The Second Vatican Council’s document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* explains: “The art of our times, from every race and country, shall also be given free scope in the Church, provided that it brings to the task the reverence and honor due to the sacred buildings and rites and expresses true artistry.” Catholic churches, with their intricate art, sculptures, and stained-glass windows, serve as a backdrop for the liturgy, enriching the spiritual experience and prayer of the participants. These artistic elements help to create an atmosphere of sacredness and reverence, enabling the faithful to encounter Christ more fully.

Catholic churches also stand as symbols of the Church’s commitment to proclaim the Gospel throughout history. They are living testimonies to the faith of generations past, as well as present-day communities. Art historian Elizabeth Lev states, “Catholic churches are the material manifestation of the Christian desire to touch heaven, to unite the material world with the spiritual.”

The aesthetic timelessness of these structures is a testament to the creative genius of those who built them and a reflection of the divine inspiration that guided their hands.

By preserving and maintaining these sacred spaces, the Church continues to pass on the rich heritage of the Catholic faith to future generations. These sacred spaces, with their breathtaking architecture and art, are living testimonies of the faith and commitment of generations of believers who sought to glorify God through their creative expression – they are a testament to our journey towards a heavenly home rather than a worldly one.

As Pope Francis has said, “In this sense, the artistic patrimony of the Church, as well as the new ways of expressing beauty, are an invitation to humanity to discover the joy of the Gospel and the hope that it bears for the world”. The aesthetic beauty of a catholic church serves as a beacon of light, guiding us on our spiritual journey by means of their sublime magnificence and inviting us to experience the transforming power of God’s love.

### **Pope Urges Renewed Consecration of Ukraine and Russia to Mary** *Vatican News*

Speaking during his weekly General Audience in St Peter’s Square on Wednesday, Pope Francis urged believers to renew the consecration of humanity - especially Russia and Ukraine - to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The Holy Father’s appeal came almost a year after he first prayed the Act of Consecration, at the annual “24 Hours for the Lord” Lenten penitential service in the Vatican on the 25th March 2022.

### **“An Act of Complete Trust”**

Pope Francis’ initial consecration of Russia and Ukraine to Mary’s Immaculate Heart was a response, he said, to the war between the two countries.

“This is no magic formula,” he explained at the time, “but a spiritual act. It is an act of complete trust on the part of children who, amid the tribulation of this cruel and senseless war that threatens our world, turn to their Mother, reposing all their fears and pain in her heart and abandoning themselves to her.”

### **A Renewed Appeal**

This Wednesday, the Pope said that “My thoughts go to the 25th March of last year, when, in union with all the bishops of the world, I consecrated the Church and humanity, especially Russia and Ukraine, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.”

“Let us not tire of consecrating the cause of peace to the Queen of Peace,” he continued. “I would like to invite every believer and community, especially prayer groups, to renew the Act of Consecration to Our Lady every 25th March, so that she, who is Mother, might preserve us all in unity and peace.”

The Pope ended his appeal by remembering “tormented Ukraine”, as he has at almost every General Audience since the outbreak of war, and urged his listeners never to forget the country, which, he said, “is suffering very greatly.”

### **The 6 Characteristics of an Everyday Stewardship for Lent – Committed**

I remember Jim Valvano, Jimmy V to many, saying the iconic words, “Don’t give up; you can never give up.” The former coach of the NC State men’s basketball team was dying of cancer, yet he refused to throw in the towel and give in to his disease. His words exemplified the best of the human spirit we all share. Sometimes, living out those words seem much more difficult than saying them.

These words are also important for our faith life. The life Jesus calls us to is not easy. When working toward a life of greater generosity and surrender of all to God, we are prone to fall flat on our face many times. We are not called to this life only when we are strong. It is how we respond when times are the most difficult that truly defines us as disciples and stewards. The world may think we are down for the count, but rising again gives testimony that in Christ we are stronger.

Commitment takes a willingness to do the things needed to get stronger and build our spiritual muscles. We cannot expect to find success in the spiritual life unless we continue to work on our resolve and grow in our knowledge of the faith. A marathon runner would never be able to make it to the finish line unless they have trained and prepared in advance. We must work hard to stay the course and prepare for the race at hand. No matter what this life may have in store for us, we are called to not give up. God will never give up on us.