

# 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 - 7:00 p.m.

September 3, 2023 - 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

### Choosing the Cross

I've been called a lot of things in my life, but I've never been called "Satan," at least not to my face.

It seems to me the worst name you could call a person, and today we hear it straight from the lips of Jesus. It's just one of the many small reminders strewn throughout Scripture that Jesus preaches meekness, but he is not mild — not when mildness serves no purpose, anyway. And here, when Peter is trying to deter Jesus from making the right choice, mildness serves no purpose at all. Can we blame Peter? I certainly can't. I'm sure I would have said the same thing to my own dear friend. He is, in today's Gospel, wholly unwilling to embrace the cross — he's afraid of it, even — but aren't we all, in the end, afraid of our cross? I am. It's no sin, it's only human. Fear is natural. Self-preservation is a reflex.

What Christ speaks of today is a choice, one we are all faced with, again and again, just as Peter is. We will not always respond perfectly; Peter does not respond well today. He does not respond well on Holy Thursday. But on his last day, on the day of the ultimate choice? On that day, he chooses the cross.

We marvel at first responders who put themselves in harm's way for the sake of others, because to do so is not human, it is divine. I have to believe that if even a firefighter's loved one threw themselves in his way, he would still charge toward the flames, crying, "Get behind me."

Christ runs into the burning building for us, shaking off not only his own fear (and he had it, I promise you — he was human, too) but the fear of everyone who loved him. "Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God..." — Romans 12:1



## 22<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

"Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." - Mt 16:24b-25

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

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**Jeremiah 20:7-9 | Romans 12:1-2**  
**Matthew 16:21-27**

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## Weekly Mass Schedule



<u>Sunday Liturgies</u>		
Saturday, Sept. 2	5:00 pm (St. B.)	† Bob Neidviecky
Sunday, Sept. 3	8:30 am (St. B.)	† Elaine & Billy Oster
	10:30 am (St. M.)	Pro Popula
	7:00 pm (Sts. P&P)	Special Intention
<u>Weekday Liturgies</u>		
Monday, Sept. 4	NO MASS	
Tuesday, Sept. 5	10:00 am (St. B.)	† Leo Ehli
Wednesday, Sept. 6	10:00 am (St. B.)	† Fr. Sautner
Thursday, Sept. 7	10:00 am (St. B.)	† Gail Hann
Friday, Sept. 8	8:30 am (St. B.)	† Milton & Julia Nechas
<u>Sunday Liturgies</u>		
Saturday, Sept. 9	5:00 pm (St. B.)	† Henry & Elizabeth Prchal
	8:30 am (St. B.)	† Jonah Wettstein
Sunday, Sept. 10	10:30 am (St. M.)	Pro Popula
	7:00 pm (Sts. P&P)	Special Intention

### **Reconciliation Schedule**

**St. Boniface: Saturday & Sunday** – Before/after Mass  
**Wednesday & Thursday** – after Mass  
**St. Martin: Sunday** – Before and after Mass  
**Sts. Peter & Paul** – Before and after Mass

### **Prayer Requests**

Please keep the following people in your prayers:  
 - David Heley      - Peggy Harles      - Shelby Northrop  
 - Shirley Ahrens      - Brad Meyer      - Beth Stroehl  
 - John Popp      - Rick Kane      - Dan Frolek  
 - If you have any imminent prayer requests, please call or text Cindy at 701-640-1401.

### **All Parishes**

**Join us in Prayer.** The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet will be said at the following times: Monday through Friday at 9:30 am. The Rosary for the Unborn will be said on Tuesdays at 10am.

**Eucharistic Adoration** – We have multiple time slots open for adoration. Jesus would love for you come and spend time with Him during one of these times or whatever time works best for you. Adoration is open to all and is Thursdays from 5am to midnight. Please contact Sharon to become a regular or substitute at 612-790-1211 or 538-7010.

**Lidgerwood Golf Clubhouse Breakfast** – Sunday, Sept. 3 from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm. Free will offering.

**Annual Soup, Sandwich & Pie Luncheon** will be held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church on Friday, Sept. 8 from 11 am – 1 pm. The cost is \$8.

**Ambulance Pancake Breakfast** will be held on Sunday, Sept. 10 from 8:30 am – 1:00 pm at the KC Hall.

**KC Highway Cleanup** – Come help with highway cleanup on Sunday, Sept. 10 at 1pm. Lunch will be served afterwards.

**St. Boniface Fall Bazaar** will be held on Sunday, Sept. 24 from 11am – 1pm. We need everyone’s help to ensure success. Ladies, please be kind to your circle leaders when they call and be generous with your time, talents and pies!

**Satan Says, “Reject Suffering!”** - *Benedictine College*  
 Jesus gives a startling, paradigm-destroying answer to the major religious question that people have faced for millennia in the Gospel for the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A.

**That question is “Why is there evil?”**

St. John Paul II lists it among the questions we find in the Old Testament, in the Hindu Veda and the Zoroastrian Avesta, in Confucius and Lao-Tze, and in Tirthankara of Jainism the Buddha.

Not only “Why is there evil,” but: “Why did my loved one have to die? Why do even believers suffer even when they are do all the right things?”

Jesus gives a startling two-fold answer: First, that suffering is the point of life; and second, that rejecting suffering is Satanic.

**Peter rebukes Jesus — which is best not to do.**

In a climactic moment last Sunday, Jesus tells Peter he will be the “rock” on which Jesus builds the Church and that he will be given the keys to the kingdom — the authority of a king’s steward.

So, when Jesus follows that up by announcing that he intends to “go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly and be killed,” Peter used his authority to “bind and loose” to unbind Jesus from this terrible fate. He “took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him,” saying, “God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you.”

“Get behind me Satan!” Jesus answers. “You are thinking not as God does.”

Ouch. Is it really true that preventing Jesus from suffering is *Satanic*?

It is. Ever since the Fall, when Adam and Eve doubted God at Satan’s insinuation, we have all had a paradigm problem. We think the way Satan thinks. He saw all the power and gifts of God and wanted *control*, and he taught Adam and Eve that they shouldn’t be happy with God’s generosity — that it is better to rule in hell than to serve in heaven, as Satan put it in *Paradise Lost*.

Peter knew the story of the Three Temptations of Christ —



so he knew how Satan schooled Jesus on how *he* could grab control of his story:

1. By turning stones to bread, Jesus could eliminate the suffering of hunger and toil by offering bread without labor.
2. By safely leaping off the Temple, Jesus could eliminate the suffering of mystery and uncertainty by offering superficial spectacle.
3. By accepting the world's kingdoms from Satan, Jesus could eliminate the suffering of danger and worry by offering power and security.

Jesus rejected each offer, and then Peter saw him build an approach that was opposite to Satan's.

- John the Baptist introduced Jesus as “the Lamb of God” — a sacrifice — and Jesus said, “the bread which I give is my flesh for the life of the world.”
- Jesus was born in poverty and said, “The son of man has nowhere to lay his head.”
- Jesus began his ministry saying “Repent!” and deepened his message with “Blessed are the poor, the mourning, the meek, and the persecuted.”

Jesus made it clear that he wanted to destroy the worldly paradigm of comfort, power and wealth.

**He wants each of us to destroy it, in fact. First, by accepting the cross.**

You can see this Sunday's readings were chosen to elaborate on this theme. Jesus says, “Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me,” and the First Reading shows us Jeremiaiah. Jeremiaiah was tasked with a terrible message that was very much like the paradigm-challenging message of Jesus. He said: “Surrender to your conquerors and trust God to take care of you!”

“Surrender to the bad guys” was as unpopular a message then as it would be now, and insisting on it got Jeremiah locked up, tortured in a pit, put in the stocks and mocked. But he kept telling the truth that no one wanted to hear. It is a message that still irks, today, because a lot of us suffer from a delusion that makes it hard for us to take up our cross and follow. We still think of the cross as a *transaction* and not a *way of life*. I remember I recently went all-in on a prayer intention — I prayed, sacrificed, and made a nuisance of myself. My idea was, “I will sacrifice, and God will reward that.”

He didn't. The whole incident got me *nothing* except humiliation. So I went to the chapel early one morning to demand to know why.

I said, “You are Almighty God. You can do all things. I believe it. I preach it. You want me to accept humiliation. I did that. You want me to persist in asking: I have.

Everything was set for you to heal and free, like you do in the Gospel. Why didn't you?”

Immediately, my attention was drawn to the Stations of the Cross statues on the wall, which somehow stuck out from the background and made their presence felt. And I could almost hear his answer: “I, too was humiliated, but the

humiliation never stopped. I too, suffered for my people, and many still stay far away. I never put down the cross on Calvary, and I still haven't.”

“I'm sorry,” I said. “Forgive me. Thank you.”

**Second: He wants us to give him our hearts and minds.**

Jesus says, “Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it,” and St. Paul in the Second Reading says that means to “offer your bodies as a living sacrifice” — and not just your bodies. He says, “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”

That's what Jesus was helping me do in the chapel: Stop thinking of the world as a giant support system built for my goals and starting to think of it as a Way of the Cross to teach me *his* goals.

That's what it has always been: for Jeremiaiah, for Paul, and for so many people I have met.

As Dr. Todd Worner, editor of Word on Fire's *Evangelization & Culture* put it: “Lately, I have been inundated with stories of people hitting the wall, surrendering to God, and downright miraculous things happening. These people were dumbstruck. I am dumbstruck hearing what they tell me.”

I've seen the same thing — people who have seen far worse suffering than I have, smiling and greeting the day enthusiastically. I have never heard someone say “God is good!” in a grocery store; but I heard it *a lot* in the hospital.

Suffering, when lived with resignation, purifies people and makes them incandescent with light. It gives them *faith*, because they can no longer pretend life is anything but a mystery; it gives them hope, because they no longer have any delusions about the worth of the world apart from God, and it gives them *love*, because it unites them with God who is love.

**So, what is the new paradigm Jesus delivers? That only radical trust can rebuild our relationship with God.**

We lost our relationship with God by following Satan's lead and doubting his goodness, against all evidence, in Eden's Garden of Plenty. Now we have to rebuild it by following Jesus's lead and trusting God's goodness, against all evidence, in a veil of tears.

Why is there evil? “No quick answer will suffice,” says the Catechism. “Only Christian faith as a whole constitutes the answer to this question.”

