

CHOOSING TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS

In the first and second readings, we are reminded of how important it is to make good choices, and how much we rely on the wisdom of God to help us do so. This is not a wisdom of this age, but, rather, a determination to have our eyes set on heaven. The wisdom of god, the desire for a deeper relationship with Him, inspires us to choose to keep the commandments and to trust in Him: *Whichever they choose will be given them.*

As Christians and as children of god, we are given a radical freedom and free will – to listen and obey or to turn away. God has not done this in order to mock us and watch us fall. Rather, He allows us the freedom to choose to love Him and be loved by Him, leaving open the possibility that we might also go our own way.

A narrow reading of the Gospel, or a “Pharisaical” reading of it, portrays Jesus as an “outlaw to the outcast,” breaking so many of the rules of ritual purity – talking to and touching and eating with people he should have stayed away from, lest he be declared unclean. That is why it comes as such a surprise when he says, during the Sermon on the Mount: *Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.* Indeed, Jesus makes it clear that every last letter must be fulfilled. This does not suggest that He is what we might call a stickler for the rules, or a tattle-tale, looking to get us into trouble with the Father. No, the Good Shepherd is once again trying to protect His lost, wounded and wandering lambs from doing harm to ourselves or one another, and He firmly believes that a greater respect for the laws of God will lead us to show greater respect for God’s people.

Yes, Jesus dined with tax collectors and prostitutes, and showed affection for the unclean and the untouchable, because that is what God’s law commands all of us to do – to look out for the needs of the least among us. In the mind and heart of Jesus, fulfilling the law to the smallest part of letter means two things: 1) going further than the law requires, and 2) obeying and applying God’s law with love for God and all people whom we encounter.

This is why Jesus chooses some of the Ten Commandments, and then shows us that it would never be enough to simply not kill someone, or never cheat on our spouse. In order to live the beatitudes, first preached earlier in this same chapter, we must embrace the idea that faith in God and belief in His Son as our Savior is meant not only to change how we view and respond to God, but more importantly, it should change how we treat others – especially the weakest and most vulnerable. We can no longer say one thing and do another. Instead, let your “yes” mean “yes” and your “no” mean “no”.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon	Feb 13	Gn 4:1-15, 25, Mk 8:11-13
Tues	Feb 14	Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10, mk 8:14-21, Acts 13:46-49, Lk 10:1-9
Wed	Feb 15	Gn 8:6-13, 20-22, Mk 8:22-26
Thur	Feb 16	Gn 9:1-13, Mk 8:27-33
Fri	Feb 17	Gn 11:1-9, Mk 8:34—9:1
Sat	Feb 18	Heb 11:1-7, Mk 9:2-13
Sun	Feb 19	Lv 19:1-2, 17-18, 1 Cor 3:16-23, Mt 5:38-48



YOUR SUNDAY TITHING AND

CONTRIBUTIONS

Regular Collections	\$ 12,836.50
Nativity Elem.	\$ 12.00
Nativity Maintenance	\$ 547.26
Capital Improvement	\$ 246.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 311.50
TOTAL COLLECTION	\$ 13,953.26
CASH NEEDED	\$ 14,400.00

SPECIAL APPEAL – MAINTENANCE FUNDS

TOTAL GIFTS AND PLEDGES TO DATE	\$171,349
PAYMENTS TO DATE	\$164,409
BALANCE TO COMPLETE PLEDGES	\$ 6,940

FR. JAMES' THANK YOU TO NATIVTY CATHEDRAL

Dear parishioners & friends of Nativity: Bishop Morin has appointed me to a new parish, St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Long Beach, MS, effective February 16, 2017. I am so grateful to Bishop and to Fr. Dennis for the ministry I have been blessed with being able to perform at our Cathedral. I will miss you all but look forward joyfully to new opportunities at St. Thomas. Please keep me in your prayers.

FARWELL TO FATHER JAMES

Let’s gather to bid Father James farewell on February 19th at 10:00 a.m., after the 9:00 Mass, in the SHC. Refreshments will be served!

CCD CLASS INFORMATION

CCD classes are held on Wednesdays, from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m., in the Sacred Heart Center.

BINGO MANIA

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The following families are scheduled for February 14th. McNeil (Kyle & Monique), Nguyen (Lion Van & Dong), Price (Kristi Pope), Siminicht (Ron & Dusti), Smith (Scot & Alexandra), Stevenson (Mark & Chere) and Stoddard (Bryan & Kerry) **REMEMBER!** If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to secure a replacement.

MAGNIFICAT SUBSCRIPTION

It is time to renew our Magnificat subscription for 2017. For those of you who subscribe through Nativity, please call or email Jackie Hewitt at the rectory to renew or cancel. jhewitt@nativitybvm.org.

SCHEDULED LAY MINISTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS	LECTORS	ALTAR SERVERS
Feb 18 4:00 pm 1. Helen Languirand 2. Andrea Gilich 3. Jim Coskey 4. Kathleen Coskey 5. Liz Joachim Feb 19 7:00 am 1. Vicki Howard 2. Colleen Kavanagh 3. Danny Kavanagh 9:00 am 1. Nanette Burke 2. Barbara Ziz 3. John Brauchle 4. Marianne Sherman 5. John Sherman 11:00 am 1. Deacon Ben 2. Deacon Ed 3. Sandy Steckler 4. Judy Steckler 5. Linda Welter 6. Brad Butterfield 7. Rocky Greathouse 5:30 pm 1. Jim Shugart 2. Kristy Arguelles 3. Angela Cannon	Feb 18 4:00 pm Michael Bruffey Feb 19 7:00am Marcia Mayfield 9:00 am Linda Bourgeois 11:00 am Kristy Arguelles 5:30 pm Youth Ministry CANTORS Feb 18 4:00 p.m. Billy Endicott Feb 19 9:00 a.m. Dennis Burke 11:00 am John Welter	Feb 18 4:00 pm Simon Randall Kingston Widell Cayden Canon Feb 19 7:00 am Clayton Stoddard Ave M. Stoddard 9:00 am Morgan R. Newman Rhys Newman Rush Newman Emma Theobald 11:00 am Michael Pfarrer Hadyn Hollis Greyson Ross McRae Ross 5:30 pm Jacob Arguelles Nicholas Arguelles Taylor Yasar

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Feb 13 Women of Mary, 5:30 p.m.
 Feb 14 - Men of St. Joseph, 7:00 a.m. – SHC
 - RCIA at 6:00 p.m., SHC
 - BINGO Mania, 5:30 p.m. - Bingo Hall
 Feb 15 - **Cleaning Team “B”**
 Mass at Seashore Retirement Home, 3:00 p.m.
 CCD Classes at 5:30 p.m.
 Feb 16 Mass at Greenbriar Nursing Home, 10:00 a.m.

R.C.I.A.

This week the RCIA class will be learning about the Ninth and Tenth Commandment with Father James, and Margaret Baltar will be leading our Prayer Service. Please pray for the Catechumens, Candidates and Sponsors as we approach the Easter Sacraments and as they continue their journey of faith together. If you would like further information, please contact Greg or Penny Payne 228-365-6348.

COMMUNION VISITATION

Jesus says of you and me, “You are the salt of the earth”. No one should be deprived of the Most Holy Eucharist because they are homebound, elderly, have no means of getting to Mass and/or sick in their home. Sister Jackie Tarrant, RSM will gladly bring the Eucharist to you in your home. Together we can be “salt of the earth”. Sister can be reached at 228-223-8129 or the rectory at 228-374-1717.

NEPTUNE AT NATIVITY- Our Third Annual *Neptune at Nativity* cathedral parish Mardi Gras celebration. On February 25th, after the 4:00 p.m. Mass, our parish family will gather in front of the cathedral and rectory to watch the Neptune Parade. Our Men’s Club will serve hamburgers and hotdogs. There will be an open house in the rectory with bathrooms available. Be sure to bring your drinks and a chair!

Mass Intentions

	6:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.
Mon	Feb 13 Dan Williams	Gabe/Doris Kasovich
Tue	Feb 14 Collins-Sims Fly.	Clare Sekul Hornsby
Wed	Feb 15 Thomas E. Connell	Sonny/Helen Ross
Thur	Feb 16 Dan Williams	Boise Ray “Skip Butterfield, Jr.
Fri	Feb 17 Herbert/Bertha McDonnell	Chester Badius Fly.
Sat	Feb 18 8 – Ernest “Sonny” Ross	4 Jerry O’Keefe
Sun	Feb 19 7 – Sonny/Helen Ross.	9 - For the Parishioners
	11 – Boise Ray “Skip” Butterfield, Jr.	5:30 - Richard Wells

PLEASE KEEP OUR SICK IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Tiffany Whitehead, Lena Marchioni, Anna Jo Wentzell, Kay Lawson, Jeanie Harbison, Mickey Roberts, Holly Hill, Georgia Bellais Dominick, Maxine Kiddinger, Marie Manning, Lisa Walker Kirkman, Raymond Egers, Betty Hilton, Walter Blessey, Mary Lancaster, Joe Powell, Patsy Smolcich, Danny Boney, Sr., Kathleen Hebert, Mickey Bradley, Cheryl Terry, Gwen Gollotte and Greg Hotaling.

NATIVITY BVM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*Nativity School will hold its annual Open House this Sunday, February 12th, from 11:00-2:00 p.m. Come and see what the “Nativity Difference” is all about! Current, former and prospective families are welcome to enjoy the displays, the activities, the prizes, the refreshments and the great company!

*All are invited to attend Nativity School’s annual Mardi Gras parade on Friday, February 24th at 10:30 a.m. on the school ground. The parade, led by the preschool and kindergarten students, will again feature the King and Queen of Neptune. King Cake will be served following the parade, thanks to our Grandparent Club members.

*Registration for the 2017-2018 school year will begin on Monday, February 13th for families with children currently enrolled in Nativity School. Registration for new families registered at Nativity, Blessed Seelos, Our Mother of Sorrows, St. Michael and Church of the Vietnamese Martyrs parishes will take place on March 6th through March 8th from 8:30-5:00. Open registration for all other new families begins on Thursday, March 9th until all openings are filled. Nativity School provides a well-rounded, Catholic education for children in prek 3 through 6th grade.

*The Second Annual Disney Raffle is once again taking place. Tickets cost \$75 and provide the winner with a \$4,000 Disney gift card and \$1,000 spending money. Only 335 tickets will be sold with the drawing taking place on Thursday, February 23rd at 2:00 p.m. For more information please visit the school’s website, www.nativitybvm.org, or call the school office, 432-2269.

“I command you: be firm and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord, your God, is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9