

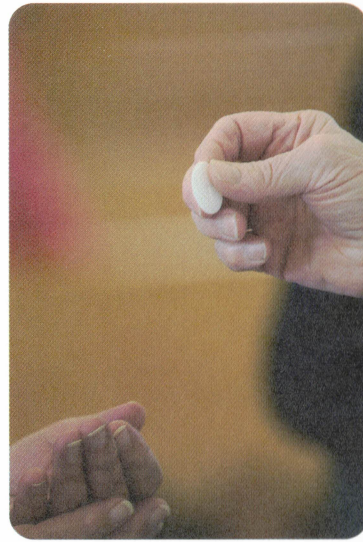
Dear Padre,

May I receive Communion if I'm divorced and haven't gotten an annulment?

Yes, you may. Divorce, in itself, is not an impediment to the reception of Communion. Divorce, although regrettable because of the many ramifications that may be part of the experience, is not in itself a sin. There are situations when divorce may be the most loving choice and make it possible for all parties involved to live the lives God is calling them to live.

Remarriage, when a person is not free to marry because of the presence of a previous bond, is an impediment to the reception of holy Communion. Although this situation is more and more common, it does not mean that the law of the Church, representative of the teaching of Jesus, can be set aside. As part of the process of healing from your divorce and moving on with your life, you may want to seek an annulment, particularly if you think you might want to marry again. The annulment process can often be healing and a source of great blessing. It also provides a rare opportunity to reflect on what was lost as a result of the original divorce and what can be learned as a way of moving forward and building a second marriage that is strong and life-giving.

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSsR / DearPadre.org



STEVE LOVERGROVE / SHUTTERSTOCK

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
March 24	March 25	March 26	March 27	March 28	March 29	March 30
Lenten Weekday	The	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Lenten Weekday	Fourth Sunday
2 Kgs 5:1-15b	Annunciation of the Lord	Dt 4:1, 5-9	Jer 7:23-28	Hos 14:2-10	Hos 6:1-6	of Lent
Lk 4:24-30	Is 7:10-14; 8:10	Mt 5:17-19	Lk 11:14-23	Mk 12:28-34	Lk 18:9-14	Jos 5:9a, 10-12
	Heb 10:4-10					2 Cor 5:17-21
	Lk 1:26-38					Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

I like to think that a nice name for God could be “the God of another possibility”.... [God] does not look at the achievements you have not yet reached, but the fruits you can still bear. He does not keep track of your shortcomings but encourages your potential. He does not dwell on your past, but confidently bets on your future.

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 20, 2022



VATICAN MEDIA

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Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 23, 2025

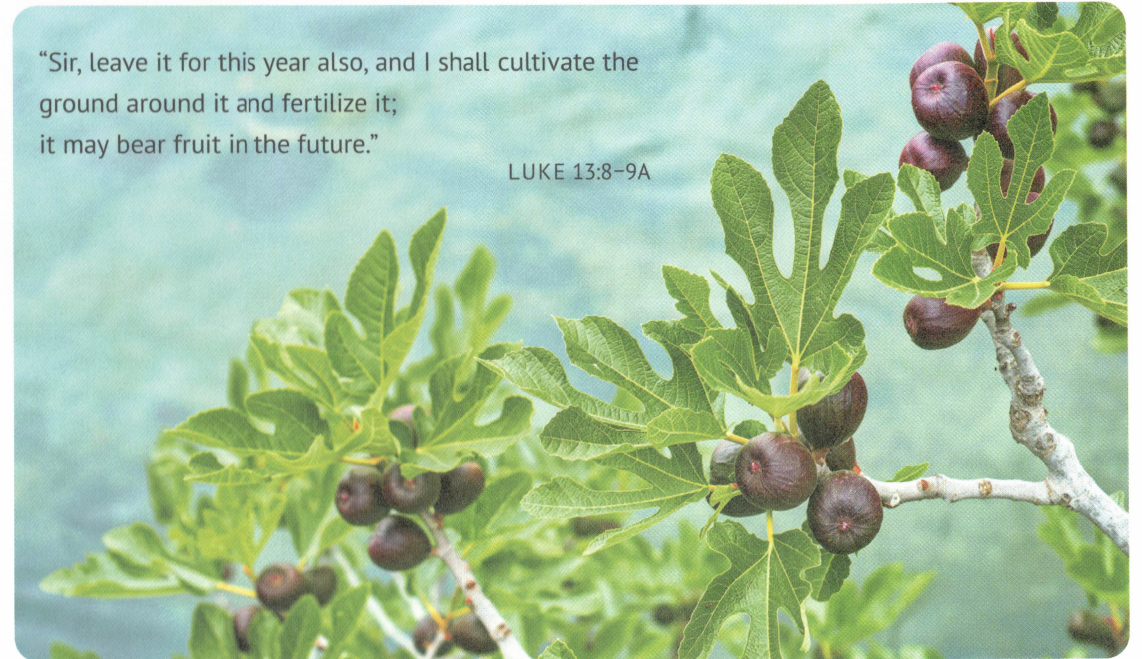
Third Sunday of Lent (C)

Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15 / 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12 / Luke 13:1-9



“Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future.”

LUKE 13:8-9A



A Gardener God

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Charles Baudelaire was a French poet and essayist in the mid-1800s. He once observed that life is like a hospital in which each patient is possessed by the desire to change beds. In other words, he thought everyone seemed to think life would be so much better if only they had a different set of circumstances, a different job, a different marriage, a different place in life. Like trees, however, not everyone grows and matures at the same pace. There are forty-year-olds who still act and think like teenagers, and there are ten-year-olds who have an attitude toward life like that of an elder. Over time, we all grow into the lives we're given.

In this week's Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, some think God is like the owner who planted the tree, as

if God is impatient with us to begin bearing fruit and quick to uproot us if we fail. A case could be made, however, for God to be the gardener who patiently fertilizes and nurtures. In the beginning, it was God who had a garden called Eden, filled with all kinds of trees and plants among which God walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. After the resurrection, it was Mary Magdalene who went looking for the body of Jesus and mistook him for the gardener. It is God who hovers over us, watering and nudging and nurturing, waiting until in God's good time, we begin to bear fruit. ●

Reflect

What needs nurturing in my life, and what needs weeding out?



The
Catholic Church
in Pocahontas County
West Virginia

OUR MISSION

If anyone
wishes to be first,
he shall be
the last of all
and the servant of all.
(Mark 9:35, nab-re)

ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH & CHURCH OFFICE, 714 Tenth Avenue, Marlinton WV 24954
ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST MISSION, 92 Catholic Church Road, Rts 250 & 92, Bartow WV 24920
ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX CHAPEL, 6332 Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe WV 26209
Telephone: St. John Neumann 304-799-6778, St. Bernard of Clairvaux 304-572-0847
Website: PocahontasCatholic.org
E-mail: Pastor@PocahontasCatholic.org



Charlie & Patty Bryant
Margaret Bryant
Ann Burke
Danielle Cade
Phillip Cobb
Drema Moore
Cynthia Olson
Quinn Riffle

EUCHARIST THIS WEEK

Monday 8:00 a.m. St. John
Friday 8:00 a.m. St. John
Saturday 5:30 p.m. St. Bernard
Sunday 9:00 a.m. St. John
11:30 a.m. St. Mark



*St. John Neumann Church is open for private prayer
every day during daylight.*

*The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered
before each Eucharist or by appointment,
and at St. Bernard on Saturdays 4:30-5:00 p.m.*

*The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
is available any time upon request.*



Please call the Church office (304-799-6778) if you know of a parishioner who is sick, in the hospital or nursing home, homebound, deployed, or in prison.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800-352-6513.
To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888-434-6237 or 304-233-0880.
To report suspected cases of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse by a bishop or eparch, please contact ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 800-276-1562.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
The Lord is kind and merciful.
(cf Psalm 103, NAB-RE)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTES

• **Five years ago during Covid-19**, bulletin of 22 March 2020 is attached to the on-line edition of our bulletin.

• **Save the date:** C.A.M.P. Wade this year is June 22-28, 2025 in Huttonsville, WV, our 40th year of C.A.M.P. Please note that our week this year is earlier than in previous years (late June instead of late July). C.A.M.P. was established to provide a camping experience and religious education for rural Catholic youth, who might otherwise have limited opportunities for Sunday School, C.C.D., and socialization with other Catholic children. Application and medical forms are available at all our Churches. Remember also that our Churches will help any parishioner who needs assistance with C.A.M.P. Wade fees.



• **Community Lenten Service** is this Wednesday (March 26) at noon at Marlinton Presbyterian Church, and brown bag lunch will follow for those who can remain. This week's message is on *The Upper Room, Sharing the Meal*, by Rev. Angela Lambert of Mountain Lutheran Parish.

• **Community Dinner** is this **Thursday**

(March 27) at Marlinton Presbyterian Church 5:00-6:30 p.m., featuring shepherd's pie, cole slaw, and desserts. It is free and open to the public, so come and join us.

• **Stations of the Cross** is every Friday during Lent at 5 p.m. at St. John Neumann and St. Mark the Evangelist. Stations will include Exposition and Benediction at St. Mark the Evangelist this week.



LAST WEEKEND

	<u>attendance</u>	<u>collection</u>
St. John Neumann	39	\$285.00
Fund for the Poor		\$230.00
St. Mark the Evangelist	7	\$363.00
Fund for the Poor		\$20.00
St. Bernard of Clairvaux	35	\$1,147.00
Fund for the Poor		\$364.00
Priests' Retirement Fund		\$50.00
total	81	\$2,459.00

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR C

First Reading (Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15)

Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro,
the priest of Midian.
Leading the flock across the desert,
he came to Horeb, the mountain of God.
There an angel of the LORD
appeared to Moses in fire flaming out of a bush.
As he looked on, he was surprised to see that the bush,
though on fire, was not consumed.
So Moses decided,
“I must go over to look at this remarkable sight,
and see why the bush is not burned.”

When the LORD saw him coming over
to look at it more closely,
God called out to him from the bush, "Moses! Moses!"
He answered, "Here I am."
God said, "Come no nearer!
Remove the sandals from your feet,
for the place where you stand is holy ground.
I am the God of your fathers, " he continued,
"the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
the God of Jacob."
Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.
But the LORD said,
"I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt
and have heard their cry of complaint
against their slave drivers,
so I know well what they are suffering.
Therefore I have come down to rescue them
from the hands of the Egyptians
and lead them out of that land
into a good and spacious land,
a land flowing with milk and honey."

Moses said to God,
"But when I go to the Israelites and say to them,
'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,'
if they ask me, 'What is his name?'
what am I to tell them?"
God replied, "I am who am."
Then he added, "This is what you shall tell the Israelites:
I AM sent me to you."

God spoke further to Moses,
"Thus shall you say to the Israelites:
The LORD, the God of your fathers,
the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob,
has sent me to you.

"This is my name forever;
thus am I to be remembered through all generations."

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 103: 1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 11,
Grail translation, 1963)

Response: The Lord is kind and merciful.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion.

The Lord does deeds of justice,
gives judgment for all who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses
and his deeds to Israel's sons.

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.

Second Reading (1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12)

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,
that our ancestors were all under the cloud
and all passed through the sea,
and all of them were baptized into Moses
in the cloud and in the sea.
All ate the same spiritual food,
and all drank the same spiritual drink,
for they drank from a spiritual rock that followed them,
and the rock was the Christ.
Yet God was not pleased with most of them,
for they were struck down in the desert.

These things happened as examples for us,
so that we might not desire evil things, as they did.
Do not grumble as some of them did,
and suffered death by the destroyer.
These things happened to them as an example,
and they have been written down as a warning to us,
upon whom the end of the ages has come.
Therefore, whoever thinks he is standing secure
should take care not to fall.

Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 4:17)

Repent, says the Lord;
the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Gospel (Luke 13:1-9)

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans
whose blood Pilate had mingled
with the blood of their sacrifices.
Jesus said to them in reply,
“Do you think that because these Galileans suffered
in this way
they were greater sinners than all other Galileans?
By no means!
But I tell you, if you do not repent,
you will all perish as they did!
Or those eighteen people who were killed
when the tower at Siloam fell on them –
do you think they were more guilty
than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem?
By no means!
But I tell you, if you do not repent,
you will all perish as they did!”

And he told them this parable:
“There once was a person who had a fig tree
planted in his orchard,
and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none,
he said to the gardener,
‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit
on this fig tree
but have found none.
So cut it down.
Why should it exhaust the soil?’
He said to him in reply,
‘Sir, leave it for this year also,
and I shall cultivate the ground around it
and fertilize it;
it may bear fruit in the future.
If not you can cut it down.’”

Reflection (2022)

Some years ago, Rabbi Harold Kushner wrote a book called “When Bad Things Happen To Good People.” The book wasn’t titled “*Why* Bad Things Happen To Good People,” but “*When*.”

Sometimes we’re led to believe that God punishes people for their sins during this life with sickness or failure or disasters, and therefore when something bad happens, we fall back on that early-Old-Testament way of thinking, that the person must have done something wrong, and so is being punished. I remember during the AIDs epidemic, many people said “that is God’s punishment.” Or when soldiers died in Afghanistan and Iraq, one very small church claimed it was God’s punishment on America. Or very recently, with people dying from *Covid-19*, some people again gave God the credit or blame, depending on their ideological bent.

I cannot tell you “why” bad things happen, to good people or to people we label as “bad.” But it is not God’s punishment. In today’s Gospel passage, Jesus refers to two events, and he asks the question “were their sins greater?” and he answers his own question with a resounding “by no means!”

I cannot tell you “why” bad things happen, but like Rabbi Kushner says, what is more important is what we do “when” bad things happen.

Reflection (2025)

The Psalm response today is “the Lord is kind and merciful,” and it echoes the thoughts in Psalm 103: forgiving your guilt, healing your ills, redeeming your life. Do we actually believe that “the Lord is kind and merciful,” or do we believe that the Lord is judgmental and harsh?

So many people turn away from religion, and turn away from the Church, because the followers of the Lord are anything *but* kind and merciful. Often our actions come from a philosophy that sees suffering and misfortune as God’s punishment for our sins, and therefore we become judgmental of others. But the Gospel is clear, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means!”

“The Lord is kind and merciful,” and we should be as well.

23 March 2025
Third Sunday of Lent - Year C

Penitential Rite

I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do,
through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.
May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

Prayer of the Faithful

God our Father, you are kind and merciful, and so we come before you asking that you hear our prayers:

- for Pope Francis, for his strength and well being, we pray
- for our political leaders, that they will promote equality, fairness, and justice, we pray
- for peace in the Holy Land, for peace in Sudan, for peace in Ukraine, and for peace throughout the world, we pray
- for all of us gathered for Eucharist, that our prayer, fasting and almsgiving will make us kind and merciful, we pray
- for support for those who serve our communities, especially parents and teachers, we pray
- for those who have died, that they will be saved, we pray
- and for your other intentions

(pause)

for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, we pray

Almighty Father, we ask you to hear our prayers, and give us hearts that are kind and merciful. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.



The
Catholic Church
in Pocahontas County
22 March 2020

OUR MISSION

Feed the hungry,
welcome the stranger,
clothe the naked,
care for the sick,
visit those in prison.
(see Matthew 25:35-37)

ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH & CHURCH OFFICE, 714 Tenth Avenue, Marlinton WV 24954

ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST MISSION, Catholic Church Road, Routes 250 & 92, Bartow WV 24920

ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX CHAPEL, Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe WV 26209

Telephone: St. John Neumann 304-799-6778, St. Bernard of Clairvaux 304-572-0847

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Ann Burke
Dennis DeKoch
Beth Daly
Wayne Flippen
Patrick Gibbons
Harry Gillum
Evelyn Hollandsworth
Cheryl McCullough
Gigi Mayne
Drema Moore
Tristen O'Steen
Harry Price
Annie Vaughan

EUCCHARIST THIS WEEK

Bishop Mark Brennan
has ordered that all Masses be cancelled
as well as all other events
at Catholic Churches in West Virginia,
and all Catholic Schools be closed,
because of threats of the Corona Virus,
until further notice.



*Fr. Arthur will be celebrating a private Mass
without a congregation
each week day at St. John Neumann.
The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered
any time by appointment.
The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
is available any time upon request.*



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From Fr. Arthur

It was mentioned to me that we should find a way to continue receiving our regular contributions. Know this: St. John Neumann and St. Mark the Evangelist Churches have adequate savings, we will be okay. Please consider first your needs for food, utilities, rent or mortgage payments, and other essential expenses, and keep your families safe and secure. With so many of you losing business or wages, it is imperative that you focus on meeting your own obligations first. If you do have the financial ability to contribute to the Church, I would suggest that you mail us a check for our Fund for the Poor. I expect that there will be an increase in requests for help from throughout the County for food, rent, utilities, and transportation.

The newly formed Pocahontas County Task Force had a conference call on Friday, and that will be repeated regularly, with updates on our situation, and to coordinate needs and those able to respond to needs in Pocahontas County. Sarah Riley of High Rocks led the effort, kudos to Sarah. On behalf of our Churches, I was able to offer resources and volunteers (many of you have offered your time) – expect a call as specific needs arise.

I will continue to be available throughout this crisis, so please contact me personally if you have any individual needs, pastoral or otherwise, and I will do what I can to help you. Likewise, please contact me if you need help yourself or you know of people in need of help from our Fund for the Poor. You may contact me by my e-mail (Pastor@PocahontasCatholic.org), my telephone (304-799-6778) or my cell phone (304-923-7346).

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

“Neither he nor his parents sinned.”
(John 9:3, NAB-RE)

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTES

- **Communal Penance Services** have been cancelled.
- **Wednesday Noon Ecumenical Lenten Services** have been cancelled.
- **Marlinton Community Dinner** for March 26 has been cancelled.
- **Catholic Sharing Appeal 2020** has been postponed indefinitely.
- **Diocesan Youth Rally** scheduled for March 29 in Charleston has been cancelled.
- **Formation** of the Vicariate Pastoral Council and the Diocesan Pastoral Council have been postponed.