

Jesus Embraces the Culturally Marginalized

Today's readings are about forced quarantine. On one level they are about diseases that might be contagious. On another level they are about ritual impurity that was contagious. The Israelites believed that to stand before God in worship, one's body had to be physically intact—no fractures or missing body parts, no open wounds, no oozing body fluids. Skin lesions like those associated with leprosy made one ritually unclean or impure. Furthermore, to touch one with such a disease was to become unclean oneself. The ritual impurity was considered contagious, not necessarily the disease. Unclean people were socially and religiously ostracized.

In the Gospel story, Jesus completely neutralized this practice. Touching the leprous and thus unclean man, Jesus not only didn't become unclean himself, but he actually made the man clean again. The issue here is not merely one of healing. It is a matter of reincorporating the marginalized man into society. Unfortunately, out of fear or a sense of superiority,

some people ostracize or marginalize entire groups of people. This bias might be based on gender, race, culture, sexual preference—almost anything. In this way the benefits of society are denied to those who are marginalized. One characteristic of Jesus, obvious throughout the Gospel stories, is his all-inclusiveness. Jesus rejected no one. He was open to those who society ostracized. He interacted graciously with people with diseases, non-Jews, recognized public sinners, and those working with the Roman occupiers—all people considered ritually unclean. As his disciples, can we do less?

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- * Which groups of people does society tend to ostracize or marginalize?
- * What might be done to reverse this bias?



Moved with pity, [Jesus] stretched out his hand, touched [the leper], and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean."
 MARK 1:41

Assumption of Our Lady



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February 14, 2021

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B

Hay River, NT

Weekend Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 10:30 am

Weekday Masses

Mon. Tues. & Wed. 12:10 pm

Thurs. & Fri. 5:30 pm

Reconciliation time: Saturday from 4:15 to 4:45pm; Sunday, 9:45-10:15am or by appointment. Please contact Fr. Innocent for any other sacraments or funerals



Fr. Innocent Ukaegbu: 867-875-2545

father@ourladyofassumptionhayriver.com

Sunday Mass 1:30 PM
 & St. Anne, Katloodeche

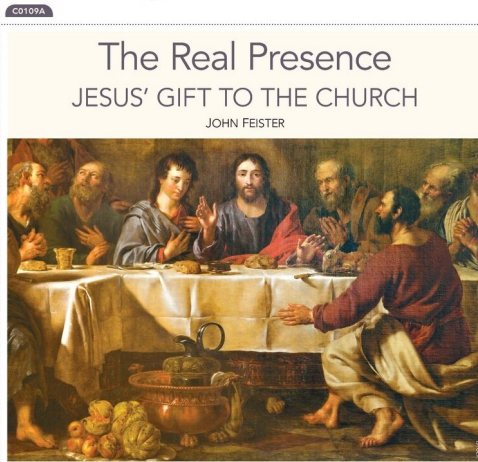
Date	Readers	Collection	Gift Bearers	Eucharistic Ministers	Coffee & Snacks
1st	Please volunteer during mass.	Please volunteer during mass.	postponed	postponed	Postponed
2nd	Please volunteer during mass.	Please volunteer during mass.	postponed	postponed	Postponed
3rd	Please volunteer during mass.	Please volunteer during mass.	postponed	postponed	Postponed
4th	Please volunteer during mass.	Please volunteer during mass.	postponed	postponed	Postponed
5th	Please volunteer during mass.	Please volunteer during mass.	postponed	postponed	Postponed

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Ask Catholics about the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and you're likely to hear a variety of personal experiences. I was in a faith-sharing group with a man who was known as a "pillar of the parish." He was always available for parish committees, helped with the festival, occasionally led the rosary during prayer services, and was devoted to his family. He told our group about his feeling the Real Presence of Christ during quiet moments of prayer one Sunday after he had received Communion.

Ash Wednesday

7 PM, Feb. 17/21

Ashes will be distributed according to the Canadian Catholic bishops guidelines.

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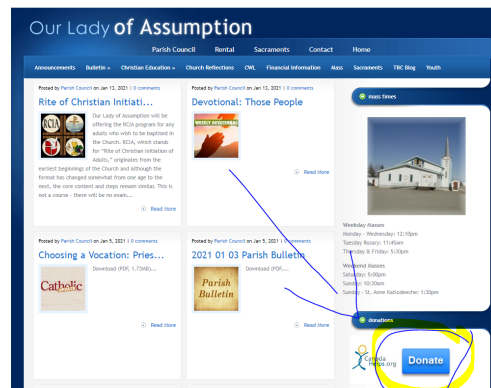
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2. Canada Helps

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Thank you for your Support!

Dear Padre,

At Mass on holy days of obligation, there's a fair crowd. But on Ash Wednesday, not a holy day, the place is packed. Your explanation?

Indeed, pastoral experience corroborates your observation. Holy days of obligation draw well, but it's "standing room only" on Ash Wednesday. Although not a day of obligation, perhaps it's considered a "holy" day by most Catholics.

There's something elemental about the smudge of ashes on the forehead. People wear it without embarrassment or shame. No matter our walk of life or social status, we want that sooty cross. It's a badge of identification, graphically reminding Catholics that it's "spiritual gut-check" time. It jogs us from our routines, spurring us to the important reality of being who we are supposed to be—fully and totally Christian. It's as if we are saying, "I'm Catholic and proud of it. I may not be the best or greatest. I have faults and sins, but I'm not a bad person. I know deep down that being Christian is the way to live, and I'm going to try again."

Ash Wednesday signals the beginning of Lent, the Church's special time of confession and renewal in preparation for Easter. It is what Christians are all about—a people who have died with Christ in the waters of baptism in order to rise with him to a new life. We renew our baptismal commitment to be his people. As we celebrate Christ's passage through death to life, we renew our own death to old sinful ways to rise and live with recaptured vigor.

From Dear Padre: Questions Catholics Ask © 2003 Liguori Publications
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



A WORD FROM Pope Francis

Contrary to the dispositions of the Law of Moses, which prohibited a leper from drawing near, Jesus extends his hand and even touches him....Jesus teaches us not to be afraid to touch the poor and the excluded, because he is in them. Touching the poor can cleanse us from hypocrisy.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, JUNE 22, 2016

Calendar

Monday

FEBRUARY 15
Weekday

Gn 4:1–15, 25
Mk 8:11–13

Tuesday

FEBRUARY 16
Weekday

Gn 6:5–8; 7:1–5, 10
Mk 8:14–21

Wednesday

FEBRUARY 17
Ash Wednesday

Jl 2:12–18
2 Cor 5:20—6:2
Mt 6:1–6, 16–18

Thursday

FEBRUARY 18
Thursday after

Ash Wednesday
Dt 30:15–20
Lk 9:22–25

Friday

FEBRUARY 19
Friday after

Ash Wednesday
Is 58:1–9a
Mt 9:14–15

Saturday

FEBRUARY 20
Saturday after

Ash Wednesday
Is 58:9b–14
Lk 5:27–32

Sunday

FEBRUARY 21
First Sunday of Lent

Gn 9:8–15
1 Pt 3:18–22
Mk 1:12–15

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