



Sacred Heart Parish Bulletin

**Mass: 9:00 am – Sunday
Fr. John Yake, I. V. Dei
(902) 535-2053**

January 26, 2025

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Sunday of the Word of God

The **First Reading** is taken from the *Book of Nehemiah*, 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10. Nehemiah and Ezra lived in the time when the people of Israel had been returned to their land after the years of the Babylonian Captivity and it was a time of rebuilding. The people had lost their connections to their faith.

The **Second Reading** is from the *First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, 12:12-30 and refers to the Mystical Body of Christ. St. Paul concludes his description of the different parts of the body by applying it to the Church, where variety of functions does not detract from unity.

The **Gospel** is from **St. Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21**. In the first four verses of St. Luke's Gospel which have been read to you today, you will find reason to be grateful to him. He went to a lot of trouble in order to put in a permanent form, in a written record, the essential facts concerning Christ, his words and his works, so that we "would understand (like Theophilus) the certainty of the faith in which we have been instructed."

But while we must be grateful to St. Luke, we owe a bigger debt of gratitude still to the all-good, all-wise God who moved Luke and the other Evangelists to preserve for us in writing the essential truths of the Christian faith that has been handed down to us. The Apostles were companions of Christ. They witnessed his works and his words; they remembered most of his doings and his sayings, and what they might have forgotten the Holy Spirit recalled to their memory on that first Pentecost day in Jerusalem. The first two generations of Christians received the facts of the faith from these eye-witnesses and the miracles so frequent in the infant Church were confirmation of the truth of their teaching.

But God in his wisdom provided for the many generations to come who would not have this evident confirmation of their faith. He established a teaching body in his Church which would safeguard the purity of the Christian truths, for "he himself would be with it all days," and he gave us a written record of the facts of the faith in the Gospels and the other writings of the New Testament.

How can we ever thank God sufficiently for his thoughtfulness in our regard? We Christians of today can be as certain, as assured, of the truth of the faith that we are trying to practice as was St. Luke who was converted by St. Paul. We have a living, teaching Magisterium in the Church, which authentically preserves and interprets for us the true facts of Christ's teaching and works as written down for us by a first-generation Christian under the impulse and guidance of God's Holy Spirit. If we needed further proof of the priceless value of our New Testament Books, the virulent attacks on their authenticity, on their objectivity, and on their veracity, by enemies of the faith down to and including our own day, should be sufficient.

But they have stood the test of time and the onslaughts of biased, prejudiced criticism, for they are the word of truth, which is eternal, and comes from God.

We have a priceless gift of God in the inspired Books of the Bible. Let us show true appreciation for that gift by using it to build up a better knowledge of the Christian faith which it teaches us. There should be a Bible, or at least the New Testament, in every Christian home. It should not be an ornament on a shelf, but a fountain and source from which we can draw strength and refreshment in the daily practice of our Christian faith. Almost two thousand years ago, God's infinite goodness provided this source of strength, the "fountain of living water," for us Christians of this century. Are we grateful for his thoughtfulness? Are we nourishing our faith at this blessed fountain of his infinite wisdom and love?

—Excerpted from *The Sunday Readings* by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.

Collection January 19, 2025

Envelopes	\$140.00
Loose	\$21.00
Initial Offering	\$10.00
	\$171.00

Notices:

1: Statement for 2024: The 2024 statement is now available in the church.

2: Johnstown Sewing/Handicraft Group This group will meet again starting on Thursday January 9th, at 1:00 pm. This is an informal group. Bring your own project and create with kindred spirits. A sewing machine is available, plus help, for anyone who wants to sew, quilt or knit. Everyone welcome. Location: District 10 Fire Hall, Red Islands.

3: Our weekly Wednesday Morning Coffee get togethers will resume on Wednesday January 8th, 9:00 – 11:30 am, at the District 10, Red Islands Fire Hall. Drop in and visit with your friends and neighbours. Cards, games and puzzles are available. Everyone is welcome.

4: Vatican II: From January until May, Fr. Bill Burke will be presenting a series of eight sessions on the documents of Vatican II. The first two will take place Sunday, January 19 and Sunday, January 26 at St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Parish from 2:00-4:00pm. All are welcome. The sessions will be livestreamed. Future dates will be announced by the end of January.

5: What is a Jubilee, Holy Year?

On Christmas Eve, 2024, Pope Francis opened the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica to open the Jubilee 2025. In the December 2024 issue of Columbia magazine, Supreme Knight, Patrick E. Kelly, wrote an article entitled, The Anchor of Hope, in which he described a jubilee. I quote from Mr. Kelly's article, pg. 3.

“In the Catholic tradition, a jubilee year, also called a holy year, is celebrated every 25 years. It's an ancient practice, dating back to 1300. The Church teaches that a jubilee year is a special time of reconciliation and conversion - an opportunity to look back on our lives, to ask the Lord for forgiveness and to seek his help as we strive to lead lives of greater holiness. Pilgrimage is also a fundamental aspect of a holy year. Most especially, it's a year to encounter Christ through the grace of the sacraments - particularly, the Eucharist and reconciliation.

“The opening of the Holy Door is also an ancient practice that is rich in symbolism. It recalls the words of Christ: “I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture (John 10: 9). By walking through the Holy Door, pilgrims affirm that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the gatekeeper, and make an intentional decision to be guided by Christ.

“Pope Francis has made hope the central theme of the Jubilee 2025. An estimated 35 million ‘pilgrims of hope’ will travel to Rome during the holy year. “Writing about the jubilee year, the Holy Father reminds us that hope is the virtue that gives our lives “inward direction and purpose” (Spes Non Confundit, 18).

“The Christian symbol of hope is the anchor, Pope Francis explains, because it “helps us to recognize the stability and security that is ours amid the troubled waters of this life.” He then adds, “The storms that buffet us will never prevail, for we are firmly anchored in the hope born of grace, which enables us to live in Christ and to overcome sin, fear and death. This hope... makes us rise above our trials and difficulties, and inspires us to keep pressing forward, never losing sight of the grandeur of the heavenly goal to which we have been called.” (25)

Hope is an essential virtue, but it can be elusive in our day-to-day lives. The scriptures remind us that, as Christians, hope is our inheritance. The author of the Letter to Hebrews tells us that God has made us a promise so that “we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, which reaches into the interior behind the veil, where Jesus has entered on our behalf as forerunner.” (6: 18-20)”

6: February 2, 2025 29th World Day for Consecrated Life:

Mass 10:30 am to be celebrated by Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick at St. Ninian Cathedral.

World Day for Consecrated Life, on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, is a day of prayer and celebration for people who have consecrated their lives to God through vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Celebration of this day of prayer allows parishes to highlight the gift of religious life and pray for those discerning a religious vocation. The following prayer, written for the World Day for Consecrated Life, is provided courtesy U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life And Vocations.

“God our Father, we thank you for calling men and women to serve in your Son's Kingdom as sisters, brothers, religious priests, consecrated virgins, and hermits, as well as members of Secular Institutes. Renew their knowledge and love of you and send your Holy Spirit to help them respond generously and courageously to your will. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.”