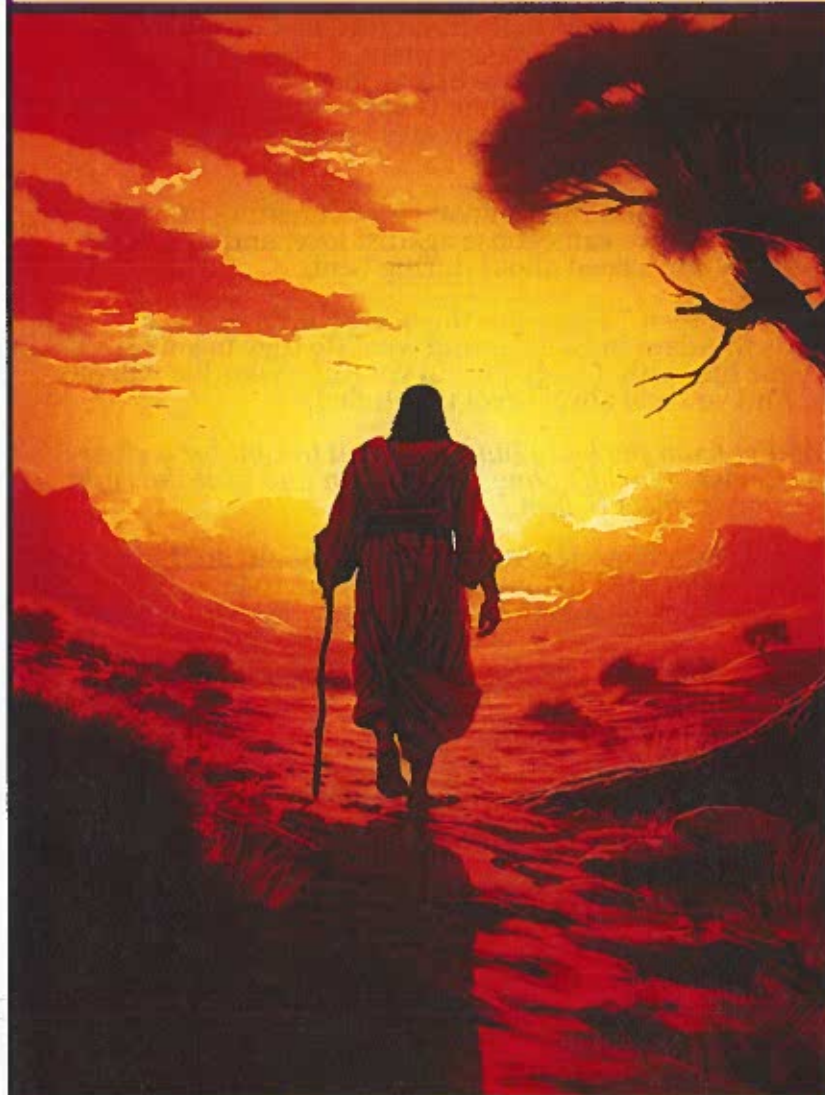


The CATHOLIC CHURCH of SAINT GERARD MAJELLA

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

FEBRUARY 18, 2024



Filled with the Holy Spirit,
Jesus returned from the Jordan
and was led by the Spirit
into the desert ...

LUKE 4:1

FIRST SUNDAY OF
LENT

MASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 AM

Saturday 4:30 PM

Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 AM

ADORATION

Friday 9:00 am - Noon

RECONCILIATION:

SATURDAY

3:45 pm - 4:15 pm

Also by Appointment

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday, 9:30am—4:30pm

PASTOR: FR. BRIAN BUFFORD

pastor@saintgerardmajella.net

DEACON: TIM SCHLUETER

502-807-3230

Secretary: DIANNE DAVIS

Email:

sgmsecretary3049@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:

DIANE RIZZO

CHURCH WEBSITE:

www.saintgerardmajella.net

CHURCH ADDRESS:

3049 LAFAYETTE ROAD

FORT OGLETHORPE, GA 30742

Phone: 706-861-9410

Sacramental Emergency:

706-401-4175

From the Pastor's Desk

Jesus announces that, *"This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."* The last part should sound familiar as that was one of the two options for the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

So, what is the Gospel? In its simplest expression, the Gospel is that God is love and this is truly good news for us because it is something we often forget. God's love is first expressed within Himself, within the Trinity. God the Father brings forth the Son and their love brings forth the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is a communion of divine persons united in love. And then, God's love overflows outside of Himself when He chooses to create the world, especially when He creates humans to bear His image and likeness.

God's desire to extend love outward results in creation. God runs a great risk in creating human beings in His image because love involves freedom and we can choose against love, and this is the problem of sin. This is the problem we're especially concerned about during Lent.

"Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return." These are the other words that are used in the distribution of ashes. These are God's words to Adam in Genesis and what do they mean? It's God way of saying to Adam that, "Without Me in your life, without My love in your life, your life will be nothing but a constant frustration to survive. And you will always feel unfulfilled."

Peter says that baptism *"...is not a removal of dirt from the body but an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him."*

So, what should we do during Lent to grow in this clear conscience of love? We should do things that say to God and others that we regret the ways we have failed to love, and we desire to love. Lent is not about giving up things or not doing things; Lent is about choosing to love more.

Fr. Brian

THE ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Today we wish to recognize those who not only support our parish, but also have made a gift or pledge to the AAA. On behalf of those who will be served by your contributions, thank you to all who have already completed their pledge payments, as well as those who are still making payments. For those of you who have not had an opportunity to participate, but still desire to be a part of the 2024 campaign, please visit our website at donate.archatl.com or reach out to the Office of Mission Advancement at missionadvancement@archatl.com or 404-920-7614.

Thank you again for your participation.

Mailing envelopes are in the vestibule.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17,

4:30 PM

SERVERS:

NICK, LEO & TROY VELK

LECTOR:

Stephanie Kowalewski

EM's: Joseph Kowalewski

Richard Ring

USHERS: Don Hays

Kieron Gleeson

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 9 AM

RICK McWILLIAMS+

(Elizabeth McWilliams)

SERVERS, LECTOR, EM'S TBD

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 11 AM

JIM STAUB+ (Healing)

(Dianne Davis)

LECTOR: Allen Hinton

SERVERS & EM'S TBD

USHER: Scott Fisher

The Pope's February Prayer Intention: For the terminally ill.

We pray that those with a terminal illness, and their families, receive the necessary physical and spiritual care and accompaniment.

Please Pray for Our Sick Parishioners

Please keep in your personal prayers the following members of our parish who are in need of healing:

Scotty Auten, Asher Barhite, David Bensley, Nancy Brabner, Candace Carne, Mason Cobble, Tracy Congdon, Carol Corkum, Nancy Jane Edwards, Sheri Fava, Cynthia Fulton, Matthew Gaudet, Daniel Hamby, Megan Hoette, Anne Janecjii, Pamela Kanter, Phyllis Lampert, Laura McClung, Linda Meeks, Emilie Meyer, Sandy Murphy, Dale & Jane Osterling, Lillian Pierce, John Pitner, Bill, Jeff & Rose Pugliano, Kathy Samilo, Mary Ann Shanahan, Jim Staub, Helen Telford, Ross Vecchio Sr. & Jr., Wright Family & baby Nalayva Rose Marie.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Monday, February 19, President's Day**
- **Friday, February 23, Knights of Columbus Fish Fry, 4:30-7 pm, and Stations of the Cross at 7 pm.**
- **Tuesday, February 27, Parish Council Meeting at 7 pm.**
- **Wednesday, February 28, Knights of Columbus Planning Meeting at 7 pm.**

Knights of Columbus

Any male 18 or older and a practicing Catholic can become a Knight. If you are interested, please contact **Kleron Gleeson** at **423-240-1798** or klerongleeson@gmail.com

TECH CORNER

The WIFI in the PLC is working again, the SSID (the name that shows up when you browse available networks) is STGMCC Guest.

The password is "catholic" without the quotes.

St. Gerard has a hearing impaired assistance system that you can receive on your phone/ear buds. There is a poster in the vestibule with information.

Did you know it is possible to give \$\$\$ to St G online? Here is the link, you can set up an account if you like. I find this handy when I am out of town. <https://www.osvhub.com/st-gerard-church/giving/funds>

If you have any questions or comments about St G tech including sound, please email Jim Tahler at jim@tahler.net

Weekly Offerings

**2/11 Offertory Received: \$5,852
(Online Giving): \$1,325
Weekly Offertory Goal \$6,000
Building & Maintenance \$601**

St. Vincent de Paul

We're happy to announce that our SVdP Conference will take on one additional ministry. With Fr. Brian's blessing, we are responding to a need in our community. The ministry is for the homeless and we call it Bags of Blessings. It consists of small duffel bags with basic toiletries and canned food. The bags are distributed by local police as they perceive the need. We are allocating \$145 each month of your generous donations to fund this project. Please pray for the success of this program.

We would like to express our thanks to our treasurer for the timely financial reports to all our donors. Tax time is surely upon us.

May you all experience a fruitful Lent as we answer our call to prayer, fasting and almsgiving. God bless you all and those you love

Karen Baldwin 815-712-6658.

HELP LINE 678-892-6163.

SVdP meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00.

Come join our St. Gerard Youth Choir!

(3rd grade and above)

We will meet twice a week.

Saturday, 11 - 12 pm

Monday, 4:30 - 5:30 pm

To sign up, call or text.

Lora Levesque 423-834-6253

or Kasie Cox 423-834-5942

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

WORDS OF THE HOLY FATHER

Every year, at the beginning of Lent, this Gospel of the temptations of Jesus in the desert reminds us that the life of the Christian, in the footsteps of the Lord, is a battle against the spirit of evil. It shows us that Jesus willingly faced the Tempter, and defeated him; and at the same time it reminds us that the devil is granted the possibility of acting on us too, with his temptations. We must be aware of the presence of this astute enemy, who seeks our eternal condemnation, our failure, and prepare to defend ourselves against him and to combat him. The grace of God assures us, with faith, prayer and penance, of our victory over the enemy. But I would like to underline one thing: in the temptations, Jesus never enters into dialogue with the devil, never. In his life Jesus never had a dialogue with the devil, never. Either He banishes him from the possessed or He condemns him, or He shows his malice, but never a dialogue. And in the desert it seems that there is a dialogue because the devil makes three proposals and Jesus responds. But Jesus does not respond with his words. He answers with the Word of God, with three passages of Scripture. And we should also all do this. When the seducer approaches, he begins to seduce us: "But think of this, do that...", the temptation is to dialogue with him, as Eve did. And if we enter into dialogue with the devil we will be defeated. Keep this in your mind and in your heart: you can never enter into dialogue with the devil, no dialogue is possible. Only the Word of God.

THE SEASON OF LENT

Give up complaining - Focus on gratitude. Philippians 2:14 & 15 - Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure...

Give up bitterness - Turn to forgiveness. Ephesians 4:31 - Get rid of all bitterness and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. **Ephesians 4:32** - Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Give up worry - Trust in God. Matthew 6:25 - "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life... who by worrying can add a single hour to his life? **Matthew 6:33** - But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given unto you.

Give up discouragement - Be full of hope. Deuteronomy 31:8 - The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you: He will never leave you or forsake you. Do not be afraid: do not be discouraged. **Isaiah 40:31** - But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles, they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Give up hatred - Return good for evil. 1 John 2:9 - Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. **Luke 6:27** - "But I tell you who hears me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you."

Give up anger - Be more patient. Matthew 5:22 - But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgement. **Proverbs 15:18** - A hot tempered man stirs up contention, but a patient man calms a quarrel.

Give up tossing - Control your tongue. Psalms 34:13 - Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies. **Proverbs 21:23** - He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity!



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL 7416



CHARITIES

STOCKING FULL OF LOVE FOR CATOOSA AND WALKER COUNTIES DADE FIRST – DADE COUNTY ST. VINCENT dePAUL FREEDOM RANCH NW GEORGIA FAMILY CRISIS CENTER	PENNIES FROM HEAVEN LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY SERVICE COATS FOR KIDS (3 COUNTIES & 2 SCHOOLS) CHATTANOOGA VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA CHATTANOOGA FIREFIGHTERS
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