

Light From Light

I have told you this story before, probably, but it bears on Sunday's Lenten readings. The incident occurred a long time ago, just before I was ordained. For some reason—why I cannot remember—I had been chosen to give the Easter Vigil homily at the hugely packed College Church at Saint Louis University.

There was a complication, of course. I was scheduled to be on my ordination retreat at the very same time.

No problem. I rode in with four other Jesuits from the retreat place, way out in the countryside, into the city, into the church, into the sacristy, into an alb and stole, and out to the altar. Needless to say I was very nervous, since I had only given a few homilies before in my whole life.

It happened that a huge thunderstorm had struck just the night before. I had watched it through the high plate glass doors of the retreat house. If you are tired of rain or snow all over this country, you may no longer see what used to be the beauty of our rain storms.

Dark rain pouring down, unexpected volcanic lightning flashes, blistering forth in naked power. Every single smallest detail of the landscape visible for seconds, as if twenty thousand florescent lights had suddenly flashed on and then off again.

This tremendous power dwarfed me.

It reminded me of what God had told the prophet: "Do not look at me directly as I pass by; the sight is too much for your eyes" (Ex 33:20). In other words, we are too small for such brilliance.

I found a much more humane version of light at Easter Vigil. The Easter Candle of course was lighted from the fire at the back, and the large assembly lit their small tapers gradually from its flames.

Since I was in the sanctuary I could witness for the first time this soft light spreading forth from countless miniature candles, combining the crowd into a gentle oneness, a hearth of human faces, wrinkles forgiven. Comforting glow made each face a vessel which held deep inside itself the quiet being of the person and of the Lord.

Such a contrast: thunderous power, followed so quickly by warmth, love, small light. It enacted the true contrast between God's transcendent greatness—too much for human eyes—and Jesus' quiet love. Jesus absolved wrinkles and crippled legs and unseeing eyes. He is our glimpse of the awe-filled intensity of God-the-infinite, but through our tiny, finite eyes. Jesus is God and also one of us. He is lightning turned into candle glow.

Alright, you say, that is very interesting, but what about Lent and this week's Gospel? Well, in his transfiguration, Jesus, who was quiet light, reversed himself and showed up as God the infinite fire. My mere encounter with lightning was nothing compared to this.

Why such a transformation?

One appealing speculation would be that at the very center of each bolt of lightning is the same stuff that gently caresses our faulty faces and makes them glow.

God does not extinguish his own light. But he can filter it and offer it to anyone who will look.

John Foley, SJ

Second Sunday of Lent February 28, 2021

St. Stephens Indian Mission

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Sacrament of Reconciliation & Sacrament of the Sick

You may call the office to schedule an appointment for confession. If there is no answer please leave your name and phone number and Father Jim will return your call. Please do not schedule an appointment if you are sick, please wait until you are well to protect yourself and the priest. Priest and penitent will be required to wear a mask and maintain a safe six foot distance during confession.

The Sacrament of the sick is available for those who are in need, terminal and to those who have an upcoming surgery. Please call the office if you or a loved one is in need of this sacrament.

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Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you Welcome!
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The purpose of St. Stephen's Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.

Readings March 1st through March 7th:

Mon: Dn 9:4b-10; Ps 79:8-9, 11, 13; Lk 6:36-38
 Tue: Is 1:10, 16-20; Ps 50:8-9, 16bc-17, 21, 23; Mt 23:1-12
 Wed: Jer 18:18-20; Ps 31:5-6, 14-16; Mt 20:17-28
 Thur: Jer 17:5-10; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Lk 16:19-31
 Fri: Gn 37:3-4, 12-13a, 17b-28a; Ps 105:16-21
 Sat: Mi 7:14-15, 18-20; Ps 103:1-4, 9-12; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32
 Sun: Ex 20:1-17; Ps 19:8-11; 1 Cor 1:22-25; Jn 2:13-25

Parish Collection

Last week's mail in collection \$609

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Corinthians 9:7

THANK YOU to all who have continued to make financial contributions to St. Stephens Indian Mission through these most trying times! God Bless!

Mass Intentions this week

| | | |
|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| 2/28: | Sunday | For the people |
| | Sunday | +Danny Ortiz |
| 3/3: | Wednesday 5pm | +Danny Ortiz |
| 3/4: | Thursday 7:15am | Ward Spoonhunter |
| 3/5: | Friday 5pm | Tammy Burns |
| 3/7: | Sunday | Diane Woolford |
| | Sunday | For the people |

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Praise Him now and always!

As we continue to celebrate Mass at St. Stephens, we are limited to 10 people in attendance as we follow the Wind River Intertribal Council's resolution. If you would like to be added to the rotating list of parishioners for Mass please call the office or email the parish office. Please also email the parish office (melissa.brown@saintstephensmission.com) to make sure your contact information is on file with the Parish as this is our primary way to contact you when things change or if we have an event you might be interested in. Thank you!

Bishop Steven's dispensation from Sunday and Holy Day Mass Obligations has been extended through June 30th.

Mass is available for viewing on K2 Television at 9am and/or you may watch via livestream on St. Margaret's or Holy Rosary's FB pages.

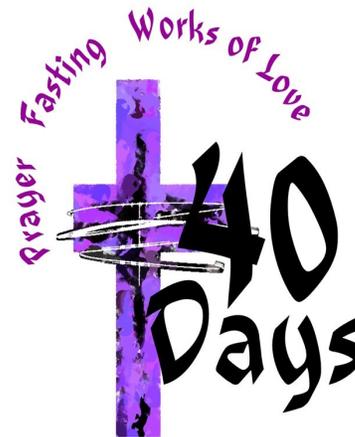
Face masks are required at Mass. Please use hand sanitizer, refrain from exchanging handshakes during the Sign of Peace and maintain at least six feet apart from parishioners (except if you are in the same household) including processing to receive the Eucharist. If you are not feeling well and are scheduled to attend Mass please stay home and call the office so we can switch you with another parishioner until you feel well. Please keep our church family safe.

Wyoming's 66th legislature reconvenes in-person March 1, 2021. For updates on legislation and information on how to contact your legislator, please visit;

<https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/legislative-liaison-and-catholic-social-teaching>; <https://dioceseofcheyenne.org/contact-your->

Having Mass offered for an anniversary, marriage, special occasion, or in memory of someone is a special gift. Cards are available at the office.

Diocesan guideline is \$10.00 for Mass.



"Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt."

-Pope Francis

Here are the Church regulations for fasting and abstinence during Lent:

- Everyone 14 years of age or older is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all the Fridays of Lent and Good Friday.
- Everyone 18 or older, and under 59 years of age, is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
- On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, only one full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.
- Catholics should not lightly excuse themselves from these prescribed minimal penitential practices.