

An Angry Savior?

Jesus, in the Gospel for Sunday, sounds angry and threatening and we must talk about that. "Repent or you will perish," he says. The tower at Siloam fell on eighteen people. Cursing a fig tree, etc.

Is the loving Lord whom we have known actually furious and offended?

Let us look.

News comes to Jesus that Pilate has murdered a number of Galilean people. Still worse, Pilate has mixed their blood with that of sacrificed animals. This is a terrible, gruesome story, worthy of denunciation. Is it like Putin and Ukraine?

Well, Jesus draws a point from it:

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!

What is the logic here? It seems you don't have to murder people in order to get punished. You can qualify just by failing to repent!

Why is Jesus so harsh? Is he a truly an angry savior? Was he angry in the same way a lot of people think the God of the Old Testament was? Unforgiving, warlike, furious, demanding an infinite sacrifice to make up for humankind's sins against an infinite God?

No.

On the contrary, when we look at the First Reading, we do not find an irate God at all. Instead, we find a tender one, grieving over the troubles of his people.

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.

God speaks these words miraculously to Moses from the midst of a burning bush that is not consumed by its own flames! He begins to instruct Moses about how to rescue God's people. Great compassion from the depths of the transcendent God.

Didn't Jesus have the same kind of compassion for his own people?

Yes.

He tells a parable in the second half of the Gospel that might help us understand.

An orchard owner orders his gardener to chop down a sadly unproductive fig tree. The gardener advises him to leave it one more year and see if, with some tending, it will bear fruit. Give it one more chance.

Who does the heartless orchard owner represent? We always assume that it is God. We half-remember the story in Mt 21:18-19 of Jesus actually cursing a fruitless fig tree.

But, on the contrary, Jesus is not the orchard owner but the gardener, asking mercy for the disobedient fig tree.

Isn't this exactly what he is doing when he warns that they will perish if they don't repent? Isn't he shouting at all of us to turn back to God in order to avoid destruction?

Yes.

He is "startling the poor sheep back" from the edge of the cliff (to paraphrase the poet Hopkins here) and you and I are the sheep.

There is still reason to fear God, of course, since he is infinite and infinitely more fiery than the burning bush. But the closer you come to the real center of God, the more your fear turns to gratitude. You are not scalded or consumed by the divine fire—you are warmed and gentled at its welcoming hearth.

Jesus' tough love leads us to that heart.

John Foley, SJ

Third Sunday of Lent

March 20, 2022

St. Stephens Indian Mission

www.saintstephensmission.com

856-7806

33 St. Stephens Road

PO Box 250

St. Stephens, WY 82524

Fr. Jim Heiser.....Pastor

Fr. Drew Duncan.....Associate Pastor

Sr. Monica Suhayda, CSJ.....Past. Asst./ Gift Shop 856-4330

Patti McMahon.....Director of Faith Formation

Blessed Sacrament & St. Josephs

332-9090

Sr. Teresa Frawley, OSF.....Past. Asst./Director of Faith Formation

St. Stephens

Friday: Adoration followed by Benediction 3:45pm

Saturday: Sacrament of Reconciliation 2:00 PM to 2:30 PM

Sunday Masses: 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass at 7:15am

Wednesday & Friday: Mass at 5:00pm

1st Saturday: Adoration at 8:00am; Mass at 9:00am

St. Josephs, Ethete

11am Sunday Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation 15 minutes before Mass

Blessed Sacrament, Ft. Washakie

Saturday Vigil Mass 4:30 PM

Sacrament of Reconciliation 15 minutes before Mass

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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 21st through March 27th:

Mon: 2 Kgs 5:1-15b; Pss 42:2-3, 43:3-4; Lk 4:24-30
 Tue: Dn 3:25, 34-43; Ps 25:4-5b, 6, 7bc, 8-9; Mt 18:21-35
 Wed: Dt 4:1, 5-9; Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20; Mt 5:17-19
 Thur: Jer 7:23-28; Ps 95:1-2, 6-9; Lk 11:14-23
 Fri: Is 7:10-14, 8:10; Ps 40:7-11; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38
 Sat: Hos 6:1-6; Ps 51:3-4, 18-21b; Lk 18:9-14
 Sun: Jos 5-9a, 10-12; Ps 34:2-7; 2 Cor 5:17-21; Lk 15:1-3, 11-32

Sunday Ministry Schedule-St. Stephens

3/20/22

9:00am Mass

Lector: Jim Cunningham

5:00pm Mass

Lector: Shelley McConnell

3/27/22

9:00am Mass

Lector: Linda Bebout

5:00pm Mass

Lector: Volunteer needed

Happenings:

3/20 Rosary at 8:20am

3/24: Just Faith begins

3/25: Stations of the Cross
after 5pm Mass

3/27: Rosary @ 8:20am

Parish Collection

3/13/22

\$1220

"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

If anyone would like to see the Annual Financial statement you may stop by the office.

JOB OPPORTUNITY: Applications are now being taken for Parish Secretary at Holy Rosary. Candidates should possess computer skills and be able to use Excel, Publisher, and Word. Candidates need to be able to learn Parish Data Software Parish Soft and other user friendly software. Pleasant communications skills required, along with professional confidentiality and service to Our Lord. This is a part-time position with hours 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Monday through Friday. Employment applications can be picked - up at the Parish Office. Background check also required. Deadline to submit application is March 28th.

Mass Intentions this week

3/19: 4:30pm Blessed Sacrament	+Carol Norse
3/20: Sunday 9am St. Stephens	John Cunningham
Sunday 11am St. Josephs	Volodymyr Zelensky
Sunday 5pm St. Stephens	For the people
3/22: Tuesday 7:15am St. Stephens	Vitali Klitschko
3/23: Wednesday 5pm St. Stephens	Blaze Stalley
3/24: Thursday 7:15am St. Stephens	Glenn G. Heiser
3/25: Friday 5pm St. Stephens	Healing in the USA
3/26: Saturday 4:30pm Blessed Sacrament	People of the Wind River Reservation
3/27: Sunday 9am St. Stephens	People of Ukraine
Sunday 11am St. Josephs	For the people
Sunday 5pm St. Stephens	Special Intention

Please pray for the family of:

+*Vianna Behan*

Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May her soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

JustFaith Catholic

How are we being called to address poverty?

We will be offering Faith and Poverty: A Biblical Response at St. Stephens beginning Thursday March 24, 2022. The program will meet for 8 weeks on Thursdays from about 6pm to 830pm right here at St. Stephens. There is a retreat and immersion experience involved as well for those who can attend. If you would like more information or would like to register contact Kevin Wilson at 407-873-1003 or kevinwilson1987@gmail.com

Metropolia invites you to make donations to the Humanitarian Aid Fund for Ukraine – Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia (ukrarcheparchy.us)

There are no small or large donations. But your donation can change someone's life for the better. The Lord God will repay the happy donor a hundredfold. Pray for the people of the war victims! May the Lord bless you and our brothers and sisters in Ukraine!

Praised be Jesus Christ! Praise Him now and always!

Don't forget to share your feedback on the Disciple Maker Index! The survey is available until April 4th. You can visit the links at the bottom of this notice or you can pick up a paper copy at the entrance of the church if that is easier for you to participate/complete the survey. Completed surveys can be dropped in the collection basket or given to Patti McMahon at the Mission office. Please participate and help make this a success! Thank you!

St. Stephens:

<https://portal.catholicleaders.org/d/kpx782>

St. Josephs:

<https://portal.catholicleaders.org/d/kpg2a2>

Blessed Sacrament:

<https://portal.catholicleaders.org/d/k80g42>

Blessed Sacrament and St. Josephs

Baptism Classes

Please contact Sister Teresa if you would like to have your child Baptized.

The addresses to complete The Disciple Maker Index Survey is listed above. Thanks for all your help in getting these done!