

Our Lady of the Lakes

Catholic Community

February 13, 2011



Weekend Mass Schedule

St. Michael's
Liberty St., Penn Yan
Confession 4:15pm Sat.
5:00pm Saturday
7:00am Sunday
9:30am Sunday

St. Andrew's
See St. Michael's
Mass Schedule

St. Theresa's
Route 245, Stanley
Confession 10:30am Sun.
11:00am Sunday

St. Mary's,
See St. Theresa's
Mass Schedule

St. Januarius
Route 21, Naples
Confession 4:15pm Sat.
5:00pm Saturday
10:00am Sunday

St. Patrick's,
N. Main St. Prattsburgh
Confession 7:30am Sun.
8:00am Sunday

Starting Out Right

Last weekend, our homilies focused on understanding the Entrance Rites of the Mass, and how we enter into the movement of the Eucharist, doing Eucharist, right from the start. The insert in the bulletin also helped spell out what we do, why, and how our 'getting it' can truly enrich our experience of Mass. By the way, we always have last week's bulletins, with inserts, available in each church, in case you are out of town, snowed in, under the weather, and didn't get a bulletin from the previous week. It might be especially good to make sure you have the full set of 4 inserts for the month of February, each about structure and meaning of the Mass. (Did you know that, while most frequently, preaching at Mass is on the scriptures of the day, the church teaches that another option is to preach on the Mass itself, or the sacraments? It's true!)

Remember last weekend, the role of the Penitential Rite as we begin the Mass? What a perfect follow up in our Gospel today. Jesus tells us *'If you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.'* After we come together, join hearts and voices in song, sign ourselves in the sign of the cross we put Jesus' words today into practice. When we take a moment to call to mind our sins, it is about doing our best to be reconciled as we come together at the altar. Why do we call out *'Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.'*? Because it is so easy to hurt one another, or to be hurt, and so hard to ask forgiveness, or offer it. It is ONLY with God' help that we can be reconciled before we offer ourselves as a gift to God.

As we continue this month to look at the movements of the Mass; how one prayer or action leads to the next, and all lead to communion, and then to mission, please remember that what we have to say is not the whole story ... the Mass has developed over so many centuries, and is so rich, that no short set of homilies or inserts can exhaust all the Mass offers. Let me give a personal example. Coming from a different tradition growing up, when I was in seminary, I was especially interested in fully understanding liturgy, and the Mass. I read tons of things, subscribed to several liturgy periodicals, became a member of the diocesan liturgy commission, attended meetings of the National Federation of Liturgical Commissions, as well as of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. You would think I might have had it all down pat. But during a retreat, an elderly priest added one little line to the penitential rite that opened my eyes to a deeper layer. I can still almost hear him saying, after inviting us to call to mind our sins, *'and perhaps we can whisper a little prayer for anyone we need to forgive.'* Are those words in the book? No. But does it capture beautifully the spirit of seeking God's help to be reconciled as we come to the altar? You bet! Can it make a difference in our life, and our relationships? Absolutely! As we come before God, seek to become a more holy community, and remember that we come as sinners in need of God's mercy a prayer whispered for anyone we need to forgive is sure to soften our hearts and help us become more forgiving.

Even St. Paul provides a little help to our reflecting on the Mass this month. When he speaks of God's wisdom, a wisdom not of this age, a mysterious and hidden wisdom ... we can easily apply those words to the wisdom contained in the Mass, as it was given to us by Christ, and then developed with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who St. Paul tells us scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God. (and that is about as deep as it gets ...)
God bless you all, Fr. Bob