



WORLD MARRIAGE DAY ~ FEB. 14

The Catholic church recognizes World Marriage Day on Valentines Day, honoring husband and wife as the foundation of the family; and celebrating faithfulness, sacrifice, and joy in daily married life. It is intentional that the celebration is also St. Valentine's feast day.

HISTORY ABOUT THE DAY

The idea of creating a special day to celebrate marriage began in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1981. Couples presented the plan to declare Valentines Day as "We Believe in Marriage Day," first to the mayor, then the governor, and then Bishop of the Diocese of Baton Rouge. Soon after, the Worldwide Marriage Encounter's National Leadership Council adopted the day. Within a year, 43 governors officially recognized it too. A year after that, the name was changed to "World Marriage Day."

WV COUPLE AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL



A Clarksburg couple embodies all that is good and everything that is celebrated on this World Marriage Day. They credit their Catholic faith for strengthening their 72 years of a "wonderful and happy life" together.

Joseph "Jobey" and Josephine "Jay" (Vallelonga) Spatafore of St. James the Apostle Catholic Church in the North View section of Clarksburg, celebrated their 72nd wedding anniversary on November 13th. Despite the pandemic,

their family including their three children - Lenora Jo (Boyle), Richard, and Mike, along with their six grandchildren and six great grandchildren - were still able to celebrate day together thanks to phone calls and FaceTime.

The couple was featured in July on FaithInWV.org and in August in The Catholic Spirit (Read the story [HERE](#)). They are both doing well, son Mike recently took them to get their second COVID-19 vaccination. So they considered themselves extra blessed.

"We have had such a wonderful and happy life," Jobey said. "I am 100-percent certain that it's because of our church life. Our marriage has always been blessed, and our kids respect and love us to pieces."

His advice to men wanting a long and happy marriage is to know, "The husband has got to make sure he gets in the last words! Although they better be, 'Yes, dear,'" he said.

Jay rolled her eyes then looked at him insisting in a corrective tone, "It's gotta be 50/50."

"She's right," he said. "You have to understand and accept that the other person is going to have a different idea than you, but as long as you love and trust the good Lord, it will work out

wonderfully."

Whether it was being involved with the old parish school or anything around St. James parish, the couple has always taken part in helping however they could.

"We still do," he said.

Although the pandemic has slowed down their involvement they are not being left out.

"We still feel involved. The priest calls to make sure we are doing good, (parishioners) check in on us, some bring us food, and we enjoy calling them too. We can still be close even though we have to be apart. I know everyone at St. James is doing their best to keep safe."

When Jay's father was a boy, he survived the Spanish flu of 1918. The family didn't pass down details to the following generations, other than he had to take some sort of medicine that made him sleep "for days." Troubled times were not uncommon then. People fought through a lot of hardships like



World War I, then World War II, and the Great Depression.

The Spatafores believe those hard-hitting challenges are all the more reason why their families considered the parish extended family. As children, throughout their marriage,

and still today they believe it is all the activity at the church brings people closer and confident.

"I explain to everybody that will listen, to be successful and have a happy family you have to get up and go to church," he said. "You gotta be part of that church, have unrattled faith, and believe God knows what is best for you. That's it. That's what it comes down to. Despite tough times, good things will always come."

“YOU ARE DUST & UNTO DUST YOU SHALL RETURN”

RESOURCES ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ASH WEDNESDAY, LENT

It is not hard to find moving reflections online of what Ash Wednesday means or what it should mean to us. Below we have comprised some thoughts from a few of our favorite Catholic influencers. So, as we journey to the cross, let us refocus our thoughts and steer our actions so others can see Christ in us.

“Too often, we approach Ash Wednesday with liturgical gloom and doom,” writes Mary Ann Steutermann in her Ash Wednesday reflection *Dust to Dust*, published in the [ST. ANTHONY MESSENGER](#). “It’s the ‘black sheep’ of the family of dark solemnities in the liturgical calendar, failing even to garner status as a holy day of obligation. But when painted in this light, it’s easy to miss its beautiful invitation to claim our brokenness, embrace our vulnerability, and stand in solidarity with all those who do the same.”

God is ready to heal our woundedness, to make us more whole than ever before,” she wrote. “Ash Wednesday is our call to make room for the divine dance to work its sacred magic within us.”

While God is ready and waiting, so is the devil to drive us off course.

“When we enter into the Lenten season, we enter into spiritual warfare,” said Father Josh Johnson author, podcaster, and pastor of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary in the diocese of Baton Rouge. “Expect Satan to discourage you, but don’t talk to the snake ... go directly to Jesus.”

Listen to his *“All about Lent: What’s Best for Your Soul?”* in Johnson’s [ASK FATHER JOSH PODCAST](#).

Bishop Robert Barron, auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and founder of Word on Fire global media ministry, urges us to guard our hearts against the devil through making time for sacred scripture. You can sign up for Daily Lenten Gospel Reflections from Bishop Robert Barron and Word on Fire to spend time with Christ and the Gospel. Sign up at WWW.LENTREFLECTIONS.COM.

The following is the script to a sincere video reflection – Appreciating Ash Wednesday - by Franciscan Fr. Clifford Hennings (you can view it at: [YOUTU.BE/xMd_Z_HvLQM](https://youtu.be/xMd_Z_HvLQM)).

“One of the things that I find incredible every year is that we have three big liturgical celebrations where the church is just packed. I mean standing room only – so many people you don’t know if the fire marshal is going to come. That is Christmas and Easter, and Ash Wednesday.

“It’s amazing, because every year the priests, we joke around (saying) ‘Don’t tell anybody that it’s not a day of obligation,’ but I don’t think that they’re coming because they think it is. People know it’s not a day of obligation, and yet there’s something about Ash Wednesday that draws out so many faces that maybe you don’t see throughout the year. I believe that it’s because it speaks to our human condition.

“The symbol of receiving those ashes and hearing those words that ‘You are dust and unto dust you shall return.’ How often are we reminded of our mortality? We don’t talk about it, but it’s something that looms over all of us. Repent and believe in the gospel. Do we talk about our own inadequacies, and

our own failings? Not very often, but it’s something we’re all aware of. There’s a deep sense within all of us that we’re only here for a short time, and we want to make the most of it. Ash Wednesday draws us into that in a very profound way.

“So, when some people joke or criticize folks who come out to Ash Wednesday and don’t go to anything else, they say they just want to receive the ashes. I think that’s the wrong way of looking at it. You know it shows us that we’re all in this boat together. The Gospel message is profound in its simplicity really – we are created, and we will ultimately die, but God is with us and God will not abandon us no matter what goes on in our lives. There is meaning in it all.”

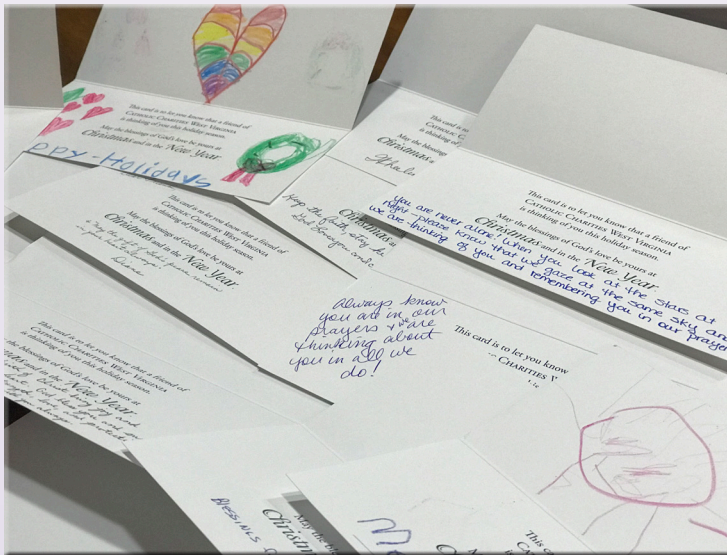
Let us enrich our spirit and strengthen our faith this lent through the many Catholic resources available to us through our parishes and online Catholic sites, such as [FRANCISCAN MEDIA](#), [ASCENSION PRESENTS](#), and [USCCB LENTEN RESOURCES](#) for adults. For children check out: [CATHOLIC ICING](#), [SADLIER](#), and [LOYOLA PRESS](#).



CONNECTING IN NEW AND CREATIVE WAYS

By: Katie Hinerman Klug, Catholic Charities West Virginia Marketing Communications Specialist

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, our Catholic Charities West Virginia team has learned to adapt our services in new and innovative ways to meet our clients' needs. From video conferences to drive-through food pantries, we learned to connect in creative ways.



Catholic Charities West Virginia donors included personal messages to people in need during the 2020 holiday season.

That creativity carried through to our year-end appeal. We included a greeting card in the mailing, but asked donors not to keep it; instead, we asked them to write a message to one of those we serve and mail it back to us. The greeting card message noted, "This card is to let you know that a friend of Catholic Charities West Virginia is thinking of you this holiday season."

We distributed the cards through our various regional offices. This connection was an opportunity for our clients to feel seen and supported, and it was a way for donors to interact with people in need at a time when it was difficult to see one another in person.

The outpouring of love we received was overwhelming. Messages included:

"Stay strong! You matter!"

"Always know that you are in our hearts and prayers and we are thinking about you in all we do!"

"May the birth of Christ bring joy and peace to your heart. God bless you and surround you with His strength, love and protection. You are never alone; He is with you always."

"I try to remember this one passage. It has helped me in my most trying times. The passage is this: Jeremiah 29:11. Try to never give up HOPE."

"You are never alone! When you look at the stars at night, please know that we gaze at the same sky we are thinking of you and remembering you in our prayers."

"Life can be very difficult; but it is important to remember people care about you."

We are grateful for the support of our donors, whose generosity enables us to continue making a difference in West Virginia.

To learn more about Catholic Charities West Virginia, visit www.CATHOLICCHARITIESWV.ORG.



Catholic Charities West Virginia
*Shining a Light
on Hope*
VIRTUAL GALA
Save the Date
March 16, 2021

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

First Reading LEVITICUS 13:1-2, 44-46

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "If someone has on his skin a scab or pustule or blotch which appears to be the sore of leprosy, he shall be brought to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests among his descendants. If the man is leprous and unclean, the priest shall declare him unclean by reason of the sore on his head. "The one who bears the sore of leprosy shall keep his garments rent and his head bare, and shall muffle his beard; he shall cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' As long as the sore is on him he shall declare himself unclean, since he is in fact unclean. He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp."

Responsorial PSALMS 32:1-2, 5, 11

R. (7) I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Blessed is he whose fault is taken away, whose sin is covered.
Blessed the man to whom the LORD imputes not guilt, in whose spirit there is no guile.

R. I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, my guilt I covered not. I said, "I confess my faults to the LORD," and you took away the guilt of my sin.

R. I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you just; exult, all you upright of heart.

R. I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Second Reading 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31–11:1

Brothers and sisters,
Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or Greeks or the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every way, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

Alleluia LUKE 7:16

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

A great prophet has arisen in our midst, God has visited his people.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MARK 1:40-45

A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. He said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For the Church, that in imitation of Jesus we may break down barriers by including the outcast, the forgotten, the refugee, the ostracized, and the sinner in stretching our love of neighbor to every corner of society, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That our leaders may make every effort to truly see those who usually are overlooked and consider them when making decisions, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For all married couples, that they may grow in God's love and be signs of Christ's selfless love for their families, their friends, and each other, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That our parish community may comfort and support those who suffer in relationships that have become strained or fractured, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer



First Reading JOEL 2:12-18

Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God. For gracious and merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment. Perhaps he will again relent and leave behind him a blessing, Offerings and libations for the LORD, your God. Blow the trumpet in Zion! proclaim a fast, call an assembly; Gather the people, notify the congregation; Assemble the elders, gather the children and the infants at the breast; Let the bridegroom quit his room and the bride her chamber. Between the porch and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep, And say, "Spare, O LORD, your people, and make not your heritage a reproach, with the nations ruling over them! Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" Then the LORD was stirred to concern for his land and took pity on his people.

Responsorial PSALMS 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17

R. (see 3a) Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me.

R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

For I acknowledge my offense, and my sin is before me always: "Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight."

R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me. Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Second Reading 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20—6:2

Brothers and sisters:

We are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him. Working together, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. *For he says: In an acceptable time I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.* Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Verse Before the Gospel PSALMS 95:8

If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Gospel MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-18

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. "When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."

PRAYER INTENTIONS

For God's holy Church, as we strive to carry forward Jesus' mission through prayer, fasting, and giving alms, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That a spirit of reconciliation might flourish throughout the world, among nations and societies, among families and neighbors, let us pray to the Lord. . .

For those who fast out of necessity and not by choice, that they may be aided through our efforts to eliminate hunger and malnutrition across the world, let us pray to the Lord. . .

That we might take heart the words we heard today and turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel, let us pray to the Lord. . .

Lord hear our prayer



LET US GO *Rejoicing* TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

PSALM 122

UPDATED GUIDELINES RELEASED

Bishop Mark E. Brennan released updated guidelines for our churches and facilities.

- New Norms for Reopening Parish Facilities for Meetings and Gatherings
- Updated Liturgical Guidelines
- Music Protocols for Liturgical Celebrations

These are available online at www.dwc.org.

Liturgy of the Hours LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Pray the prayer for this day, this hour!

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to view a PDF version of the Liturgy of the Hours.

EBREVIARY.COM [LITURGY OF THE HOURS](#)



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A LITTLE CATHOLIC HUMOR



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MASS ONLINE

Saturday 6pm Masses will continue to be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Joseph, and will be available on our website each Sunday at DWC.ORG.

Below are four options for enriching your spirit through daily Mass online.

- EWTN airs daily Mass from Our Lady of Angels Chapel, in Irondale, Alabama, at 8am, noon, and 7pm: [HTTPS://WWW.EWTN.COM/TV/WATCH-LIVE](https://www.ewtn.com/tv/watch-live)
- St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York has daily Mass live streamed at 7am: [HTTPS://SAINTPATRICKSCATHEDRAL.ORG/LIVE](https://saintpatrickscathedral.org/live)
- Catholic TV also streams its daily Mass: [HTTP://CATHOLICTV.ORG/MASSES/CATHOLICTV-MASS](http://catholicTV.org/masses/catholicTV-mass)
- Daily Mass Online at Notre Dame' Basilica of the Sacred Heart is live at 11:30 am Monday-Friday: [HTTPS://CAMPUSMINISTRY.ND.EDU/MASS-WORSHIP/BASILICA-OF-THE-SACRED-HEART/WATCH-MASS/SPECIAL-MASSSES/](https://campusministry.nd.edu/mass-worship/basilica-of-the-sacred-heart/watch-mass/special-masses/)