

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 23, 2025

Intentions:

Feb 23 - In loving memory of **Roger St. Martin**, requested by Avelina Bercades..

Mass Intentions: \$15.00

Offertory Collection

Feb - 16 T.B.A. Thank You

Social Sunday: Today is **Coffee Sunday**, so please join us after mass for light refreshments and fellowship.

February 23

St. Polycarp

Born circa 69, St. Polycarp was one of the Fathers of the early Church, a Greek bishop from Smyrna and an important 2nd century figure in Christian theology. His *Letter to the Philippians* was a significant foundation of early Christian literature, establishing the role of Apostle Paul and referencing the existence of other texts of the Bible's New Testament. He was a leader of the second generation of Christians, the first Christians who were not eyewitnesses to the death and resurrection of Our Lord. Extremely influential in the catechesis and initiation of new Christians, he was named bishop of Smyrna, located in modern-day Turkey. Polycarp's dedication to religion ultimately led to his death. He was arrested and killed by the Romans for refusing to abandon Christianity about the year 155 at the age of 86. He is a patron of those suffering from earaches.

Pope's Intentions for the Month of February:

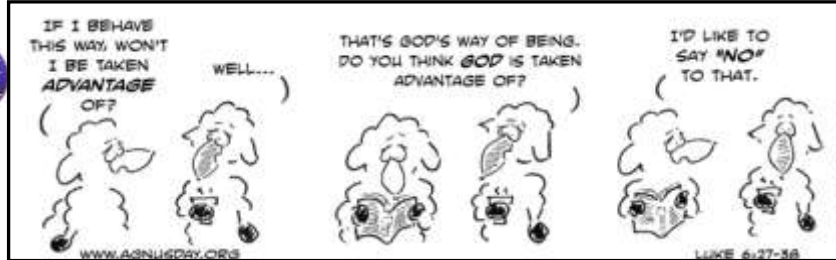
For vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Let us pray that the ecclesial community might welcome the desires and doubts of those young people who feel a call to serve Christ's mission in the priesthood and religious life.

Looking for the following Ingredient donations for the pancake Dinner on March 4th. Baking Powder, 2% Milk, Flour, Corn Oil, Sugar, Decaf ground coffee, and \$\$\$.

Please pick up your 2024 income tax receipts available at the rear of the church.

There will be a parish council meeting this coming Tuesday, the 25th February at 2 pm in the sacristy.

Gospel Reflection: We have here, for those "who hear," the deeper challenge beyond the Beatitudes. Not everyone can hear and live this challenge; this is why it is so difficult to establish God's reign. Jesus lays out the concrete conduct that establishes the kingdom, and it truly is extraordinary in its demands. True this extraordinary way of relating to others isn't normal! It is divine! God has acted toward us already with extraordinary kindness and mercy, already giving us a full measure of blessedness. Can we afford not to hear? (Living Liturgy, p.62)



"If anyone does not refrain from the love of money, he will be defiled by idolatry and so be judged as if he were one of the heathen"
~ Saint Polycarp

Prayers for the Sick. Please pray for the sick among our families and friends, especially Fran Bernard, Roy Campbell, Patricia Cassidy, Bridget Floysvik, Chris Kelly, Suzanne Lafontaine, Priscilla Rowley, and Lorraine Stafford. *The names will remain on the list until we are otherwise advised.*

Administrator's Corner

Transformative Power of Forgiveness: A Journey of Faith.

In Luke 6:27-28, Jesus says, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." This is the radical love that Jesus demands from His followers like us in this Parish

But why should we forgive? What do we gain from loving our enemies? These are questions that we may ask ourselves when faced with the challenge of forgiving those who have wronged us. The answer lies in the fact that forgiveness is not just about the other person, but about ourselves. When we forgive, we free ourselves from the burden of anger and resentment. We create space for healing and growth. As the saying goes, "To err is human, but to forgive is divine." Forgiveness is a divine act that allows us to participate in God's own nature. It is an act of mercy and compassion that reflects God's own love for us.



We know that forgiveness is not something natural to humans or something we learn spontaneously, it is a decision. Then the question arises how can we acquire the skill of self control to guide against lashing out those who hurt our feelings? St Philip Neri suggests that we practise control of our emotions through our conscious practise of transformative actions especially in the midst of pain and suffering. Hence, we ought to see ourselves following the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ who bore the pain and pang of death with great patience and resilience. Now, with this at heart, we can see our sacrifices as purifying love that over time it becomes second nature with us. This may sound unreal but come to think of it when we set our minds in changing the course of life through heroic means miracles happen. Here the focus is on Jesus not on what we suffer or complain about, why it is us that is suffering. Thus such pious habit could be nurtured through Eucharistic adoration, meditation or reflective reading of the word of God and spiritual readings especially the life of the saints and saying ejaculatory prayers like "Jesus be with me" "Jesus I love you" or repeating short sentences or phrases in the bible like "I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me".

St Augustine noted that there are diverse arms through which we receive pardon for our sins but the greatest of them all is forgiving from our heart the sin committed against us.

Jesus practiced what he preached, even in the most difficult circumstances. As he hung on the cross, he prayed, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

David also practiced this noble law of non-retaliation. In our first reading (1 Samuel 26: 2, 7-9,12-13,22-25) , we see how David spared the life of King Saul, who was trying to kill him.

The golden rule, as Jesus taught us, is to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

This teaching is not unique to Christianity. Many other religions and philosophers have also taught the importance of loving one's enemies. For example, Buddhism teaches, "Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." Confucius said, "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you." Hinduism teaches, "Do not unto others which would cause you pain if done to you." Islam teaches, "No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desired for himself."

As St. John Chrysostom said, "Nothing makes us like unto God so much as being always ready to forgive." When we forgive our enemies, we tame them, subdue them, and make them our friends. As the saying goes, "The best revenge is none. Heal, move on, and don't become like those who hurt you." May we be guided by the words of Jesus and inspired by the examples of David and other saints. This weekend we receive in great joy our candidates for confirmation. As a parish we support their faith formation by our good exemplary lives; gracious words of encouragement and especially our prayers that they and we may learn to practice forgiveness as taught by Jesus.

As we embrace this divine mandate, I pray, may we embark on a transformative journey into the heart of God, where forgiveness becomes a beacon of light and faith, guiding us back to His everlasting enfold. Amen.


Blessings. Father Anthony

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Baptisms: Father Anthony Nwaohiri 623-3419
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 Mass Intentions & Bulletin: Marilyn Deslauriers 222-3762
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EMERGENCY: anwaohiri@gmail.com For emergencies, email this address with EMERGENCY in the subject or call the church office at 613-623-3419.

West Carleton Food Access Centre: (WCFAC) Please remember our local Food Bank each week by donating items to St. Gabriel's grocery cart. Cash donations of \$20.00 and over will receive a tax receipt. Please include your name and address on the envelope. See Suzanne Lee if you have any questions. Thank you for your support.




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 Email: jenna.sudds@part.gc.ca
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St. Gabriel's Roman Catholic Church
 205 Bayview Drive, RR3, Box 9, Woodlawn, ON, K0A 3M0

All Welcome



Father Anthony Nwaohiri anwaohiri@gmail.com
 phone (613) 623-3419, fax (613) 623-7282
 Web: <http://www.stgabrielparish.ca>

Deacon James Kubina jgkubina@gmail.com

Weekly Eucharist

St. Gabriel's (Constance Bay) **St. Michael's** (Fitzroy Harbour)

Sunday 11:00 am Mass Saturday 4:00 pm Mass
 Sunday 9:00 am Mass

live streaming link on YouTube St. Michael's Mass at 9 am Sunday

StMStG-Live

Confessions and Sacrament Of the Sick are also available by request.
 Please contact Fr. Anthony directly to book an appointment.

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