

Fr. Simon Sez

Light Breaking Forth: Scott Hahn Reflects on the Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Priest Substitute this Weekend: We welcome Fr. David Axtmann who is our priest substitute this weekend so that I could have the time this past week to prepare for our Confirmation candidates from both of our parishes to attend the Confirmation retreat hosted by our diocese at Holy Name Parish in Watertown, Saturday, February 4, 2023.

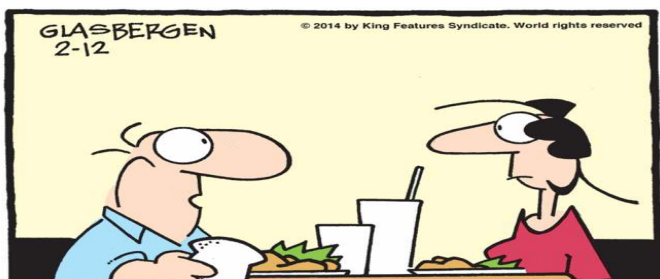
Priest Substitute in Two Weeks: I plan on being gone skiing at Terry Peak Wednesday, February 15 - Monday, February 20, 2023. Fr. Don Glover, MM plans on being here to substitute the weekend of February 18-19, 2023. He is a senior priest who lives in Frederick, SD.

Set Ablaze Parish Restructuring Plan Published: The final plan for restructuring our parishes was published on the website setablazesf.org and in the February 2023 issue of "The Bishop's Bulletin" which was sent to registered parishioners. I provided an insert in this Sunday's bulletin to highlight the information for you.



Liturgy Schedule for Ash Wednesday: Mass and ashes in Sacred Heart Church will be at 7:00 am and 7:00 pm and in St. Pius X Church at 5:15 pm on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023. We will sit as a large group in each parish instead of having YFF mission sessions in either parish.

Christian Concert: This is Saturday, February 11, 2023, at O'Gorman High School Performing Arts Center. Ben Fuller, Christian Airplay #1 hit Album artist, will fill your evening with excitement, truth, love, and inspiration of never giving up, even when times are difficult. This is the message the beneficiary of this event, The Lourdes Center, provides daily to their clients and families. For more information or tickets, go to www.ccfesd.org/events/gift-of-hope, call 605-988-3765 or email events@ccfesd.org.



"My men's group gets together once a week to discuss our feelings. Mostly, we feel like playing poker."



Isaiah 58:7-10
Psalm 112:4-9
1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus came among us as light to scatter the darkness of a fallen world.

As His disciples, we too are called to be "the light of the world," He tells us in the Gospel this Sunday (see John 1:4-4, 9; 8:12; 9:5).

All three images that Jesus uses to describe the Church are associated with the identity and vocation of Israel.

God forever aligned His kingdom with the kingdom of David and his sons by a "covenant of salt," salt being a sign of permanence and purity (see 2 Chronicles 13:5, 8; Leviticus 2:13; Ezekiel 43:24).

Jerusalem was to be a city set on a hill, high above all others, drawing all nations toward the glorious light streaming from her Temple (see Isaiah 2:2; 60:1-3).

And Israel was given the mission of being a light to the nations, that God's salvation would reach to the ends of the earth (see Isaiah 42:6; 49:6).

The liturgy shows us this week that the Church, and every Christian, is called to fulfill Israel's mission.

By our faith and good works we are to make the light of God's life break forth in the darkness, as we sing in this week's Psalm.

This week's readings remind us that our faith can never be a private affair, something we can hide as if under a basket.

We are to pour ourselves out for the afflicted, as Isaiah tells us in the First Reading. Our light must shine as a ray of God's mercy for all who are poor, hungry, naked, and enslaved.

There must be a transparent quality to our lives. Our friends and family, our neighbors and fellow citizens, should see reflected in us the light of Christ and through us be attracted to the saving truths of the Gospel.

So let us pray that we, like St. Paul in the Epistle, might proclaim with our whole lives "Christ, and him crucified."

St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology (www.stpaulcenter.com)