



Sts. Peter and Paul Ecumenical Catholic Church+USA
808 N. Mason Road
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February 2017 Parish Bulletin

Parish Web Site: www.sspp-eccusa.org

Church Web Site: www.ecc-usa.org

CLERGY MASS SCHEDULE

All Mass Times 4:00 PM unless otherwise noted

February 5, 2017, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time: +Fr. Carl*

Mass Intention: Janice Vetrone

February 12, 2017, Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time: Fr. Bill

February 19, 2017, Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time: Fr. Tom

February 26, 2017, Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time: +Fr. Bob

***Blessing of Throats at this mass.**

Pastoral Staff:

Pastor: +Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div., 314.800.3456,
pastor@stspeterandpaul-eccusa.org

Associate Pastor: Fr. Bill LaGrand, M.A., 314.719.2833,
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Presiding Bishop: +Fr. Carl Swaringim, Ed.D., 636.240.7839, domcarl@ecc-usa.org

Prayer Intentions

If you would like us to remember a special intention for you at Mass, please contact one of our priests.

If you or someone you know is in need of spiritual assistance (prayers, Sacrament of the Sick, etc.), please contact one of our priests.

Inquiries regarding the administration of Sacraments or services (Baptisms, First Communion, Marriages, and Funerals) are welcomed.

Sunday Scripture Reflections

Fr. Bill LaGrand, M.A.

February 5, 2017 – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time: To test whether we are being salt and light in the world, we need to ask ourselves: If we were arrested and charged with being Christian, how many of us would be released for lack of evidence?

February 12, 2017 – 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Can we understand the complex interpretation of the Mosaic Law that Jesus espoused and offered to his disciples as a “higher” form of righteousness than that of the scribes and Pharisees?

February 19, 2017 -7th Sunday in Ordinary Time: Perfection is not a matter of doing everything perfectly, but of loving others in God as we love God himself. We shall always have imperfections, but the more we let God’s love flow through us, the more God-like our life will be.

February 26, 2017 – 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time: We have the choice to serve God or the material things of this world. In his wisdom, Jesus takes reality head on and plainly presents God as the one who can offer those who follow him more than they can ever receive from the world.

From the Presiding Bishop’s Desk

+Fr. Carl Swaringim, Ed.D., Presiding Bishop

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AT MASS: We have been asked: At your Church does the absolution given by the priest at the beginning of Mass have the same meaning and effect as the absolution given by a priest in the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) after he “hears” someone’s confession?

Yes. The absolution which the priest gives as part of the Penitential Rite of Masses in Ecumenical Catholic Church+USA and the absolution given by a priest in the RCC Confessional is the same sacrament. Absolution given at our Masses is called **General Absolution** (because it is offered to everyone at the same time) and absolution given in the Confessional is called **Individual Absolution**. Both are valid administrations of the Sacrament of Penance within the Catholic Faith Tradition. The Roman Catholic Church also uses both of these forms of the administration of Penance; however, General Absolution is seldom used and when it is used, the penitents still have to make an individual confession of the sins forgiven within a certain period of time. That RCC disciplinary rule requiring follow-up confession of sins directly to a priest is not required in our Church.

Both forms of administering the Sacrament of Penance have the same spiritual effect as long as the penitent (in both forms) has the proper spiritual disposition for receiving the Sacrament of Penance.

What are the required dispositions for receiving the Sacrament of Penance? Four things are required for the valid reception of the Sacrament of Penance and each is provided for in the Penitential Rite of every ECC+USA Mass:

1. **Recognition of our sins.** Our Mass begins by the priest saying, “Let us place ourselves in the presence of Almighty God. Calling to mind our sins against God and neighbor, let us ask God our Father for forgiveness.” (Then, we pause to reflect on our sinfulness: have we offended God or neighbor?)

2. **Sorrow for our sins.** We pray the Confiteor:

I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I beseech blessed Mary ever virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul and all the saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

3. **Firm purpose to change our life and avoid sinning against God and neighbor.**
True sorrow for a sin includes a firm intention not to do it again.

4. **Ask God for forgiveness.** We pray the **Kyrie**:

Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy. Lord have mercy (2 times); or,

the **Orthodox Trisagion Hymn**:

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: Have mercy on us (3 times)

5. **Receive absolution from a priest.** The priest administers the Sacrament of Penance saying:

May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution and remission of our sins. By his authority, I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **All: Amen.**

6. **Make reparation for our sins.** Our proper disposition and the priest’s absolution guarantees God’s forgiveness of our sins. However, some sins require that we repair the damage done. For instance, if we steal something; we must make restitution of the stolen item or its value; if we ruin someone’s reputations, we must correct what we said, etc.

At Mass, we begin reparation for our sins by following the priest’s directive to “extend a sign of peace and God’s blessing to our neighbor.” And we make that expression to

the other members of the congregation and carry that attitude into our activities during the week.

Finally, at Mass, we pray for our world and our human family in all of its needs; we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ which provides the grace and motivation to love God and our neighbor; and finally, we receive the blessing and charge of our priest to go out into our world and love God and neighbor.

In summary, during the Penitential Rite of each Mass:

- we recall our sinfulness;
- make a firm purpose of avoiding sinfulness in the future;
- ask Almighty God for forgiveness;
- receive the priest's Sacramental Absolution; and
- do reparation for our failings by expressing love of neighbor and praying for peace and justice among all of humankind.

Having received Almighty God's forgiveness through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we can receive the Holy Eucharist worthily with a pure heart and soul reconciled with God.

Finally, to be complete, our priests also are available for individual confession of sins upon request. Individual confession certainly has its own spiritual benefits, particularly spiritual consultation and advice from the priest, that is lacking in General Confession. Of course, the priest is bound by the Seal of Confession, which means that everything discussed in that setting is an absolute and forever secret between the priest and the penitent.

Blessings,

+Father Carl

From the Pastor's Desk
+Fr. Bob Catlett, M.Div., Pastor

Parishioner donation statements were mailed out the first week of January. If you did not receive yours, please contact me.

Annual Charity Donation: Several years ago, our Parish Council, on behalf of the parish, adopted the practice of "sharing our wealth" with those less fortunate than we. Through the generosity of our faithful congregation, each year a worthwhile charity (Food Pantry, Military Service Organization, etc.) is chosen to receive a donation from the parish's contributions. The 2016 charity chosen was the St. Charles Coalition Against Human Trafficking. Our parishioner, Barbara Butchart, is very active in this organization and expressed their deep appreciation to the parish for its \$1,000 donation for their ministry.

Blessing of Throats: Our Annual St. Blase Blessing of Throats will be held on Sunday, February 5, 2017. Everyone is welcome to receive this blessing. *"Saint Blase was the Bishop of Sebaste in Armenia during the fourth century. Very little is known about his life. According to various accounts, he was a physician before becoming a bishop. His cult spread throughout the entire Church in the Middle Ages because he was reputed to have miraculously cured a little boy who nearly died because of a fishbone in his throat. From the eighth century, he has been invoked on behalf of the sick, especially those afflicted with illnesses of the throat." (From The Book of Blessings.)*

Our Priests Thank You! As you know, unlike many churches, our priests do not receive a salary or stipend for their services to our parish. In return, our parish supports its priests by paying their annual clergy dues to the National Church (\$120 each priest). On behalf of +Fr. Carl, Fr. Bill and Fr. Tom, we say, "Thank you for your generosity! It is our privilege to serve you."

Parishioner Birthdays: Dick Harbers, 2/8

Parishioner Anniversaries: None this month!