

# Dear Padre,

## I'm a non-Catholic church secretary who receives questions about a Purgatorial Society. What is it?

**T**hose who die in God's grace and friendship imperfectly purified, although they are assured of their eternal salvation, undergo a purification after death, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of God" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1054). This process of purification is known as purgatory. Saint Gregory the Great (540–604) wrote "certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come" (see *Dialogues* 4, 39). This forgiveness of sins granted after death is also suggested in Matthew 12:32 and 2 Timothy 1:18.

Because Catholics believe we're in communion with one another through an active relationship that transcends death, our prayers and sacrifices benefit the deceased (see 2 Maccabees 12:38–46). Thus, a Purgatorial Society is a formal association of Catholics who offer prayers, Masses, and other works of charity to benefit the souls in purgatory. Souls that get to heaven, in turn, offer their prayers to benefit the living. This mutual assistance affirms our belief in an earthly and heavenly Church forming one body in Christ.

Purgatorial societies were especially prevalent from the Middle Ages through the previous century, but they're currently seeing a revival in some church parishes and religious communities. Societies generally maintain a

registry to enroll names of the deceased so that Masses are regularly offered for the holy souls in purgatory—especially during the month of November.

Fr. Byron Miller, CSSR  
Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



### A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

By visiting the tombs of our loved ones we remember that we have a multitude of saints who before God intercede for our needs. Let us not forget, however, that so many deceased also await our spiritual support. Let us remember them in our prayers...asking that they be welcomed into the ranks of the elect in heaven.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, OCTOBER 31, 2018



## Calendar

**Monday**  
MARCH 22  
*Lenten Weekday*  
Dn 13:1–9, 15–17,  
19–30, 33–62  
or 13:41c–62  
Jn 8:1–11

**Tuesday**  
MARCH 23  
*Lenten Weekday*  
Nm 21:4–9  
Jn 8:21–30

**Wednesday**  
MARCH 24  
*Lenten Weekday*  
Dn 3:14–20, 91–92, 95  
Jn 8:31–42

**Thursday**  
MARCH 25  
*The Annunciation  
of the Lord*  
Is 7:10–14, 8:10  
Heb 10:4–10  
Lk 1:26–38

**Friday**  
MARCH 26  
*Lenten Weekday*  
Jer 20:10–13  
Jn 10:31–42

**Saturday**  
MARCH 27  
*Lenten Weekday*  
Ez 37:21–28  
Jn 11:45–56

**Sunday**  
MARCH 28  
*Palm Sunday of the  
Passion of the Lord*  
Mk 11:1–10 or  
Jn 12:12–16  
Is 50:4–7  
Phil 2:6–11  
Mk 14:1–15:47  
or 15:1–39

# Our Parish COMMUNITY

March 21, 2021  
Fifth Sunday of Lent (B)  
Jer 31:31–34  
Heb 5:7–9  
Jn 12:20–33

## Do I Have to Die?

**W**ho has not asked this question, at least to oneself? It's a valid question, because at the core of every living being is the drive to live. Jesus also must have asked this question. Today's Gospel account implies this in John 12:27. ("I am troubled now.") Despite his passion for living, Jesus was more passionate about the transformation that would take place later. The example of the grain that must die if a harvest of wheat is to be produced is a perfect metaphor to make this point. Just as the grain is insignificant compared with the possible harvest, so—our faith assures us—there is no comparison between this life and the wondrous transformation that awaits us. And yes, in order to move from this life to that splendid future, we will have to die.

Our Lenten meditations will soon focus on the suffering and death of Jesus. However, to concentrate solely on suffering and death is like examining the

death of the grain without any thought of its transformation and the bountiful harvest that will come. We must not minimize Jesus' suffering. However, it was precisely by means of his having been lifted up on the cross in suffering and death that he was lifted up in glory and exaltation. This is why we claim that death is not the end of life but the gateway to new life. So, as difficult as it might be to leave the life we love, like Jesus we have to die in order to enter that new life.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

### For Reflection

- ✦ Begin to place yourself in God's hands with little things so that you are better able to do so in bigger things.
- ✦ The second reading reminds us that Christ is the source of our eternal salvation. Spend a moment in gratitude for this great gift.



[Jesus asked,] "Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour."

JOHN 12:27





St. Mary's Church  
Dalton, NE 69131



All Souls' Church  
Bridgeport, NE 69336



Sacred Heart Church  
Bayard, NE 69334

Pastor: Rev. Dr. C.P. Varghese

Address: 701 P Street, Bridgeport, NE 69336

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Dear Sisters, Brothers and Children in Jesus Christ,

Today's readings focus on the approaching death of Jesus which the letter to the Hebrews considers a priestly sacrifice and John considers the moment of Jesus' "exaltation" and "glorification." The readings offer us a challenge. Just as Jesus became the "Promised Messiah of Glory" and the "Conquering Son of Man" by offering his life for others, we, too, if we would come to Heaven, must die to self by loving obedience, spending our lives in self-giving, sacrificial service.

The first reading, taken from the book of the Prophet Jeremiah, explains how God will replace the Old Covenant of Judgment with a New Covenant of Forgiveness of sins. This New or Renewed Covenant prophesied by Jeremiah was fulfilled, at least in part, through Jesus' life, death and Resurrection. In the second reading, the author of the letter to the Hebrews tells us that it is by Jesus' suffering and death, in obedience to his Father's will, that the New Covenant is established. Using metaphors of the "sown wheat grain" and the "spent life" in today's Gospel, Jesus teaches these lessons. The Gospel hints at the inner struggle of Jesus in accepting the cup of suffering to inaugurate the New and Eternal Covenant. However, Jesus accepts the cross as his "hour," meaning the stepping-stone to his passion, death, Resurrection and exaltation. Jesus also considers his "hour" as the way of glorifying his Heavenly Father and of being glorified by his Father. In addition, it is the way by which all people will be drawn into the saving action of God. Finally, the "lifting up" of Jesus on the cross and later into Heavenly glory by Resurrection and Ascension is the assurance of our own exaltation and glorification, provided we accept our crosses.

Today's Gospel teaches us that new life and eternal life are possible only by the death of the self through obedience, suffering and service. Salt gives its taste by dissolving in water. A candle gives light by having its wick burned and its wax melted. The oyster produces a priceless pearl by transforming a grain of sand through a long and painful process. Loving parents sacrifice themselves so that their children can enjoy a better life than they themselves have had. Only a life spent for others will be glorified, sometimes here in this world but always in Heaven. We know that the world owes everything to people who have spent their time and talents for God and for their fellow human beings. Mother Teresa, for instance, gave up her comfortable teaching career, and with just 5 rupees (17 cents) in her pocket began her challenging life for the "poorest of the poor" in the crowded slums of Calcutta. We see similar cases in the history of great saints, scientists, and benefactors of mankind in all walks of life. They chose to burn out rather than to rust out.

Yours in Christ Jesus,  
Fr. C. P. Varghese  
Pastor

**SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK**

Date	Day	Time	Place	Intention
03/22	Monday	4.00 PM	St. Patrick's, N. Platte	Chrism Mass
03/23	Tuesday	6.00 PM	Bridgeport	Stations of the Cross & Eucharist
03/24	Wednesday	6.30 PM	Bridgeport	Lenten Confessions
03/25	Thursday	6.30 PM	Dalton	Stations of the Cross & Confessions
03/26	Friday	6.00 PM	Bayard	Stations of the Cross & Confessions
03/27	Saturday	5.30 PM	Dalton	Palm Sunday: Procession & Eucharist
03/28	Sunday	800 AM	Bayard	Palm Sunday: Procession & Eucharist

**ALL SOULS**  
617 P STREET  
BRIDGEPORT NE 69336

**MASS TIME**  
Tuesday — 6:00 PM  
Sunday — 10.30 AM

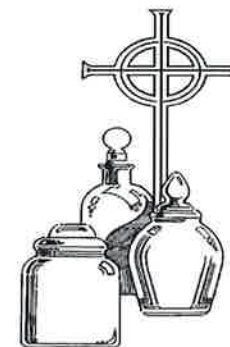
**Confessions:**

**March 24, Wednesday**  
**at 6.30 PM**

**OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH**

ADULTS	\$105.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$348.00
SUBTOTAL	\$453.00
MASS STIPEND	
TOTAL	\$453.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$6,046.00
DONATIONS	\$3615.00
BALANCE	\$2,431.00

- Prayer line requests may be made to Carolyn-262-0453 or Teresa-262-0439.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.



**SACRED HEART**  
1003 AVE B  
BAYARD NE 69334

**MASS TIME**  
Friday — 12:00 PM  
Sunday — 8:00 AM

**Stations & Confessions:**

**March 26, Friday**  
**at 6.00 PM**

**OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH**

ADULTS	\$240.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$206.00
SUBTOTAL	\$446.00
MASS STIPEND	
TOTAL	\$446.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$4,907.00
DONATIONS	\$2915.00
BALANCE	\$1,992.00

- Prayer line requests may be made to Paula-586-2992.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.



**SAINT MARY'S**  
718 FRANCIS ST  
DALTON NE 69131

**MASS TIME**  
Thursday — 6:00 PM  
Saturday — 5:30 PM

**Stations & Confessions:**

**March 25, Thursday**  
**at 6.30 PM**

**OUR GIFTS TO GOD & CHURCH**

ADULTS	\$250.00
CHILDREN	
PLATE	\$50.00
SUBTOTAL	\$300.00
EASTER FLOWERS	\$40.00
CATHOLIC RELIEF	\$20.00
TOTAL	\$360.00
BUILDING FUND	
APPEAL GOAL	\$6,136.00
DONATIONS	\$6439.00
BALANCE	(\$303.00)

- Prayer line requests may be made to DeAnn-249-1735.
- The rosary is prayed ½ hr before Mass, please come and pray.

