Pastor’s 2 Cents From: Fr. Jim DeBruycker

Throughout history, religious people have contrived to enter into suffering in order to share in the passion of Christ. Fasts and abstinences, cold showers, hair shirts, ankle straps that cut into your skin, and self-flagellation are among the more moderate penances they have endured. Some of the saints are most famous for their self-inflicted penances, like Simon Stylite who lived on a platform on top of a pillar for 37 years - talk about self-quarantining.

In today’s Gospel Jesus tells the disciples if they are true disciples, they must take up their cross to follow him. What does he mean? Jesus has just told the disciples that he must go to Jerusalem where the leaders will kill him. Peter, who a couple of paragraphs earlier had been named a rock of faith, now with his new found authority tries to talk Jesus out of this journey. Peter goes from a rock of foundation to a rock of obstruction.

Why was Jesus crucified? Was it a suicide as some critics like to say? Martin Luther King, the night before he was assassinated, talked about being thankful that God had allowed him to live long enough to see so much progress in the civil rights movement. And although he would like to live a long life, it was worth the risk to continue on with the struggle. In another speech he said that there was redemption in suffering. The non-violent movement gnawed at the conscience of a nation.

The cross for Jesus was more than a piece of wood to be nailed to. He was nailed to the cross because of a decision to act. His death was no more a suicide than was Martin Luther King’s, or Mahatma Gandhi’s, or anyone who died or was killed trying to do the just and right thing. For Jesus, to take up your cross means to take up the challenges of your life, personal and communal, and act on them.

I said last week Peter would not become the real rock upon which the church was to be built on, until he experienced one thing. The person who holds the keys of the kingdom must first experience forgiveness. Time and again Peter tried to do the right thing, but he lost courage. Finally, almost completely broken, he encounters the risen Christ, who once again offers him leadership. But this time not as an authority in power, but as a man accepting forgiveness in humility.

So if you want to suffer, there are many ways to do so, but for what reason? If you truly want to be nailed to a cross, try to meet those daily challenges you like to walk away from or ask that most dangerous question, “What can I do to help?”

SJA Welcome Back Sunday: 2020 Version! On Sunday, September 13, between 9am-noon, we invite you to drive through the SJA parking lot and pick up info (from your vehicle, wearing your masks) on all kinds of fall activities, including Faith Formation and Family Liturgy, Warm Hands Warm Hearts Coat Collection, peace and justice ministry events, SJA gardening, and other Shared Ministry volunteer opportunities. AND you can purchase Cabaret raffle tickets, too! Please plan on stopping by our drive-thru. We’ll be thrilled to see you, even for a moment, and we promise we won’t try to hug you. See you soon!

SJA Vigil for Detained Immigrants: On Tuesday, September 8 at 7:30am, join us at the Whipple Federal Building for a vigil of prayer and music to lift up those who will appear in immigration court - many of whom will be deported directly from this facility. SJA readers and musicians (Lee Vague!) will host this important vigil for our brothers and sisters in detention. Space is limited; RSVP to Julie Madden.

No Gathering for Masses planned at this time. The same applies to all meetings or gatherings. Parish Center will be open 9:00am - 3:00pm Monday thru Friday.
Food Shelf Donations Are Needed: We will continue to accept non-perishable food items, which can be dropped off Monday thru Friday, 9am - 3pm, in the bins in the Parish Center entry. Your food offerings are donated to the Foodshelf at Sabathani Community Center and they have also indicated a need for laundry detergent and body soap. Thank you for your willingness to help those in need.

SJA Antiracism Ministry: We thank everyone who has joined us for powerful discussions and steps forward this summer. Our most recent conversation explored our sense of safety in our community, and began the discussion of what it means to reform, defund or abolish the police. We are continuing this discussion on Sunday, September 27 from 11am-1pm, and we will be joined by SJA youth who are leading great things! FFI/to register for this event, please contact Julie Madden.

Help Parishioners In Need! If you are able to help members in our community with things like picking up & delivering groceries please contact Sherri Stella at 612.823.8205 ext. 231 or sstella@stjoan.com. Please contact Sherri Stella at 612.823.8205 ext. 231 or our community with things like picking up & delivering groceries.

Prayer Corner: Please remember in your prayers those who are in need of:


Prayer Corner Requests: To keep prayer requests current, names will be included in the bulletin for four weeks and then removed. To add a name or to renew your request, please call the Parish Center at 612.823.8205.

Scripture Readings:

- Sun, Aug. 30: Jeremiah 20:7-9; Romans 12:1-2; Matthew 16:21-27
- Tue, Sept. 1: 1 Corinthians 2:10b-16; Luke 4:31-37
- Sun, Sept. 6: Ezekiel 33:7-9; Romans 13:8-10; Matthew 18:15-20

Our Liturgies from April through today’s will be available through the St. Joan of Arc website. Celebrate virtually with Fr. DeBruycker, Fr. Cassidy and the SJA community. Watch online at www.stjoan.com.

Family liturgies are taking a brief hiatus before launching again on September 6th, when we start off our Fall together!

34 Days Until Imagination Cabaret 2020: Mark your calendars! and join us on Saturday, October 3 at 7pm for:

- A FREE, 90-Minute Live concert broadcast on Stjoan.com
- Our 26th Annual SJA Concert Fundraiser - Your contributions make a difference to our 90 programs throughout the SJA community, city, country and world.
- Featuring over 20 performances from Twin Cities musical luminaries
- Starting August 31, you can also buy raffle tickets for $20 each (no limit-cash or check only) for chance to win a 2021 Maui vacation or cash prizes of $500 or $250!
- Find details on the SJA website (www.stjoan.com) and our Facebook page

Summary of contributions for the week and fiscal year. Includes plate, envelopes and estimated Sustaining Member payments.

- Week of August 17 - August 23, 2020
  - Actual $48,032
  - Budget $27,467
  - Prior Year Actual $28,866

- Year to Date (July 1 – August 23, 2020)
  - Actual $244,391
  - Budget $247,199
  - Prior Year Actual $281,633

THANK YOU for your continued generosity!!
School Supply Collection at SJA through September 18:
Even if you're doing distance learning, the best part of back-to-school season is a brand new backpack and fresh new supplies. We are collecting items for distribution by the Church of Blessed Kateri, so plan on dropping off a backpack with supplies at our ministry drive-thru on Sunday, September 13 from 9am-noon, or at the Parish Center Monday - Friday 9am til 3pm thru Friday, September 18. For a list of necessary supplies, go to www.stjoan.com or contact Julie Madden.

Warm Hands Warm Hearts Is Back! Our beloved annual collection of 500 new coats and winter accessories for children in our community will commence very soon. It is led entirely by SJA volunteers and you can be involved in several ways:
Here’s how you can get involved — pick one or more!
• Shop early — Purchase a coat with mittens and a hat, put it in a plastic bag, label the gender and size on the outside, and drop it off at SJA’s Drive-thru Ministry Event on Sunday, September 13 from 9am to noon. We will have extra bags available, too.
• Sign up later — look for the link to our WHWH Sign Up Genius online site (coming soon).
Select a gender and size, then bring your purchased coat/hat/mittens to SJA on one of the following dates. Plastic bags and labels will be available for you there.
  • Saturday, October 10, 9am - noon
  • Saturday, October 17, 9am - noon
  • Monday - Friday, October 12 - 16, 9am - 3pm
• Send in a donation by check or cash to SJA, attention “Warm Hands, Warm Hearts” in the memo line. Volunteers will use your donation to shop for missing sizes.
• Volunteer to don your mask and gloves to accept donations at SJA on the dates above and move them into the gym and/or sort previously donated items. Look for the WHWH Volunteer Sign Up Genius online site (coming soon).
• Have questions? Call 612.823.8205 (Ext 237).

Welcome the Stranger Fall Series: Our Welcome the Stranger ministry focuses on immigrants, refugees and asylees, and we have a fantastic series of events coming up to explore connections between Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota immigrant communities. Our first event is Sunday, September 20th from 10-11:30am, with Bonnie Rietz, former mayor of Austin, MN, and founder of Apex Austin, which works to welcome immigrants to her community. FFI to register, contact Julie Madden or go to www.stjoan.com. Also, we’ll have a short introductory video from Bonnie available on our Facebook and web page soon!

Twin Cities Nonviolent: From September 18-27, there will be 10 days of virtual peacemaking activities and presentations, bringing much-needed healing and hope to our Twin Cities. Many people familiar to SJA, including musicians, peacemakers, and justice builders, will be part of this event. FFI go to twincitiesnonviolent.org and join with others in lifting up a Twin Cities free from violence

SJA Responds to Housing Crisis: Affordable housing is already scarce, and when eviction protections are lifted (making current and back rent due), we know that countless families and individuals will face becoming homeless. SJA is responding:
• We are proud to partner with Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative as they develop beautiful, affordable housing. Together we just celebrated the launch of Emerson Village, in North Minneapolis. Your advocacy will help bring this project to fruition. On the first of the month, we have a "Rent is Due" Day of Action. Contact Julie Madden for info. contact Julie Madden for info.
• Our CARE Committee is very happy to resume our meetings with individuals in need of emergency financial assistance for housing and utilities. The SJA Outreach Fund Board has approved temporarily doubling the budget of the CARE Committee, and we will help as many households as we possibly can. Our thanks to the Outreach Fund donors who make this response possible.

Prayer During Times of COVID-19
In this time of COVID-19, we pray:
When we aren’t sure, God, help us be calm;
when information comes from all sides, correct and not, help us to discern;
when fear makes it hard to breathe, and anxiety seems to be the order of the day, slow us down,
God; help us to reach out with our hearts, when we can’t touch with our hands;
help us to be socially connected, when we have to be socially distant;
help us to love as perfectly as we can, knowing that “perfect love casts out all fear.”
for the doctors, we pray, for the nurses we pray,
for the technicians and the janitors and the aides and the caregivers, we pray,
for the researchers and theorists, the epidemiologists and investigators,
for those who are sick, and those who are grieving, we pray, for all who are affected, all around the world … we pray for safety, for health, for wholeness.
May we feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked and house those without homes;
may we walk with those who feel they are alone, and may we do all that we can to heal the sick - in spite of the fear.
Help us, O God, that we might help each other in the name of the Creator,
in the name of the Healer, in the life of the Holy Spirit that is in all and with all,
We pray. May it be so.

-Rev. Richard Botts