

*Growing
in Spirit,
Community,
and Service*

Mass Times

Sunday Eucharist

Saturday Vigil: 5 pm

**Sunday: 8:30 am, 10 am
and 12 noon**

Weekday Eucharist

9 am: Monday to Friday

Sacrament of

Reconciliation

Saturday: 9 to 10 am

Ministry Centre

Hours

10 AM– 4 PM

Monday, Wednesday,

Friday

and by appointment on

Tuesday & Thursday

1300 Leslie Street,

Toronto, ON M3C 2K9

Tel: 416.447.5571

Fax: 416.447.4082

www.st-bonaventure.ca

www.franciscans.org

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 21, 2024

Bonnie News

Franciscan Church of St. Bonaventure



Christ calls Apostles Peter and Andrew as fishermen (VIth century AD), mosaic cycle, Basilica Saint Apollinare Nuovo Ravenna. Museum: San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, Italy.

The Summons (vv. 1 and 4)

Will you come and follow me
If I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
And never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
Will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown
In you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
When you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you
And never be the same.
In your company I'll go
Where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
In you and you in me.

First and last stanzas of "The Summons". Words: John L. Bell, ©1987 WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland, G2 3DH (Admin. by Wild Goose Resource Group).

FROM THE PASTOR ~ PASTORAL LETTERS

On occasion, I receive requests to submit a pastoral letter that is part of the application process for positions in the Catholic School Boards. This kind of letter presupposes that the applicant is a parishioner of St. Bonaventure and that I have sufficient knowledge of his/her practice of the Catholic faith to speak to the suitability of the applicant to work in Catholic education. For this reason, prospective applicants need to submit their request for a pastoral letter to me at least six months prior to the submission of their application. Suitability to work in Catholic education calls for a certain level of involvement in the life of the parish. Those seeking a pastoral letter should consider volunteering in one of the ministries of the parish. ~ Friar Tom

LITURGY & SACRAMENTS

THIS WEEK'S MASS SCHEDULE

Monday, January 22	9 AM	† Maternida Labson and Ana Dominguez
Tuesday, January 23	9 AM	† Marjorie Mitchell
Wednesday, January 24	9 AM	† Donna Jean Haley
Thursday, January 25	9 AM	† Deceased Members of the Creedon Family
Friday, January 26	9 AM	† John Burke † Souls in Purgatory Brothers, Sisters and Benefactors of the Order The Friars Arlene Wong
Saturday, January 27	5 PM	Marie Therese, in Thanksgiving
Sunday, January 28	8:30 AM	The Parishioners
	10 AM	† Margaret King
	12 PM	† Oliver Figueiredo
Sanctuary Lamps Bl. Sac. Bl. Sac. O.L. Chapel		† Romi Walsh
		† Clayton Searle
		† Brigid O'Rourke

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confessions are heard on a weekly basis on Saturdays from 9 to 10 am in the Mary Chapel. In addition, confessions are heard on the first Monday of the month from 1 to 2 pm. Finally, you can always make an appointment with Fr. Peter or Fr. Tom to celebrate this Sacrament in which we encounter our merciful God.

800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIVITY SCENE AT GRECCIO ~ PLENARY INDULGENCE



On the occasion of the 800th anniversary of "Christmas at Greccio" as experienced by St. Francis of Assisi, the Apostolic Penitentiary grants a plenary (full) indulgence to all the faithful who, from December 8, 2023 (Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary) to February 2, 2024 (Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord), visit and pray before a Nativity scene in a church entrusted to the Franciscan friars.

By pausing in devout prayer before a nativity scene in a church served by Franciscans, the faithful may obtain the plenary indulgence for themselves or the souls of the deceased under the following usual conditions:

The faithful must, in addition to being in the state of grace:

- have the interior disposition of complete detachment from sin, even venial sin;
- have sacramentally confessed their sins;
- receive Holy Communion;
- pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The parish's Nativity scene has been moved to Our Lady's Chapel, where it will remain until February 2.

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD ~ JANUARY 21, 2024 ~ “REMAIN IN MY WORD” (JOHN 8:31)

“The Bible was not written for a generic humanity, but for us, for me, for you, for men and women in flesh and blood, men and women who have a name and a surname, like me, like you. And when the Word of God, infused with the Holy Spirit, is received with an open heart, it does not leave things as they were before: never. Something changes. And this is the grace and the power of the Word of God.

Christian tradition is rich in experiences and reflections on prayer with the Sacred Scripture. In particular, the method of “*Lectio divina*” was established; it originated in monastic circles, but is now also practised by Christians who frequent their parishes. It is, first of all, a matter of reading the biblical passage attentively: even more, I would say with “obedience” to the text, to understand what it means in and of itself. One then enters into dialogue with Scripture, so that those words become a cause for meditation and prayer: while remaining faithful to the text, I begin to ask myself what it “says to me”. This is a delicate step: we must not slip into subjective interpretations, but rather become part of the living Tradition, which unites each of us to Sacred Scripture. The last step of *Lectio divina* is contemplation. Words and thoughts here give way to love, as between lovers for whom sometimes it is enough to just look at each other in silence. The biblical text remains, but like a mirror, like an icon to be contemplated. And in this way, there is dialogue.

Through prayer, the Word of God comes to abide in us and we abide in it. The Word inspires good intentions and sustains action; it gives us strength and serenity, and even when it challenges us, it gives us peace. On “bad” and confusing days, it guarantees to the heart a core of confidence and of love that protects it from the attacks of the evil one.

In this way the Word of God is made flesh – allow me to use this expression: made flesh – in those who receive it in prayer. The intuition emerges in some ancient texts that Christians identify so completely with the Word that, even if all the Bibles in the world were to be burned, its “mould” could still be saved through the imprint it left on the life of the saints. This is a beautiful expression.

Christian life is at the same time a work of obedience and of creativity. Good Christians must be obedient, but they must be creative. Obedient, because they listen to the Word of God; creative, because they have the Holy Spirit within who drives them to be so, to lead them forward. At the end of one of his discourses addressed in the form of parables, Jesus makes this comparison: “Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure” – the heart – “what is new and what is old” (Mt. 13:52). The Holy Scriptures are an inexhaustible treasure. May the Lord grant us all to draw ever more from them, through prayer.”

Pope Francis, *Catechesis on prayer with the Sacred Scripture*, General Audience, January 27, 2021

PRAYER

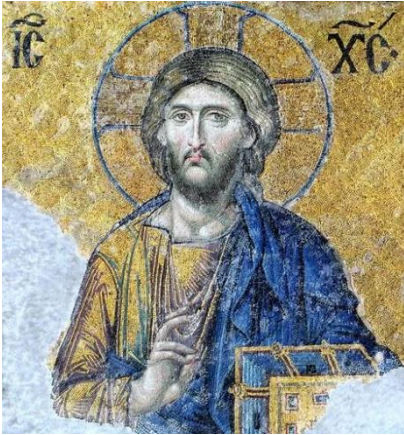


In our charity we remember those who are ill and all who have requested a remembrance in our prayers.

We commend to the Lord the members of our parish who died recently:

+ Jim Meyer, + Marjorie McGinty, + Gerry Devlin, + Alice Eaglen, + Deanna Andrew, + Norman Bell,
+ Jean-Gabriel Castel, + Romi Walsh, + Brigid O'Rourke, and + Joyce Dias.

SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD: EXCERPTS OF A REFLECTION ON JOHN 8:28-42 AND PRAYER



LECTIO DEVINA - Proposal I - Jn. 8: 28-42

Every believer's contact with Holy Scripture is an encounter always desired by the soul that thirsts for God. Like a flower opening up to the sun, so the human heart exposes itself to the breath of the divine Inspirer of human words which he takes up and transforms into those of God.

God's Truth - The only source of joyful freedom

"Jesus...said to those Jews who believed in him, 'If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" (Jn. 8:31-32). Jesus speaks here to those who have become his disciples. He proposes to them an extended journey: one must remain in his word, in a continuous existential sense.

The word of Christ is not primarily an object of study or a subject of discussions reserved for specialists (such as the Pharisees and scribes). It is a "remaining" comparable to continuously "breathing in" the divine oxygen of Jesus's word that coincides with a growing intimacy modeled after that between the Father and the Son, which is denoted in the opening words. It is in this "place" that the existential assimilation of Truth takes place. In this relationship is played out the "true discipleship" that Jesus would define as "friendship." Only such a way of remaining in his word can reveal its content, message and vital energy: "I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father." (Jn. 15:15).

In this way, according to John, thanks to Jesus we come to the knowledge of the Truth that is, the ultimate knowledge of God who manifests to humanity his origin and final destination (the Trinity).

Jesus - Light of Truth shining in the darkness T

The Messiah's invitation to remain in his word begins to resonate already in the previous chapter. Jesus has gone up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, and his teaching (7:1-24) provokes discussion about the origin of the Messiah (7:25-30). He chooses this moment to announce his imminent departure (7:31-36), which, though dramatic, will coincide with the opening of the eternal rivers of living water (7:37-39).

Such a promise, however, will not appease the confrontation over the origin of the Messiah (7:40- 53), unfortunately based on a mere socio-geographical criterion. "[N]o prophet arises from Galilee." assert the objectors (7:52), perhaps even malevolent in their subtle allusion to Jesus's misunderstood conception before the formalization of marriage: "We are not illegitimate children; we have one father, God himself." (8:41).

But John knows this from the prologue of his gospel: "the light shines in the darkness" (Jn. 1:5). The Truth of God will shine in the darkness of this shocking rejection, giving rise to an unforeseen epiphany of the Love that corresponds to God himself. For only God, in the crucified Messiah, will know how to love by crossing even the human dimensions of pain and meaninglessness caused by sin and rejection.

In this human hell, Truth will shine even more brightly with its saving light and energy. It is the splendor of the free giving proper to the Gift that is God Himself. Like the Holy Spirit after Jesus's Passover, this *splendor of free self-giving* is poured out on the disciples at Pentecost, marking a new beginning of Life with a sun that never sets.

Together in the "today" of grace - freed to be fulfilled in giving

The *lectio divina* of Jn. 8:28-42 here opens the heart's inner gaze to the mystery of salvation. The original sonship between the Creator and Adam in the stillness of paradise was blurred by rebellion, caused by the envy of the ancient Serpent (cf. Wis. 2:24). Thus, God's fatherhood was also blurred. The vision of God, the world and man himself was clothed in suspicion and resulted in a hostility of creation, increasing violence in humanity and a silence of Heaven...

Only a new creative word of the Father could restore life to a reality marked by death. The divine Logos who knows no darkness, the beloved Son, was “spoken” and sent, in the incarnation to shine in the night of the world, manifesting the Creator’s faithfulness to his beloved creation. In order for man to understand this and to be born again even more beautiful than in the first creation, the Son of Man had to enter into the death of every sense and every relationship, continuing to love even as he descended to the underworld of human existence far from the Father’s heart. Therein lies the deliverance *from evil*, which Jesus taught us to ask for at the end of the “Our Father,” but even more so the deliverance to be in a giving predisposition and thus find ourselves in a collective “we”: a reflection of the Trinity.

Remaining in the Word - remaining in Jesus

Jesus revealed to us today that “Place” from which he came and to which he returns, in his Passover, together with us: “The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to him.” (8:29). “To be with Him” forever - that is humanity’s destiny, made accessible again to all who remain in His Word.

It is the synthesis of the entire gospel: *remaining in the Word* correlates with *remaining in Jesus*, as he remains in the Father. It is “living in Christ,” following him closely, toward the new creation that originated on the cross, participating in his epiphany of unfading Love.

In the encounter with this Truth is the answer to the question that underlies all Christian action: can man fully express his freedom in the free gift of self? The answer is found in Jesus’ words at the Last Supper, “Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates [(loses)] his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.” (Jn. 12:25)

PRAYER

Lord, you reaffirm to each of us, «Remain in me, as I remain in you.» (Jn. 15:4). We ask you for the grace to put our full trust in your words, which have now become our life. Grant that in constantly offering ourselves for the life of the world, as you did, we may be your friends. In this way, we will always be enveloped in the light from your words and warmed by their grace, permanently abiding in you who are the Word of the Father, full of the Spirit of Love. Amen.

From *Fifth Sunday of the Word of God*, January 21, 2024, “Remain in my word” (Jn. 8:31) Liturgical and Pastoral Handbook. Dicastery for Evangelization, pg. 11-14.

CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE MASS WITH ARCHBISHOP FRANCIS LEO - FEBRUARY 11, 2024

As part of Marriage Sunday 2024 celebrations, Archbishop Francis Leo will preside at a special Mass to honour married couples, with special recognition for those celebrating 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th and 60+ wedding anniversaries in 2024. The Mass will take place at 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 11, 2024 at St. Michael’s Cathedral Basilica (65 Bond Street, Toronto). All married couples will have an opportunity to renew their marriage commitment during the Mass. All are welcome to attend.

Couples celebrating 25th, 40th, 50th, 60th or 60+ anniversaries in 2024 may register for reserved seating. Reserved seating is limited, so please register early. All other seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Those who are unable to attend at the Cathedral are invited to join the celebration via livestream Mass. Registration and other important information can be found at www.archtoronto.org/marriage.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY ~ JANUARY 18-25

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated around the world from January 18 to 25. This universal week of prayer encourages Christians of all denominations to pray that all may be one, as Christ desires. The theme for this year is based on Luke 10:27: *You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbour as yourself*. A resource for personal or group prayer titled “Eight Days of Prayer,” containing daily Scripture readings, reflections, discussion questions, and prayers, may be downloaded from:

<https://www.weekofprayer.ca/sites/default/files/8%20Eight%20Days%20of%20Prayer%202024%20WPCU.pdf>

PRAYER NETWORK REQUESTS

Network members pray daily for your prayer intentions which are held in confidence. New members are welcome! Please call Teresa Krijgsman at **416-709-8150** with your prayer intentions or if you would like to join the prayer network.

HELPING OTHERS

CASSEROLES FOR THE GOOD SHEPHERD REFUGE

A BIG THANK YOU to all those faithful cooks who provide a casserole either monthly or whenever possible.

A reminder that your casseroles are due at the Ministry Centre by Monday January 29th.

Pans and recipes are available in the cupboard at the back of the church. Remember to sign for the pans you pick up.

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL



SERVING IN HOPE. Vincentians ‘Serve in Hope’ because we are called to bring the love of God and the compassion of Jesus to people in need. St. Vincent said, “God demands first the heart, then the work”. It is only with our heart that we can bring compassion, respect and devotion to members of our community who are vulnerable and marginalized.



By visiting people in need in their homes and walking alongside to guide them to resources to break the cycle of poverty, we give them hope for the future.

Your generous donations to our poor boxes and through Canada Helps do help us make a difference. Thank you!

Our confidential helpline is: **416-447-5571 Ext. 570.**

In addition to donating through our poor boxes located at our three main exits, online donations can be made securely through our QR code or the following link:

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/society-of-st-vincent-de-paul-st-bonaventure-conference/>

ST. BONAVENTURE CATHOLIC WOMEN’S LEAGUE FRIDAY LOVE NOTE

The best kept secret is now out and ready to be shared with everyone. If you could use a little love on Fridays maybe the St. Bonaventure CWL Friday Love Note is for you. It’s a concise (almost weekly) newsletter that drops into your email “in box” on Friday. There are times when notices are sent out mid-week requesting prayers or advising of celebrations. That’s what we call the **whole package**. In the Friday Love Notes you will receive up to date information on CWL meetings and events, spiritual reflections and prayers, plus information about and how to participate in our many outreach programs. We welcome men and women alike. This is not a solicitation to join The League (though it would be awesome if you did), it is just our way to let you know that we’re here and doing great things!

Send an email address to Tracy MacInnis - t.macinnis60@gmail.com and in the subject line put 1 of 2 options:

1. Just the Friday Love Note, or
2. Sign me up for the Whole Package

So, what are you waiting for? Email Tracy now and get your name on the list. You can cancel anytime. You just have to email Tracy to be taken off the list.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CWL MARY DOBELL PRO LIFE ESSAY & POETRY CONTEST

The Toronto Diocesan Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada promotes the Mary Dobell Pro-Life Essay and Poetry Contest to support and encourage an awareness and positive attitude towards a broad range of pro-life issues. Contestants reflecting on the dignity of life can reflect on how they see the sanctity or dignity of life is diminishing in their schools, communities, and the world and what can be done to promote the dignity of life in these environments. The contest is open to students from the **Grade 7 to the Grade 12 level**.

Students interested in receiving detailed information re this contest can contact Céline Massaroni at cmassaroni10@sympatico.ca and submissions are due by **February 9, 2024**.

PANCAKE BREAKFAST - SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2024



The Knights of Columbus will be hosting the annual Pancake Breakfast/50-50 Raffle/40 cans for Lent on Sunday 11th February 2024 from 9:00 am.

Tickets will be available for purchase at all masses starting Saturday Jan 27, 2024, and at the parish office. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

QUEEN OF APOSTLES RENEWAL CENTRE RETREAT- SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2024

The Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre invites cancer patients and caregivers to a day of retreat to experience God's healing love on Saturday February 17, 2024, at the Queen of Apostles Renewal Centre located at 1617 Blythe Road in Mississauga. Registration is at 8:30 a.m. and cost is \$45.00. For more information, please contact Jean at 905-278-5229 or office@qoa.ca

CWL -THE JEAN MCCANN SERVICE AWARD FOR YOUTH

This award recognizes and affirms the role played in our Parishes by our confirmed Catholic youth (**ages 15-18**). This award emphasizes the necessity of service to others and shows appreciation to those young people who are taking the gospel message seriously. The applicant's written submission must **1) describe involvement with family, school, community, parish and other activities, 2) explain how he/she uses his/her talents in witnessing Christ and 3) tell us about his/her future plans and anything else that he/she wishes us to know.**

Students interested in receiving detailed information re this contest can contact Céline Massaroni at cmassaroni10@sympatico.ca. submissions are due by **February 25, 2024**.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS - CATHOLIC CITIZENSHIP ESSAY CONTEST

The Knights of Columbus invite all parishioner students in grades 8-12 to participate in the Catholic Citizenship Essay Contest. The theme, *"How can the Church evangelize in the digital age?"* prompts reflections on leveraging technology for spreading the Word. Submit a 500 to 750-word essay with parental consent by **May 15th, 2024**, at the Parish Office. Entry forms and guideline are available at the back of the church or parish office. All participants will be recognized, and winners announced in June.

This is a valuable opportunity to showcase writing skills and reflect on the Church's role in the digital age. We encourage your participation to foster understanding of the Church's evolving mission. Good luck!

MINISTRY WITH MATURING ADULTS

Nurturing Our Spirituality in the Second Half of Life With a Focus on Care of the Body, Mind and Spirit

January 23, 2024, 10:30AM-Noon: **Zoom Presentation - Following the Star
Reflections on the Epiphany and the Journey of the
Three Wise Men (In case you missed it last week!)**



The session will include presentation, music, prayer, small group sharing and a time for reflection.

Facilitated by Trena Finnegan, Coordinator, Ministry with Maturing Adults at St. Bonaventure Parish

If you wish to be included on this Zoom presentation, please email me by the latest Sunday Jan. 21st. at trena@st-bonaventure.ca

In Person Meeting

Coffee and Conversation: 9:45 - 10:00 am

Meeting: 10:00 - 11:30 am

January 30, 2024: **Practical Spirituality from the perspective of a Permanent Deacon
Presented by Deacon Peter Lovrick, D.Min., M.A., B.A.**

Loving God, Church and Family and how to navigate through these in our challenging times. Please bring your bible and rosary if you can!

Dcn Peter Lovrick was ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons in 2002 after four years in formation at St Augustine Seminary. In addition to serving various parishes in the Archdiocese of Toronto, he has served as the Director of Diaconate Formation at St. Augustine Seminary from 2010 to 2022. He is the professor of Homiletics at the seminary teaching Introduction to the Homily, Advanced Homiletics, and the Homiletics Practicum. He is a frequent webinar presenter on Homiletics out of Los Angeles, California. He is a writer for various publications and maintains a YouTube channel on preaching Better Catholic Preaching.

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE THANKS!

Thank you so much for your donations during Advent and Christmas 2023. We received these following notes:

SISTERS OF LIFE

With Much Thanks from the Sisters of Life:

We received \$1930 in Shoppers and Walmart gift cards for the Sisters of Life. The Sisters are most thankful for the generosity of St. Bonaventure's parishioners. With them we pray:

"May every pregnant mother receive compassionate care and support as she nurtures the life in her womb."



Fill a Stable for Chalice Canada:

We received \$4,190 for Chalice Canada. We were able to provide four full stables for communities in need.

Thank you for your generous donations and support of this worthy cause as we celebrated the 800th Anniversary of the first nativity scene.



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Thank you for your generous donations and gift cards for our Neighbours in Need Program. We are extremely grateful to the parishioners of St. Bonaventure Parish for their continued support of this vital ministry.

GROWING IN *Spirit, Community, and Service*



**Knights of
Columbus®**

ST. FRANCIS COUNCIL 5080

2024 PANCAKE BREAKFAST



AND
40 CANS FOR LENT
Please donate cans of tuna in
support of the local food bank




One serving per Ticket
2 Pancakes - 2 Sausages - Fruits - Coffee/Tea

ST BONAVENTURE PARISH HALL

9:00 AM		11		ADULT	CHILD (4-12)
1:30 PM		FEB		\$7	\$3

Tickets can be purchase after all Masses, at
The Parish Center and on the day of the event

1300 Leslie Street, Toronto

CONTACT US

Ministry Centre (Office)
1300 Leslie Street
Toronto, ON M3C 2K9
Office: 416-447-5571

Pastor
Fr. Thomas Reist, OFM Conv.
Ext. 234
frtom@st-bonaventure.ca

Associate Pastor
Fr. Peter Knaapen, OFM Conv
Ext. 233
FrPeter@st-bonaventure.ca

Lay Pastoral Associate
Gregory Beath
Ext. 258
gregb@st-bonaventure.ca

Parish Manager
Connie Durante
Ext. 224
connie@st-bonaventure.ca

ARE YOU REGISTERED? IF NOT, ASK AN USHER
FOR A PARISH REGISTRATION FORM TO COMPLETE

St. Anthony of Padua Mission Aid
1320 Leslie Street, Suite 100
Toronto, ON M3C 2K9
416-690-9904
www.saintanthonyofpadua.net

St. Clare Inn Office:
1320 Leslie Street, Suite 200
Toronto, ON M3C 2K9
416-690-0330
info@stclareinn.org

St Bonaventure School
1340 Leslie Street
Toronto, ON M3C 2K9
416-393-5263
<https://www.tcdsb.org/SCHOOLS/STBONAVENTURE/>

Society of St. Vincent de Paul
416-447-5571 ext. 570

Casseroles for the Good Shepherd Centre, contact
casseroles@st-bonaventure.ca

REFLECTION

“Come follow me...” ~ Mark 1:17

Wouldn't it be wonderful if you had a direct summons specifically for you from God? Instead of going about in a fog and trying your best to remember how to live, maybe how to pray once in a while, and perhaps to make an effort and to get to Mass at least on Sunday, wouldn't it be great to have a command that would focus everything in our life, draw us on like a far-shining star? In both the First Reading and the Gospel, people are given such a direct invitation to do God's will ...But ...in the First Reading, Jonah was quite repelled by the call God gave him. And in the Gospel the disciples surely had no idea what they were getting themselves into when they dropped everything and followed Jesus. Would they have been so trusting if they had known about the crucifixion?

Why in the world didn't Jonah just follow God's command instead of running to the other side of the world? One speculation is that Jonah did not want Nineveh, the pagan city, to convert and be saved—because this city was an enemy of the Hebrews. But you and I can make our own speculations, since *we ourselves know what it is like to run from what God asks*. As for the apostles, they did not run away. Almost impulsively they followed Jesus. Possibly they wanted political action. With Jesus' gentle guidance they found out gradually that following the Messiah really meant something quite different. In contrast with Jonah, the apostles imagined the best. But they followed Jesus into the passion and crucifixion! Luckily the resurrection followed. Lucky for us since suffering seems to be inevitable in human life. And you? Are you running away or running toward? Either way you will have suffering. Either way God will keep after you, pulling you out from the entrails of a fish, pushing you, pulling you, over and over, to learn in your flesh what love is really about. And you?

- Copyright © 2021, John B. Foley, SJ. All rights reserved. Permission is hereby granted to reproduce for personal or parish use.

May the Lord bless you and keep you!