

Offertory: December 24, 2015 OLM \$733, OLV \$942, COS \$3,580, Total \$5,255
 December 29, 2016 OLM \$518, OLV \$764, COS \$1,099, Total \$2,381 (incl. online giving)

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, Feb. 25, OLM 4:00 PM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
 Saturday, Feb. 25, COS 4:30 PM For Richard Morgan, requested by Patricia Morgan
 Sunday, Feb. 26, OLM 8:30 AM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
 Sunday, Feb. 26, OLV 10:30 AM For Shirley Lane, requested by Deacon and Mrs. Richard Anderberg
 Sunday, Feb. 26, COS 12:30 PM For Richard Morgan, requested by Patricia Morgan
 Saturday, March 4, OLM 4:00 PM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
 Saturday, March 4, COS 4:30 PM For Shirley Yankowski, requested by Pat Yankowski and Don Bidwell, Jr.
 Sunday, March 5, OLM 8:30 AM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
 Sunday, March 5, OLV 10:30 AM For Terese Heard, requested by Eleanor C. Crombie
 Sunday, March 5, COS 12:30 PM For Richard Morgan, requested by Patricia Morgan



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

March 1: Ash Wednesday, Mass OLM 5:30PM, OLV 7:30 PM, with distribution of Ashes

March 4 & 5: Special Collection, Easter Flowers

March 3: First Friday Mass, 5:30 PM, St. Edmund's, Saxtons River

Pro-Life Answers to False Pro-Choice Arguments (Part V)

"How can you make a fetus more important than a grown woman?"

Abortion is a human rights issue, but politically speaking, it does involve competing rights. On the one hand, you have the mother's "right" not to be pregnant. On the other hand, you have the baby's right not to be killed. The question that must therefore be answered is which right is more fundamental?

Abortion advocates argue that outlawing abortion would, in essence, elevate the rights of the unborn over and above those of the mother. However, in reality, outlawing abortion would not be giving unborn children more rights; it would simply re-establish for them the most fundamental right that no one can live without, namely the right to life.

If a baby is not to be aborted, then the pregnant mother must remain pregnant. This will also require of her sickness, fatigue, reduced mobility, an enlarged body and some new clothes. Fortunately, it is not a permanent condition. On the flip side, for a pregnant woman not to be pregnant, her child must be killed (unless she is past 22 weeks of pregnancy, in which case the baby may well survive outside the womb). Abortion costs the unborn child his or her very life and it is a thoroughly permanent condition. That is what's at stake, both for the child and for the mother. It is not an issue of who is more important, but rather who has more on the line.

Any time there are competing rights, the government must protect the more fundamental right. For example, the law requires the driver of a car to slow down and stop so a pedestrian may cross the road in front of him. This is not because the pedestrian is more valuable or important than the driver, but rather because, if the driver does not stop, it might cost the pedestrian his life.

Obviously, for a woman to remain pregnant, she gives up far more than a few minutes of drive time, but she gives up far less than her baby who would otherwise be killed. This is what it comes down to. Since the child has far more at stake, the more fundamental right to life must be upheld.



Weekly Intention:

For the grace this week to seek first the Kingdom of God in our life.

"If evil is contagious, so is goodness. Let us be infected by goodness and let us spread goodness!" -Pope Francis



Remember man that you are dust and into dust you shall return.

There will be a special collection on Ash Wednesday to support Vermont Catholic Charities. This agency provides financial and emotional support to individuals and families throughout Vermont through the programs offered which include Counseling, Emergency Aid, Prison Ministry, Project Rachel, and Residential Care Homes. Envelopes will be available in the churches. Please know that every gift—whatever the size—makes a difference. Thank you for your generosity.

The first public event of the Year of Creation will take place on the first Friday of Lent, March 3, 7:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Bishop Coyne will lead **The Stations of the Cross with John Paul II: On the Path of Ecological Conversion**, followed by a sustainable soup supper and discussion of the Lenten practice of fasting. Participants will learn about the **Global Catholic Climate Movement's Lenten Fast for Climate Justice** and how fasting from certain foods, especially **meat**, positively effects the planet and the poor.

Do you work or volunteer with youth in the Church? As part of the Diocese of Burlington's continuing commitment to protect children and young people, all adults who work with children and youth are required to participate in child abuse prevention training, submit background check paperwork, read the Diocesan Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry, and sign a Code of Conduct. The training program for adults used within the Diocese of Burlington is Safe and Sacred by Proud to Protect, Inc. Please visit the "Child Safety" section of www.vermontcatholic.org.

From Fr. Fred:

Your Father's Son

After a few of the usual Sunday evening hymns, the church's pastor slowly stood up, walked over to the pulpit and, before he gave his sermon for the evening, briefly introduced a guest minister who was in the service that evening. In the introduction, the pastor told the congregation that the guest minister was one of his dearest childhood friends and that he wanted him to have a few moments to greet the church and share whatever he felt would be appropriate for the service. With that, an elderly man stepped up to the pulpit and began to speak.

"A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the pacific coast." he began. "Then a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to the shore. The waves were so high, that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright and the three were swept into the ocean as the boat capsized." The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who were, for the first time since the service began, looking somewhat interested in his story. The aged minister continued with his story, "Grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life: to which boy would he throw the other end of the life line.

He only had seconds to make the decision.

The father knew that his son was a Christian and he also knew that his son's friend was not. The agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves. As the father yelled out, 'I love you, son!' He threw out the lifeline to his son's friend.

By the time the father had pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beneath the raging swells into the black of night. His body was never recovered."

By this time, the two teenagers were sitting up straight in the pew, anxiously waiting for the next words to come out of the old minister's mouth.

"The father," he continued, "knew his son would step into eternity with Jesus and he could not bear the thought of his son's friend stepping into an eternity without Jesus. Therefore, he sacrificed his son to save the son's friend. How great is the love of God that He should do the same for us. Our heavenly Father sacrificed His only begotten Son that we could be saved. I urge you to accept His offer to rescue you and take a hold of the life line He is throwing out to you in this service." With that, the old man turned and sat back down in his chair as silence filled the room.

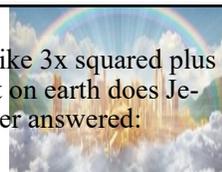
The pastor again walked slowly to the pulpit and delivered a brief sermon with an invitation at the end. However, no one responded to the appeal. Within minutes after the service ended, the two teenagers were at the old man's side. "That was a nice story," politely stated one of them, "but I don't think it was very realistic for a father to give up his only son's life in hopes that the other boy would become a Christian."

"Well, you've got a point there," the old man replied glancing down at his worn bible. A big smile broadened his narrow face. He once again looked up at the boys and said, "It sure isn't very realistic, is it? But I'm standing here today to tell you that the story gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up his son for me. You see...I was that father and your pastor is my son's friend."

May I, Father Fred, give you hope in your struggle, that you are not alone, and may I repeat what that pastor said: "I urge you to accept the Father's offer to rescue you and take a hold of the life line that he is throwing out to you in this service."

Just for Fun:

One day Jesus turned to his disciples and said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like $3x$ squared plus $8x$ minus 9 ." The disciples were very puzzled and finally asked Peter, "What on earth does Jesus mean—the Kingdom of heaven is like $3x$ squared plus $8x$ minus 9 ?" Peter answered: "Don't worry. It's just another one of his parabolas."

**Quote of the week:**

"What ZEST life acquires when we allow ourselves to be filled with the love of God!" -Pope Francis