

**Fourth Sunday of Lent March 15, 2026 Vol. 183 #164**  
1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

The LORD said to Samuel:  
“Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way.  
I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem,  
for I have chosen my king from among his sons.”

As Jesse and his sons came to the sacrifice,  
Samuel looked at Eliab and thought,  
“Surely the LORD’s anointed is here before him.”  
But the LORD said to Samuel:  
“Do not judge from his appearance or from his lofty stature,  
because I have rejected him.  
Not as man sees does God see,  
because man sees the appearance  
but the LORD looks into the heart.”  
In the same way Jesse presented seven sons before Samuel,  
but Samuel said to Jesse,  
“The LORD has not chosen any one of these.”  
Then Samuel asked Jesse,  
“Are these all the sons you have?”  
Jesse replied,  
“There is still the youngest, who is tending the sheep.”  
Samuel said to Jesse,  
“Send for him;  
we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until he arrives here.”  
Jesse sent and had the young man brought to them.  
He was ruddy, a youth handsome to behold  
and making a splendid appearance.  
The LORD said,  
“There—anoint him, for this is the one!”  
Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand,  
anointed David in the presence of his brothers;  
and from that day on, the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David.

#### **VOCATION CORNER March 15, 2026**

This Thursday, (March 19th), is the feast of the Solemnity of St. Joseph. “When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him.” (Matt 1:24). It was grace that moved Joseph to embrace his vocation as the guardian of Israel’s Messiah. It’s the same grace that empowers us to accept God’s call and wisdom for our lives. Joseph’s yes in faith changed the world. God also has a plan for your life. You don’t know where your yes might lead and how God might use it. Ask St. Joseph to help. Then, like Joseph, go out in faith to be a “doer of the word” (James 1:22).  
(The Word Among Us)



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**Mission: Live Catholic Teachings,  
Participate in Sacramental and Liturgical Celebrations, Serve our Community**

#### **ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH**

2020 State Rte. 146 E. Vienna, IL – 62995  
Parish Council Chair: Marsha Nelson Weekdays –Thursday 6:00 pm  
Trustees: Steve Pobst, Matt Slife Sundays – 8:00 am

#### **Faith can’t see; But it isn’t blind**

How many of us have struggled with faith? A blind leap... A shot in the dark... Trust unquestioningly given... We have a hard time committing ourselves to something so unreasonable, even counter-intellectual - and we should! If that’s our idea of faith, that it’s, by definition, unreasonable, then the Gospel for the Third Sunday of Lent is meant for us!

“If you knew the gift of God and who it is that is saying to you, ‘give me a drink...’” *If you knew.* But the woman of Samaria doesn’t know - at least not yet. There’s a lot of work to do before they get to the point in the conversation where Jesus drops the messiah bomb: “I am He, the one speaking with you!” It’s only through many tedious questions, questions about buckets and cisterns, questions about her past, questions about her people’s history, and questions about worship that she comes to a slow understanding that there’s more to this “prophet” than meets the eye.

Imagine, just for a moment, that Jesus expected her to get it right away. Absurd, isn’t it! It would be unreasonable for her to believe in Him before He gave her anything to go on. And it’s the same with us.

It’s true that the object of faith (that which we believe) has to be something we can’t see - otherwise we’d call it knowledge.

But what we sometimes forget is that, just because an object of faith can’t be *reasoned to*, doesn’t mean it has to be *unreasonable*.

In the end, the woman at the well proclaims Jesus to be the Messiah based on what she *has seen*. “Come meet a man who told me everything I have done.”

Faith works the same way for us. We believe what Jesus says because of what Jesus does. Jesus has worked powerfully in our lives. He has given us many good gifts, helped us through many struggles, and picked us up after many falls. Jesus has also worked powerfully in history. He spoke with astounding wisdom; He healed the sick; He raised the dead; and eventually, He suffered death himself and rose to life again.

The concrete events of the past - our own past, and our people’s past - are the reasons we have to put our faith in Jesus for the future. Faith and trust really mean the same thing. Faith is about trusting the God who has been so good to us in the past, to continue to be the same in the future. After all He’s done, wouldn’t it be more unreasonable not to trust Him?

But, if the good things in our lives and in the past are the reasons we have to believe, aren’t the tragedies and griefs exactly the opposite? For many, they are. Evil, sin, and scandal do great harm to faith. There is only one place to take those objections - the very same destination of our Lenten journey. When the wickedness of the world, or the darkness of our own past experiences start to make us doubt, take those doubts to Calvary, to the Cross. See, nailed to that tree, the love that goes deeper than every last one of them. The Cross is the ultimate reason to believe because there is the proof, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that God is love.

Jesus did not ask the woman at the well for blind faith, and He doesn’t ask us for that either. He asks us to trust Him, especially in darkness, when we can’t see the next step or how this could possibly end well - and He has given us plenty of reasons to be confident that we can.

## SCHEDULE OF MASSES

**SUNDAY** 03/15 8:00 am Mass- *Delmar Schwartz/ William Anderson*  
**WEDNESDAY** 03/18 5:30 pm Mass /*Parish Council Meeting 6 pm*  
**THURSDAY** 03/19 6:00 pm Mass  
**SUNDAY** 03/22 8:00 am Mass- *Victoria Koval*

### Liturgical Ministers

	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>Servers</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
<b>Mar 15</b>	A. Dueker	C. Ross	Matt Slife S. Widowski	C. Levesque	* <b>Joe Nelson</b> J. Bergmann

Gift Bearers Cathy Kruep Family      Cantor J. Starratt

	<u>Lector</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>Servers</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
<b>Mar 22</b>	S. Pobst	K. Pobst	C. Kruep M. Nelson	M. Palmer	* <b>Matt Slife</b> S. Widowski

Gift Bearers Laurie Coleman & Carolyn Johnson      Cantor C. Ross

### **STEWARDSHIP OFFERING** March 8, 2026

General	\$1825.00	<b>(25)</b>
Loose	35.00	
CSMA	100.00	<b>CSMA</b>
Flowers	35.00	

**Total \$1995.00**

**BUILDING & MAINTENANCE: \$80.00 (2)**

**STATUE \$100.00**

**TOTAL \$180.00**

### BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

*Christine Ross*

### **CCW COLLECTION**

\$260 were donated to our St Paul CCW last weekend. Thank you for your generosity.

### **THE CATHOLIC SERVICE AND MINISTRY APPEAL**

Each year, through our prayers and gifts to the Appeal, diocesan ministries continue to feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, care for the sick and elderly, educate children, reach out to the youth, train lay ministers and catechists and so much more. Your contribution will touch the lives of thousands of people throughout Southern Illinois; on behalf of each of them, please accept our heartfelt thanks.

## **HOUSEHOLD ITEM DRIVE FOR DAYSTAR**

This collection will run through April 5th, items needed as in the past, *paper towels, laundry detergent, dish soap, hand soap, Clorox wipes, etc.* thanks for your generosity. **If there are any questions contact Peggy Widowski.**

## **RICE BOWLS**

*CRS Rice Bowls* are the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services, supported by the U.S. Bishops and embraced by families across the country. *Thanking you in advance for your generosity.* If you haven't got one yet they are located in the back of the church.

## **THANK YOU**

Thank you to *Pat Kalicki, Pam Shallenberger, Vicki Baker, Arlene Dueker, Peggy Widowski, Geri Tesina, and Cathy Kruep* for making cards for St. Patrick's Day.

## **CHRISM MASS**

Father encourages parishioners to attend the **11:30 am Chrism Mass at St. Peter Cathedral in Belleville on Wednesday, March 31.**

## **STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

There will be an opportunity to pray the *Stations of the Cross at 7:40 a.m. each Sunday in Lent.* We use our **One in Faith Mass books starting on page 335.**

## **EASTER MASS**

*St. Paul will not be hosting an Easter Egg Hunt, Easter morning.* Easter treat bags for all parishioner's children or grandchildren will be available following Easter morning services. If your children or grandchildren will be coming with you on Easter please let **Arlene Dueker know by Palm Sunday at (618) 559- 7803** so that we will have enough Easter treat bags for them. Thank you.

## **PRAYERS**

Please keep the following list of Homebound Parishoneers in your prayers. *George Bell (Hillview), Sandy Belski, Dick & Midge Bigler, Larry Flamm (Hillview), Gertrude Henderson, Suzanne McHugh, Susan Ward, Dolly Hopkins & Peter Vanes (Hillview)*

## LOOKING AHEAD

<b>March</b>	18	Parish Council Meeting <b>5:30 pm Mass/ 6 pm Meeting</b>
<b>March</b>	19	Pro-Life March in Springfield
<b>March</b>	19-21	Faith Alive
<b>March</b>	27	Fish Fry <b>4:30-6:30 pm</b>
<b>March</b>	31	Chrism Mass in Belleville
<b>April</b>	02	Holy Thursday
<b>April</b>	03	Good Friday
<b>April</b>	04	Holy Saturday
<b>April</b>	05	Easter Sunday

**\*\*Office Hours are Wednesday 10am-1pm at the rectory. Contact Theresa at (618)658-4501 or via email. Wednesday at 12 pm is the deadline for any bulletin changes or additions.\*\***