

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF
ST. PIO OF PIETRELCINA

REVEREND JEREMIAH N. MURASSO, PH.D., ED.D., PSY.D., PASTOR
REVEREND PATRICK KANE, PAROCHIAL VICAR



5TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. - Mk 1:32-34

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 4, 2024

Mass Intentions for the Week

SATURDAY, February 3 - Vigil – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:00pm OLOP + Alphonse & Franca Gambardella
by Children
4:30pm SVDP + Marie Riccitelli
by Jim & Marie Connors

SUNDAY, February 4 – 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00am OLOP + Anne Falco
by Family
9:00am SB + Thomas Hamilton (14th Anniversary)
by Anna Hamilton & Family
10:00am OLOP + Filomena Lavorgna
by Husband, Attilio
11:15am SVDP + Robert Consiglio
by Renee & Family

MONDAY, February 5 - St. Agatha

8:00am OLOP + Anna & Bill Allen, Sr.
by Marianne Hall
8:00am SVDP + Laura Anderson

TUESDAY, February 6 – St. Paul Miki

8:00am OLOP + William M. & Cynthia Richmond
by Alyce
8:00am SVDP + Joyce Hutt

WEDNESDAY, February 7 – Weekday

8:00am OLOP + Fr. John L. Lavorgna
8:00am SVDP + Sr. Susan Carlin, R.S.M.

THURSDAY, February 8 - St. Jerome

8:00am OLOP + Wayne Goodrich
by Wife & Children
8:00am SB + Rev. Thomas Mitchell

FRIDAY, February 9 - Weekday


8:00am SB + Rose Infante (Birthday)
by Family

SATURDAY, February 10 - Vigil – 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

4:00pm OLOP + Madi Ponte
by Family
4:30pm SVDP + Joseph Buonome
by Family

SUNDAY, February 11 – 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:00am OLOP + Gail Vaughn
by Lorraine Burns
9:00am SB + Irene C. Flynn (6th Anniversary)
by Ed, Edward & Kathleen
10:00am OLOP + Rose & Joseph Sagnella
by Family
11:15am SVDP + Alese Mauriello
by Family



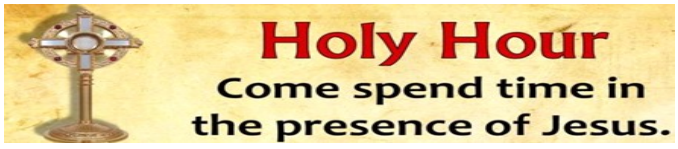
**2024 MASSES -
SAVE THE DATE!**

The 2024 Mass Intention Book is opened. There are many weekday Masses left. Kindly have your requests ready when scheduling.

Payment due at time of booking.

STEWARDSHIP January 27 & 28	
Regular Collection	\$9,515.00
Online Donations	\$954.00
February 10 & 11 Second Collection: Utility	
Thank you to the many of you who have been so generous and responsive in these difficult times.	

SCRIPTURE READING	
Sunday:	Jb 7:1-4, 6-7/Ps 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 (see 3a)/1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23/Mk 1:29-39
Monday:	1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13/Ps 132:6-7, 8-10/Mk 6:53-56
Tuesday:	1 Kgs 8:22-23, 27-30/Ps 84:3, 4, 5 and 10, 11/Mk 7:1-13
Wednesday:	1 Kgs 10:1-10/Ps 37:5-6, 30-31, 39-40/Mk 7:14-23
Thursday:	1 Kgs 11:4-13/Ps 106:3-4, 35-36, 37 and 40/Mk 7:24-30
Friday:	1 Kgs 11:29-32; 12:19/Ps 81:10-11ab, 12-13, 14-15/Mk 7:31-37
Saturday:	1 Kgs 12:26-32; 13:33-34/Ps 106:6-7ab, 19-20, 21-22/Mk 8:1-10



Holy Hour
Come spend time in the presence of Jesus.

Every Monday, immediately following morning Mass at Our Lady of Pompeii, there is one hour of **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.**

CONFESSION SCHEDULE:

Our Lady of Pompeii: Saturday at 3:00-3:30pm
St. Vincent de Paul: Saturday at 3:30-4:00pm

SILENCE.

Please, be mindful that many parishioners arrive early prior to the start of Mass in order to sit reflectively with the LORD in prayer. Please, be mindful of the level of your voice and that voices carry from the back of the church to the front. Please, maintain a subdued tone when speaking so that other's quiet time is not disturbed.

St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish
Address: 355 Foxon Road, East Haven, CT 06513
Phone Number: (203) 469-0764

Office Hours:
Foxon Road: Mon-Thu 8:00-12:00 & 1:00-3:00;
Fri 8:00-12:00
Taylor Avenue: Mon. & Fri. 10:00-2:00

E-Mail: stpioofpietrelcina@gmail.com
Website: stpioofpietrelcinaeh.com

MINISTRY & EVENT CALENDAR

<p>SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4 No Events or Activities Scheduled</p>	<p>SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11 No Events or Activities Scheduled</p>
<p>MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5 Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church</p>	<p>MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12 Holy Hour - 8:30-9:30am in Our Lady of Pompeii Church Midnight Run - 7:00pm Contact Sue Stacey at 203-214-1762 Ladies Guild Meeting - 7:00pm at St. Vincent de Paul</p>
<p>TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6 KofC #44 Monthly Rosary - 6:30pm at St. Bernadette Church Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p>TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13 Bible Study - 7:00pm on Zoom Contact Christine Sandford at 203-469-7823 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p>WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7 Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 ASH WEDNESDAY Bible Study - 6:30pm at SVDP Parish Office Contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8 Scriptural Rosary - 6:00pm at OLOP Chapel Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p>THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15 Scriptural Rosary - 6:00pm at OLOP Chapel Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9 Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>	<p>FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16 Stations of the Cross - 1:00pm at Our Lady of Pompeii Simple Supper - 5:00pm at St. Vincent de Paul Stations of the Cross - 7:00pm at St. Vincent de Paul Rosary Group - 8:00 pm on Zoom Contact Sally Mucka at 203-469-0764 ext. 8</p>
<p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10 Men's Group - 7:30am-9:00am at SVDP Parish Center</p>	<p>SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17 Men's Group - 7:30am-9:00am at SVDP Parish Center</p>



THE EAST HAVEN FOOD PANTRY is asking for canned soup, ramen noodles, and peanut butter for the months of February. Please leave your donations of food at the church entrances.

The Food Pantry will be open from 9:00am-11:00am on Saturdays & Tuesdays for East Haven residents.

The Food Pantry is looking for volunteers to deliver to one homebound senior in their neighborhood twice a month, if you are able to please call Christine at the below number.

For more info call Christine Sandford 203-469-7823



Online Giving

A growing number of parishioners are taking advantage of our online giving option, signing up for everything from ongoing weekly offerings to gifts for Christmas flowers. You may make a one-time gift or sign up for recurring donations. Visit <https://stpioofpietrelcinaeh.com/> and click on the 'Give' button for online giving and account registration. Contact the Parish Office with any questions.

The Candles burn this week for these special intentions:

Our Lady of Pompeii Candles

Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ In Memory of Billy Richmond & For All the Souls in Purgatory

Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~ In Memory of the Mauro & Elko Families

Chapel ~

Sacred Heart of Jesus ~

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Icon ~ Robert Consiglio by Renee & Family

Pascal Candle ~ Fr. John Lavorgna

St. Vincent de Paul Candles

Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ In Memory of the Balzano & Avitable Families

Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) - In Memory of Ronald Paolillo

Our Lady's Altar ~ Nicholas, Raffaele & Peter Bertier by Ann St. Joseph's Altar ~

Pascal Candle ~ Barbara & Maurice Connolly

St. Bernadette Candles

Sanctuary Lamp (Right Side) ~ Andrew Acabbo by Acabbo Family

Sanctuary Lamp (Left Side) ~

Pascal Candle ~ Harold Donegan

PRAY FOR THE SICK OF OUR PARISH

Nick Vessicchio, Sally Ann Fallon, Lynette Ely, David T. Boyle, Richard Lucibello, Carmel Ferretti, Bryan Surprenant, Sharon Spadacenta, Marie Zambrano, Helen Langello, Brian Savo, Gerry Andrea, Alan Poirier, Connie Rasimas, Jane Pyka, Harry Karik, Lou DiNola, Geraldine Licciardi, Joseph Anyzeski, Fran Sofo, Elizabeth Kuen, Deborah Sanning, Paula Ferrara, Tina Marie Fionia, Joseph Parise, Frank DelGrego, Moira Ferguson, Danielle Joubert, Frances Polaski, Pauline Condon, Rose Anna Izzo, Angelo DeMatteo, Patricia Aulenti, Michael Pascale, Alyce Richmond, Mark Schettino, Patty DiMilo, Rose Rogalski, Elaine Smith, Karen Rescigno, Virginia Pisano, DJ DiVincenzo, Sgt. Anthony Rybaruk, Philip & Sally DeMilo, Anna Concelmo, Anna Marie Nappi, Brian Higney, Rich Tortora, Denise Bailey, Joseph Peterson, Marion Mahl, Paula Ruddock, Pamela Willis, Laura Luzzi, Brian Wilson, Maureen Redmond, Kristianne Argentino, Shirley Perrelli, Bill Izzo, Andrew & Catherine Criscuolo, Patricia Miles, Joe Coscia, Deborah Verab, Dona Marie, Christina Meoli, Michelle Smith, Ron Mattei, Angela Riccio, Charlene Tantalò, Al Forgione, Gabriella Garrity, Beverly Fucci, W.D. Merkle, Phyllis Anastasio, Cheryl Barbara, Laura-Phyllis Esposito, Diana Vitelli O'Brien, Meghan Keeney, Gennaro Milone, Jo Vuolo, Felicia DeRoche, Mike Barnett, Richard Costanzo, Carole & Frank Casapulla, Michael Bowen, Linda Montone, Mary Diamante, Carol Esposito, Fred & Barbara Brow, Christopher Farrell, Roberta Sanders-Gray, Jeannette Winston, Marilyn Sisson, Ryder Feeley, Theodore Siwinski, Michael Enders, Nicholas Cerillo, Edwina Cinque, Rudolph Pohlman, Linda Esposito, Renee Flynn, The Cooper Family, Lynn Ely, Ethan Roche, Frances Graney, Barbara Kapusta, Megan Maturo, Rose Paula Dziedulonis, Taras Mychajlowskyj, Denise Steiner, Mary Ann Anastasio, Gloribeth R., Stacie Bouchard, Al Sappinetti, Guy Racino, Michael Polaski, Martha Catel, Eddie Villecco, Isaiah Colville, Jennie Nazario, Joan Proto, Caitlin Rustic, Michael Filion, John Torello, Mauro Antonio Bezanilla, Matteo Criscuolo, Robert Filion, Lucy Carbone, Dorene Izzo, Lucille Palange, Carmine Riccitelli, Sr., Louise Amato, Mark Houston, Avery Bye, Alex Bernaitis, Vincent Pisano, Barbara Bellucci, Michael Bulger, Joseph Bonie, Mary Katherine Hart, Billy Carr, Andrea Pepe, Anna Sabatino, Audrey Elder, Theresa Polio, Mike Liso, John Mongillo, Sr., Bill Morrison, Juan & Family, Vern Kelly, Barbara Corso, Terrence King, Monica Cantore, Fr. Lawrence Boch, Antoinette Comiskey, Diane DiLungo, Frances 'Jean' Mas-simino, Luca Small

Please send prayer requests to stpiofpietrelcina@gmail.com so that our parishioners and friends can be remembered in our prayers.

**Midnight Run
Taylor Avenue Campus**

The Midnight Run for **February** is the **2nd Monday**, which is **February 12th**. Donations of brown bag lunches, water, juice boxes and toiletries are appreciated. These donations can be dropped off to Sue Stacey's home, 82 Forbes Place, up until 7pm on **Monday, February 12th**. Any questions, please contact Sue at 203-214-1762. Thank you and God bless you for all donations. Stay safe & well.

**Midnight Run
Foxon Road Campus**

On the last Monday of each month, we bring 75 bagged lunches to the Columbus House Overflow Shelter.

Donations Needed:

ShopRite Gift Cards or

Gallon Size Ziploc Bags

Quart Size Ziploc Bags

Peanut Butter & Jelly

Juice Pouches

Raisin Boxes

Fruit Cups & Pudding Cups

Granola Bars

Individual Packaged Cookies, Crackers or Chips

We are also looking for small amounts or full skeins of yarn, it will be used to make hats and scarves for the midnight run. Please leave your donations at any entrance of Our Lady of Pompeii church **ONLY**. Thank you.

Midnight Run is the **LAST** Monday of **EVERY** month from Our Lady of Pompeii Church from 6-7 pm. Thank-you for being so generous!



St. Bernadette Food Pantry located at the

East Shore Senior Center is open every Saturday from 10:00am-11:00am. We are always in need of non-perishable foods. Top

choices are, canned: tomatoes, tomato sauce, vegetables, tuna fish, soups and fruits. Pasta, mac & cheese and peanut butter. Consumption guidelines provided to us from the CT Food Bank: Expiration/Code Date Extensions past expiration: high acid foods (i.e. tomatoes) 12-18 months. Low acid foods (canned meat, most vegetables) 2-5 years. Food in jars, 12 months past expiration, dry cereal 6-12 months, rice/pasta (dry) 1 year. Questions, please contact Deb or Rico at 203-468-7489



Have you recently lost a friend or family member?
Are you having difficulty concentrating and enjoying everyday activities?

Rajnet352@comcast.net or
Phone: 713-898-2563

From the Pastor's Pen

Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, Ph.D., Ed.D., Psy.D.

Unclean Spirits in Saint Mark:

Demonic Possession: Spiritual Brokenness
Mark 1:21-28 1:40-45

As we begin a New Year and a new cycle in the liturgical year of the Church's calendar, we *listen* to the *Gospel According to Saint Mark*. Mark's gospel account is referred to as the "*Gospel of Conflict*" because the Jesus in Mark's account, unlike that of Matthew and Luke is confronted early on in his public ministry with evil and conflict. Last weekend, as Jesus begins his public ministry, he enters into a synagogue where Mark tells the reader that Jesus is met by an "*unclean spirit*" (1:21-28).

Each of us, at one time or another has come into contact with someone whose bizarre and perhaps, ostentatious display of human nature has sparked our curiosity or even offended our human dignity. Few of us, in viewing another's behavior would conclude that such colorful behaviors were abnormal, or as threatening as they might have appeared deserved to be classified as demonic possession.



Throughout the ages, however, even prior to Old Testament times, there existed the belief that man could fall victim to malevolent entities that take control of his body and manipulate his mental processes. Yet, with the advances that have been made in medicine and the behavioral sciences, we who live in the 21st century hear very little about demonic possession, at least as it is described in the scriptures.

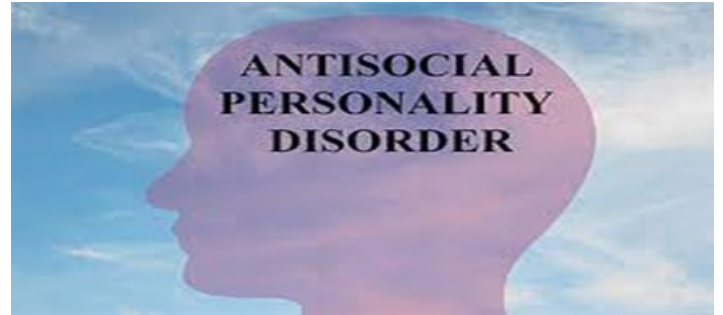


Demonic Possession

Demonic or spiritual possession is understood as the state in which an individual is violated by an evil or unclean spirit who takes control of man's body and of his cognitive functioning. Characteristics of possession include psychosomatic occurrences that involve the alteration and distortion of the individual's speech, self-mutilating gestures, the display of abnormal strength and exaggerated bodily functions.

In the 21st century, we are less inclined to identify spiritual possession as a common explanation for the behaviors described above, which resemble or mimic what was in less sophisticated times considered to be symptoms of demonic possession. Rather, in today's world, some of the very same symptoms that were at one time considered to be signs of possession are now classified as psychosis, including schizophrenia, dissociative identity disorders, Tourette Syndrome as well as various forms of delusional behaviors.

The symptoms of demonic possession, which have always included lewd and obscene types of mannerisms, are often associated with mental disorders, or merely inappropriate and anti-social behaviors. Seizures or convulsive kinds of behaviors, for example, are understood to be associated with epilepsy. Personality changes or severe mood swings are associated with hysteria, schizophrenia, or other dissociative or delusional disorders.



The Existential schools of thought such as Logotherapy recognize that some disturbances are *noogenic* in origin, which means that they have their origin in man's soul; more specifically man's *dis*-connect from self, from others, from God. The Christian Church has always viewed demonic possession with caution and perhaps, even fearful skepticism. While the scriptures provide an interpretation of the power of the underworld, the Church has always maintained that given man's free will, no evil entity can gain access to man's soul directly without some kind of conscious and willful invitation on the part of the individual.

Consequently, given her position, the Church has always associated spiritual possession with man's vulnerable and indifferent human spirit. In other words, when man loses his ability to cope with personal problems; thus, gives into the negative external forces around him, he consciously and unconsciously permits negative energy to manipulate and alter his behavior, his choices and his attitude. This kind of scenario is reiterated throughout the Old and New Testaments.

Unclean Spirits in the New Testament

Demonic possession, as it is recorded in the New Testament is described not only in terms of the invasion of an evil entity; it also, metaphorically describes man's state of helplessness and hopelessness, which is experienced when met with physical disabilities or mental anguish. In Christ's time, it was common for individuals to be labeled as spiritually possessed by an unclean or demonic spirit when there was no other explanation for the display of what society considered to be bizarre and/or abnormal behavior.

The individuals in the New Testament who are described as being possessed by a demon or an unclean spirit have one thing in common; they all have the experience of emptiness and helplessness. These individuals have been condemned by society and sentenced to a life lived in seclusion and in isolation; separate from others as a type of punishment for being different.



Mark is very forthcoming with regard to Jesus' interaction with those afflicted with unclean and unwelcomed spirits. According to Mark, the importance of the exorcisms performed by Jesus signifies the *powerlessness of evil when confronted by goodness*. In other words, Jesus performs these exorcisms as a way of showing man that no power, whether human or diabolical can restrict man's spirit. Although the human spirit can undergo *spiritual amnesia* leading to spiritual death, it can never be destroyed.

There are numerous individuals who seek Jesus out for healing, many of whom, Mark will introduce to us throughout his account in the weeks and months ahead. Such individuals have given into the external forces around them in a desperate attempt to satisfy the feelings of brokenness, incompleteness and emptiness. This is the feeling of desolation that exists at the core of their spiritual unconscious; at the level of their very soul.

In other words, this kind of existential emptiness is descriptive of individuals who have lost their way; lost the ability or the willingness to discover and to cultivate meaningful experiences. They have lost their *will to meaning*. When meaning is no longer hidden from man and man begins to discover meaning in this life (i.e., something to live for and something to hope for), purpose emerges and is actualized in the pursuit of positive goals.



Lack of purpose results in the erosion of man's human dignity. Consequently, when man loses a reason for living and doing, he knowingly exposes himself to the powers and even the *principalities* that seek his demise. The feeling of emptiness that so often contributes to personal brokenness, which leads to anger, depression, indifference and apathy results in man's *perceived* belief that his only remedy for happiness is from the world. Consequently, man begins to look for *quick-fix-feel-good-fast-solutions*, which serve only as temporary forms of relief that when depleted return man to his original state of hopelessness and despair: thus, an addiction is born.

The Resilient Human Spirit

Despite the intrusion of evil or the onset of addictive disorders, the human spirit can *never* be altered or destroyed. Having been created in the image and likeness of God, the soul, which provides nourishment to the human spirit, *yearns* consciously and unconsciously for oneness and completeness with God. This is why Christ, in addressing this existential malaise in those who approach him for healing, speaks first to the inherent transcendent aspect of the individual him/herself, which when rekindled, can provide healing and completeness to the whole person.



As with the Samaritan woman and the blind Bartimaeus whom we meet in John's gospel account on the third and fourth Sundays in Lent, Jesus approaches each of the *spiritually depressed* individuals, *not* with their physical distortions as his focus. Rather, Jesus looks at the spiritual *dis-ease*; the individual's broken human spirit and the discord and the disconnect that is present at the level of his/her soul.

Whether we classify this as a psychological depression, spiritual possession by an unclean spirit or the evidence of an existential void, the remedy is the same: a spiritual *re*-awakening leading to self-transcendence. Jesus approaches each individual in Mark's gospel account with love and with unconditional acceptance, without prejudice and without fear of contamination. Addressing their spiritual *dis-ease*, he relates to them as "*soul meeting soul*."

The Gadarene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20)

In a few weeks, Mark will recount the story of the Gadarene demoniac who exemplifies that which can happen to man when he has given up because of feelings of hopelessness and despair. Believing that he has no future, man relinquishes his freedom and responsibility. Having given into the powers outside of himself, he permits his spirit to become buried by the external forces around him. This leads to the smothering of his spirit by a deprecating and demoralizing society, which holds man's spirit captive.



Mark indicates that the man referred to as the Gadarene demoniac lived isolated in the tombs. The tombs were the burial places of dead men's bones; thus, a place of impurity. The Jews in Jesus' time looked upon tomb-dwelling with abhorrence, as a sign of insanity. Yet, man caught in the experience of an existential void feels just like the Gadarene demoniac: empty and hopeless, lacking control over his life and consumed by outside forces.

A buried human spirit renders man spiritually dead. Having lost his dignity, man views himself as futureless; thus, he is condemned to live life as a living corpse. Only Matthew mentions the presence of two possessed men, and Luke makes mention of the fact that the man is naked. In other words, in the absence of man's recognition of and desire for spiritual connectiveness, man loses the finer qualities of human nature, such as love, charity, respect and reverence in relation to the other. Appearing naked, the Gadarene demoniac is devoid of all modesty.



The Gadarene demoniac becomes a metaphor for post-modern man living in the 21st century because the more buried the human spirit becomes by the world as a result of man's indifference toward his fellow man and toward a relationship with the Divine, the greater the chance for an unclean spirit to afflict man by filling the void in man (which was initially created by man's feelings of meaninglessness) with addictive-like dependence on the *things* of the world.

Jesus addresses the man by name in an attempt to reawaken the seduced human spirit. "*What is your name?*" *Jesus asked*" (Mark 5:9). Mark indicates that Jesus exorcises the unclean spirit from the man after which the man requests to become Jesus' follower. However, with the man's self-discovery and a renewed desire for meaning, man discovers a new mission. This is a mission that will take him from the emptiness of the tombs to the experience of self-transcendence. The man returns to the community, just as the Samaritan woman returned to her community, both individuals giving testimony to the *experience of God* in their midst; thus, proclaiming and living their new-found faith in the as a result of their experience with Jesus.

Demoniac at Capernaum (Mark 1: 23-28)

Like the Gadarene demoniac, the demoniac at Capernaum characterizes man in the grips of the forces outside of himself. Unlike the Gadarene demoniac, however, this man is not in the tombs, but encounters Jesus in the synagogue.



"And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, 'What do you want to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?' Jesus rebuked him" (Mark 1:23-26).

Luke says that the man was possessed by an "*unclean demon*" (4:33). He also states that the demon threw the man into a convulsive state. However, only Luke says that "*the demon had thrown him down in the midst, and he came out of him, having done him no harm*" (Luke 4:35).

Two interesting aspects of this account are important for our reflection on our spiritual lives:

- The first has to do with the possessed man's presence in the synagogue.
- The second, with the fact that when hurled to the ground in a convulsive state, Luke makes the point that the man was unharmed.

Like the Gadarene demoniac, this man at Capernaum has given up all hope for healing and wholeness. However, the very fact that he is described as being in the synagogue testifies to man's resilient human spirit. Man's spiritual nature *yearns* for wholeness and as such speaks to the fact that regardless of the psycho-somatic constraints that are placed upon man, the human spirit can never be diminished or destroyed.



As indicated above, the human spirit needs only a *spark* to propel it into consciousness. Although self-absorbed because of the invasion of evil, the human spirit is propelled into activity having absorbed the religious *ambience* of the synagogue. Perhaps, it was the sound of chanters, the mystical feeling of solitude, the smell of incense, or the presence of the ancient parchment depicting the *Word* of God. It was the experience of the mystical that *re-minded* the possessed man that he had a spiritual center that yearns for healing.



Once the spiritual unconsciousness is *re*-awakened, the human spirit propels itself in the *re*-discovery of the unconscious God within man's soul. In addition, man begins to discover meaningful avenues for achieving wholeness. This is why the possessed man was unharmed when hurled into a convulsive state. Once man discovers the spiritual energy within his *soul*, opportunities for meaning are endless.

Albert Einstein says it best: "The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their primitive forms----this knowledge, this feeling, is at the center of true religion"

Use this this Lenten Season to re-awaken the Spirit within you! JNM



From the Pen of the Parish Nurse
Kimberly Petrillo, R.N.

**Annual Physical:
A Second Look**

With the flu season upon us and the resurgence of the COVID knocking on our doors, I feel it worthwhile to take a second look at the importance of an annual physical. In the course of my day, I see many individuals, actually too many who tell me that a) they do not have a primary physician and/or b) they do not take the time for scheduling an annual physical. Our health; good health is everything and you know as well as I that when we are feeling good, there us nothing that we cannot tackle on a daily basis.



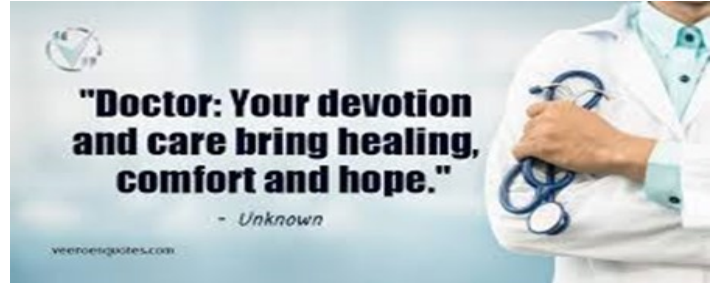
Now that the New Year has begun it is time to schedule an appointment with the doctor for a physical exam. Most people who are feeling well, often do not think it is important to have an annual physical. People generally see the doctor when feeling ill. Consequently, at that office visit, the doctor focuses on the complaint and makes recommendations for treatment; thus, an assessment by the doctor is made precisely focusing on the specific ailment for which the appointment was made. This would usually be a short visit with the focus on treating the overt symptom.

The doctor does not have the time at a sick visit to perform a physical exam or does the insurance company want to pay for a sick visit along with a wellness physical on the same day. A physical exam provides an opportunity to check one's overall health. It is a time to discuss possible lingering health concerns that the patient might have and in addition, such a meeting opens the door for asking about general health/wellness concerns or questions.



Think of your healthcare provider as your partner in your long-term health. It is important to have a trusted primary care provider that you can talk to you about your concerns; whether these concerns are in the area of mental health issues/changes in family history or any other health concerns that may arise and for which you want answers.

The actual physical exam serves as a wellness check to touch base with the doctor, address any health problems and to discuss preventative measures for the future. It is a time for the doctor to reconnect with the patient and for you, the patient with your physician.



The Physical Exam

What should happen at a physical exam? The annual check-up with the primary care provider combines two main factors: 1) talking through the patient's recent health history and the changes or concerns that have occurred since the last visit, and 2) the actual physical exam.

1. Review Health History

This is the time to brief the provider one's recent health history. Use this time as an opportunity to bring up any changes in family health history and any concerns you have. The doctor will likely quiz you about lifestyle behaviors. The doctor will also check on vaccination status and update personal and family health history.

2. Vital Signs

These are some vital signs that are checked by the doctor:

•Blood Pressure

Less than 120 over less than 80 is normal blood pressure. Doctors define high blood pressure (hypertension) as 130 over 80 or higher.

•Heart rate

Values between 60 and 100 are considered normal. Many healthy people have heart rates slower than 60.

•Respiration Rate

From 12 to 16 breaths per minute is normal for a healthy adult. Breathing more than 20 times per minute can suggest heart or lung problems.

•Temperature

98.6 degrees Fahrenheit is the average. Healthy people can have resting temperatures slightly higher or lower.

•General Appearance

The doctor gathers a large amount of information about the person and health by merely watching and talking to the individual. How is the memory and mental quickness? Does the skin appear healthy? Can a person stand and walk easily?

•Heart Exam

Listening to the heart with a stethoscope, a doctor might detect an irregular heartbeat, a heart murmur or other clues that suggest heart disease.

•Lung Exam

Using a stethoscope, the doctor listens for crackles, wheezes or decreased breath sounds. These and other sounds are clues to the presence of heart or lung disease.

•Head and Neck Exam

Opening up and saying “ah” shows off the throat and tonsils. The quality of the teeth and gums, it also provides information about the patient’s overall health. Ears, nose, sinuses, eyes, lymph nodes, thyroid and carotid arteries may also be examined.

•Abdominal Exam

The doctor can use a range of examination techniques including tapping the abdomen to detect liver size and presence of abdominal fluid, listening for bowel sounds with a stethoscope and palpating for tenderness.

•Neurological Exam

Nerves, muscle strength, reflexes, balance and mental status may be assessed.

•Dermatological Exam

Skin and nail findings could indicate a dermatological problem or disease somewhere else in the body.

•Extremities Exam

The doctor will look for physical and sensory changes. Pulses can be checked in the arms and legs. Examining joints can assess for abnormalities.

Male Physical Exam

A man’s annual physical exam might include:

1. Testicular Exam The doctor can assess for lumps, tenderness, or changes in size. Most men with testicular cancer notice a growth before seeing a doctor.
2. Hernia Exam The famous “turn your head and cough” checks for a weakness in the abdominal wall between the intestines and scrotum.
3. Prostate Exam Inserting a finger in the rectum lets the doctor feel the prostate for its size and any suspicious areas.

Female Physical Exam

A woman’s annual exam might include:

1. Breast Exam Feeling for abnormal lumps may detect breast cancer or benign breast conditions. The doctor will check the lymph nodes in the underarm area and look for visual abnormalities of the breasts and nipples.
2. Pelvic Exam The pelvic exam allows examination of the vulva, cervix, uterus and ovaries. A Pap test and HPV test can screen for cervical cancer and help assess risk.

Laboratory Tests

There are no set standard laboratory tests during an annual physical. Some doctors will order certain routine tests which are:

- Complete blood count
- Chemistry panel
- Urinalysis (UA)

A lipid panel is ordered if risk factors are present. Abnormal cholesterol levels can increase the risk for heart attacks and strokes. Most healthy adults should have their cholesterol checked at least every 4 to 5 years; more often if the patient has a history of high cholesterol or heart disease.

If an individual is overweight or has risk factors for diabetes, the blood sugar will likely be checked. The American Diabetes Association recommends that all adults age 45 should be tested regardless of weight.

The CDC recommends that everyone over the age of 18 get screened at some point for hepatitis C.



Colorectal Cancer

At age 45, it is time to begin regular screening for colorectal cancer. People who have immediate family members with colorectal cancer or other risk factors may need to be screened before age 45.

Mammogram Screening

For some women, age 40 marks the time to begin annual mammogram screening for breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends that that women ages 40 to 44 should have the choice to start mammograms if they wish to do so. Women age 45 to 54 should get mammograms every year while women 55 and older can switch to mammograms every 2 years, or can continue yearly screening.

It is important for females to speak with their doctor about when to start and how often to get a mammogram.



Healthy behaviors work far better than medicine at preventing illness and disease. The good news is that healthy behaviors do not require a prescription!

What Can I do?

Engage in brisk walking or other exercise 30 minutes most days of the week (approximately 150 minutes a week). Add in strength training at least twice per week. The risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some types of cancer will decrease significantly. And eat a mostly plant-based diet, low in animal fats.

Exercising, maintaining a healthy weight and not smoking are enough to keep most people healthy. Managing stress and getting 7 to 8 hours of sleep all help to maintain good health. Taking the time to go for a physical exam each year and keeping up with preventative health screenings/tests are important ways to care for the body in order to remain healthy (webmd.com).



Have you scheduled your annual physical? If not, take the time to do so. **KP**

Parish nurse can be reached via email kimp51@comcast.net or mobile 203-980-0931. Health counseling available by appointment.

FR. MURASSO'S MESSAGE BOARD

A LOOK AHEAD

Lent



The season of Lent begins with **ASH WEDNESDAY** on **February 14**.



St. Bernadette Church

7:00am to 7:45am ashes only

8:00am Mass with ashes

12:00 noon to 1:00pm ashes only

4:30pm to 6:00pm ashes only

St. Vincent de Paul Church

7:00am to 9:00am ashes only

12:15 noon Mass with ashes

3:00pm to 5:30pm ashes only

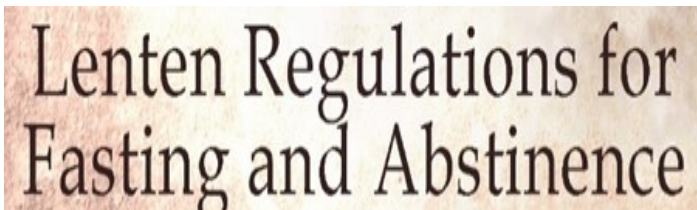
Our Lady of Pompeii Church

7:00am to 7:45am ashes only

8:00am Mass with ashes

8:30am to 5:30pm ashes only

6:00pm Mass with ashes



Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence from meat.

The norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 to 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding from age 14 upwards.



Friday Lenten Simple Suppers ARE BACK!

Come join us for Friday Suppers in the SVDP Church Hall. Homemade Soups & Bread will be served each Friday during Lent, **BEGINNING FRIDAY, FEB. 16** followed by the Stations of the Cross @ 7:00pm.

•**Location:** St. Vincent de Paul Church Hall

•**Time:** 5:00pm to 6:30pm

•**Cost:** Free

•**When:** Fridays during Lent, except Good Friday
Parishioners who would like to make their special soup for a Friday during Lent should contact Marie Connors at 203-468-1184.



PLAN ON ATTENDING AND BRING FAMILY & FRIENDS. ALL ARE INVITED!

www.Lightforyou.today

CONFESSIONS DURING LENT

MONDAYS 6 - 7 PM

Every Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Hartford

St. Vincent de Paul Church

Monday evenings throughout the season of Lent, from 6:00pm to 7:00pm. A **Holy Hour** will begin with the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 5:00pm

Stations of the Cross

Saint Vincent de Paul Church



7:00pm during the Fridays in Lent

Friday, March 22, LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS @ 7:00 pm.

Good Friday, March 29, STATIONS THROUGH THE EYES OF MARY @ 7:00 pm.

Stations of the Cross

Our Lady of Pompeii Church
1:00pm during the Fridays in Lent
(NO STATIONS ON GOOD FRIDAY)

Simple Soup
Or
Simple Bread Recipes Wanted



Do you have a simple soup or simple bread recipe that you would like to contribute to the bulletin? As in the past, we will include a simple soup recipe in the weekly bulletin throughout Lent. This Lent, we will also include simple homemade bread recipes. If interested, please email your recipe to Fr. Murasso: jeremiah.murasso@aol.com.

If your recipe is associated with a particular tradition in your family. Share this with us as well.

When submitting your recipe, please include the following:

1. Your Name
2. Write your recipe including
 - Ingredients
 - Quantity of ingredients
 - Cooking Time
 - Oven temperature if appropriate

Something to Ponder



Become Amazed

In last weekend's Gospel account from Saint Mark (1:21-28), Mark tells us that as Jesus entered the synagogue and began proclaiming the *Word* of God, the people were "amazed" at what they heard.

When was the last time the reading or the hearing of God's *Word* left you "amazed?" Could it be that the world and your lifestyle as well as your life-choices are controlling you; thus, preventing you from regaining control of your life long enough for you to block-out distractions?

Something to ponder: Why not use the *Season of Lent* to become "amazed" at the *Word* of God as well as all the blessings that God has and continues to bestow onto you and perhaps, your family? JNM

Save the Date

Saturday, April 13, 2024
9:30am - 3:00pm

Lunch Included
\$15.00

FINDING GOD'S MERCY RETREAT

**Guest Speaker for Our Mercy
Retreat is:
Sr. Lany Jo Smith.**

Ladies
Guild

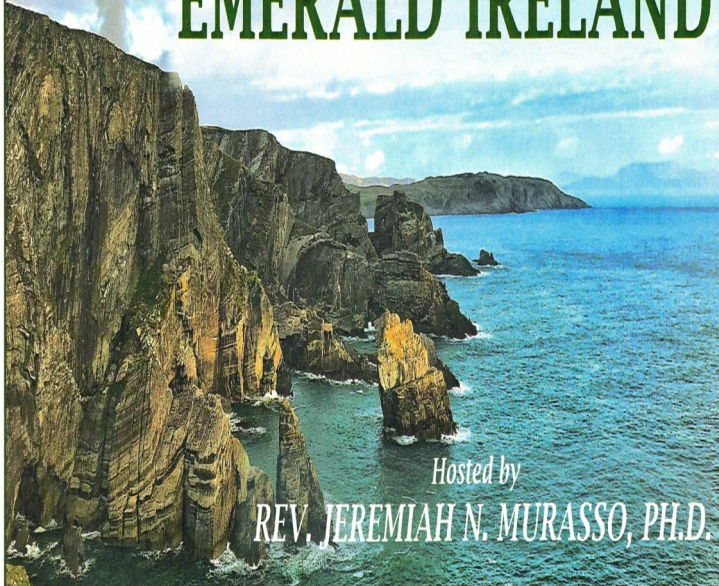
St. Pio of Pietrelcina Ladies' Guild
General Meeting

Please join us for our next meeting on Monday,
February 12 at 7:00pm at St. Vincent de Paul Church.

ACTS

SAVE THE DATE
St Pio of Pietrelcina Men's ACTS Retreat
April 18-24, 2024
Our Lady of Calvary Retreat Center,
Farmington, CT
More details to follow

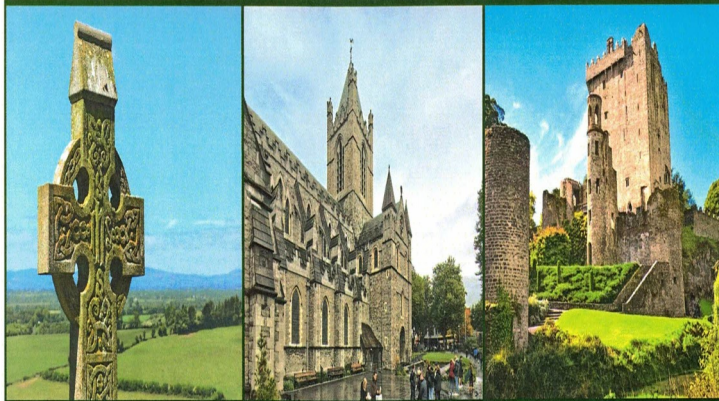
PILGRIMAGE TO EMERALD IRELAND



Hosted by
REV. JEREMIAH N. MURASSO, PH.D.

11 DAYS: AUGUST 12 - 22, 2024

WATERFORD * KILLARNEY * CLIFFS OF MOHER
GALWAY * CONNEMARA * KNOCK * SLIGO * DUBLIN



\$4199 FROM NEW YORK*

(*Air/land tour price is \$3699 plus \$500 gov't taxes/airline surcharges)

FOR A BROCHURE WITH COMPLETE DETAILS, PLEASE CONTACT OR DETACH & MAIL TO:

Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, Ph.D.
St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish
355 Foxon Road
East Haven, CT 06513
Tel: (860) 977-7675
Email: jeremiah.murasso@aol.com

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____
PHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____

NAWAS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, INC.

BEST OF ITALY & SICILY PILGRIMAGE

CEPALÚ
AGRIGENTO
PIAZZA ARMERINA
SIRACUSA
MT. ETNA
TAORMINA
PAESTUM
AMALFI COASTLINE
SORRENTO
POMPEII
SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO
ROME



HOSTED BY

FR. JEREMIAH N. MURASSO, PH.D.



\$4359 FROM NEW YORK

(Air/land tour price is \$3779 plus \$580 gov't taxes/airline surcharges)

13 DAYS: NOVEMBER 3 - 15, 2024

FOR A DETAILED COLOR BROCHURE, PLEASE CONTACT OR DETACH & MAIL TO:

Reverend Jeremiah N. Murasso, Ph.D.
St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish
355 Foxon Road
East Haven, CT 06513
Tel: (860) 977-7675
Email: jeremiah.murasso@aol.com

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____
PHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____

NAWAS INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, INC.

FROM THE PASTOR



Dear Parish Family:

In this week's bulletin, please find a yellow CENSUS UPDATE FORM. I am asking that you complete this form as quickly as possible so that we can validate your status as a registered and practicing parishioner of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina.

That which is most important about this form is your contact information. In a world of technological advancements, we want to contact you from time to time either by a parish blast via a text message or at other times with an email. This is why it is so important that you update your personal/family information.

With the merging of parishes in both 2017 and then again in 2020, along with the effects of COVID, it is time to update the parish census in order to get a more accurate indication with regard to the number of registered and practicing families that make up Saint Pio of Pietrelcina.

Upon completion of this CENSUS UPDATE, please return it to the parish office either:

- Through the mail
- Placing it into the collection basket
- Via email
- You may also submit through our website.

Once again, I thank you for updating your personal/family information. I also express to you my appreciation for your presence and support over the years. Blessings!
Fr. Jeremiah N Murasso, Pastor

Knights of Columbus Rodrigo Council #44 UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Lenten Clothing Drive

St. Joseph's Day Zeppole Sales

Palm Sunday & Easter Bread & Pastry Sales

All bread and pastry orders will be available for pick up at St. Vincent de Paul church basement for all 3 campuses.

Further information and order forms to follow.



The St Bernadette Food Pantry has been selected as a beneficiary of the Stop & Shop Bloomin' 4 Good Program for the month of February. Every \$10.99 bouquet in the sleeve marked "Bloomin' 4 Good at the East Haven store, the pantry will receive a \$1.00 donation. If you're going to purchase flowers this month, please consider purchasing this bouquet and support our pantry.

NOTICE INCLEMENT WEATHER

The winter months have arrived! This means that due to inclement weather Masses may have to be cancelled and Mass intentions rescheduled.

RULE OF THUMB: When the **East Haven Schools** are in session, if **East Haven Schools** are delayed or cancelled for the day, Masses at Saint Pio will be cancelled.

On weekends or during school vacation, please look to **Channel 8 News**. Look to the bottom of your screen under "**closings**" and look for **St. Pio of Pietrelcina**.



SHOPPING CARDS *STILL* NEEDED

With the food prices continue to rise, several of our parishioners are having trouble buying food as they struggle to purchase other household necessities and pay for rent and utilities.

Grocery Shopping cards in any denomination to any of the local supermarkets would help me help members of our parish family, who are need of assistance for the purchase of food. These gift/shopping cards can be dropped into the collection basket or brought to the parish office. Whatever you can do, is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance. JNM



GATSBY GALA NIGHT

you are cordially invited to...

East Shoreline Catholic Academy's Annual Auction

MARCH **22** 6PM - 10PM

The Woodwinds
29 School Ground Rd. Branford, CT 06405



\$110 per ticket
\$100 per ticket if purchased by 2/29/24
DRESS TO IMPRESS IN "ROARING 1920S" ATTIRE

PLEASE CONTACT HBONESSE@GMAIL.COM
FOR SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION



Ticket Pricing: \$100/ticket until 2/29/24 | \$110/ticket after

Number of Tickets: _____ Total Cost: _____

Name of Attendees:

- 1.) _____
- 2.) _____
- 3.) _____
- 4.) _____
- 5.) _____

If purchasing more than 5 tickets, add additional names here:

If an ESCA family, child(s) grade(s): _____

If child is in a double class, please add the color (ex. Pre-K 4 Green)

Form of Payment: _____ Cash _____ Check

Checks can be made out to East Shoreline Catholic Academy



MASS SCHEDULE

February 3 & 4, 2024

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Borino
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Murasso
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Murasso
9:00am SB: Fr. Borino
10:00am OLOP: Murasso
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso

February 10 & 11, 2024

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Patrick
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Borino
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick
9:00am SB: Fr. Murasso
10:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso

February 17 & 18, 2024

1st Sunday of Lent

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Murasso
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Borino
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick
9:00am SB: Fr. Murasso
10:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso

February 24 & 25, 2024

2nd Sunday of Lent

4:00pm OLOP: Fr. Murasso
4:30pm SVDP: Fr. Patrick
8:00am OLOP: Fr. Borino
9:00am SB: Fr. Murasso
10:00am OLOP: Fr. Patrick
11:15am SVDP: Fr. Murasso

DEACONS PREACHING SCHEDULE

4:00 & 11:15: Deacon George
8:00 & 10:00: Deacon Wayne
4:30 & 9:00: Deacon Larry