

“I know well that the greater and more beautiful the work is, the more terrible will be the storms that rage against it.”
—St. Faustina

UNDERSTANDING OUR FAITH: The Liturgical Year and the Scrutinies

You may have noticed (or not) that the front of the bulletin has had *B* above the readings since Advent 2023. Last week, this week, and next week, however, the bulletin has *A* instead.

Why? The liturgical calendar—Advent (December) through the end of Ordinary time (November)—has a rotating three-year lectionary cycle (A, B, or C). Each year in the rotation has its own set of readings (A, B, or C). The Second Vatican Council ordered a change in the Sunday readings at Mass so Catholics would become more familiar with the Bible. Thus, we now have a three-year cycle of readings built around readings from the three synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The Gospel of John appears in all three cycles at various times in the Church year, particularly during Lent. This year, 2024, we are in cycle B. So why do we have three weeks of cycle A readings this Lent?

They are called the scrutinies, and the Church uses them to help prepare the Elect—children of age and RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) adults—who will be baptized at Easter. The three gospel stories in

cycle A—the woman at the well, the healing of the blind man, and (spoiler alert!) the raising of Lazarus—all correspond to the prayers of three special rites known as Purification and Enlightenment, near the end of the Elect’s formation.

SEEING CLEARLY

Though the word “scrutinize” sounds negative, even intimidating, its true meaning is simply “to see clearly or inspect closely.” The scrutinies are about seeing sin in its right aspect, and understanding how we fall victim to it. They are also about the transformative healing possible for us through Christ, as He offers Himself to us.

Once we see sin for what it really is and have a better understanding our own personal weaknesses, we can begin to exercise the freedom and liberation we have received through Jesus. With God’s grace, we can turn away from the darkness of sin, reject disordered patterns, and step into the light. This is possible for us because we believe in the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, and we entrust ourselves to Him.

The Elect need to understand and experience these foundational teachings. During the three-weeks of the scrutinies, the Elect open the eyes of their souls, examine carefully how sin works in their lives, and make the deliberate choice to turn away from sin to step joyfully into the light of Christ at their Baptisms.

Sources: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-worship/liturgical-year/>
<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/liturgical-cycles/>
<https://www.catholiccompany.com/magazine/the-scrutinies-what-they-are-and-why-they-are-important/>.

WELCOME TO OUR PARISH

We are blessed to have you worship with us as we nurture each other in faith. While visiting our community, we humbly ask you to consider investing in our parish offertory and Diocesan Appeal to help ensure our parish and Diocese can be one of your partners in faith. Thank you!

DIOCESAN APPEAL

As you plan your budget, consider a pledge. Use your bank’s Bill Pay feature to set up automatic payments or use envelopes on the back table.

<https://thediocesanappeal.org/>
CURRENT STATUS: \$2,969 / GOAL: \$5,000





Holy Cross Parish

MARCH 10, 2024
4th Sunday of Lent, A
1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13
Psalm 23
Ephesians 2:4-14
John 9:1-41

SEEING AS GOD SEES

The first reading emphasizes the idea that God sees beyond outward appearances and judges people based on their hearts and faithfulness to Him. This is reflected where God tells Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

The idea of God seeing beyond outward appearances is similar to the concept of spiritual sight or perception, which involves seeing things from God’s perspective rather than relying only on our physical senses. In this sense, the passage encourages us to cultivate spiritual sight, which involves discerning God’s will and seeing beyond surface-level appearances to recognize the true nature of things. It also encourages us to trust in God’s selection and choosing even when it may not align with our expectations or perceptions.

The themes in the second reading also relate to sight in a metaphorical sense, as the passage emphasizes the contrast between light and darkness. The passage encourages us to live as children of the light, which involves walking in goodness, righteousness, and truth, rather than in the darkness of sin and ignorance. The use of light and darkness as metaphors suggests the idea of spiritual sight or perception, as seeing things from God’s perspective rather than being blinded by our own desires or selfishness.

The passage also highlights the transformative power of Christ, who enables us to live as children of the light by bringing us out of darkness and into his marvelous light. This suggests the idea of spiritual awakening or illumination as we are enabled to see and understand things in a new way through our relationship with Christ.

Last Sunday we heard about the woman at the well. Today, we hear about the man born blind. Hearing these gospels one after another brings to light parallels, but also significant differences. Both were outcasts in their society and both encounters involve a transformation. Jesus brings about a significant change in the person’s life. For the woman at the well, she becomes a believer and a witness to her community, while the man born blind receives physical healing and spiritual insight.

Both reveal Jesus’ true identity: In both encounters, Jesus reveals more about his true identity as the Messiah. To the woman at the well, he declares himself as the “living water” that can quench all thirst, while to the man born blind, he reveals himself as the Son of Man, a title that points to his divinity.

The response of the community is very different though. After the woman at the well encounters Jesus, she goes and tells her community about him, and many come to believe in him. In contrast, after the man born blind is healed, the religious leaders question him and his parents about the healing, and ultimately reject Jesus and his message.

For Reflection

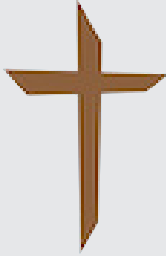
- ★ Am I quick to judge based on outward appearances, or do I seek to see people as God sees them?
- ★ What changes do I need to make in my own life to walk more fully in the light?

Holy Cross Parish

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MISSION

To care for the poor, abandoned, and the marginalized.



SCHEDULE

Mass: Sunday, 8:30 a.m.

Liturgy of the Word: Tuesday, 10 a.m.

PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM

Parish Leader

Matthew Tabone (360) 559-4098

Trustees

Michael Stensland (607) 783-2764

Richard Meyers (607) 263-5588

Parish Pastoral Council Chair

Kerry L. Mess (607) 386-1951

Parish Pastoral Council Members

Dana Mochovciak, Jenna Turner, Carol Tyson, Marguerite Webster

Liturgical Ministry

Marguerite Webster (607) 263-5478

Faith Formation

Daphne Thompson (607) 263-2410

Ministry to the Homebound

Matthew Tabone (360) 559-4098

Jenn Spivey (207) 539-5094

MARCH 10, 2024

Celebrant

Rev. Chris Welch

Deacon: Paul Cerosaletti

Lector: Becky Barringer

Mass Intention

For Pope Francis on the anniversary of his election as Pope and for his health

If you would like to request an intention for a mass, simply call the office to schedule: (607) 263-5143.

Pray for

- ✕ the deceased members of our parish and their families and friends
- ✕ the sick, their caregivers, and all who have asked for our prayers, especially Sr. Theresa Ahern MSBT, Amy O'Brien, John O'Brien, Jo Franklin, Aggi Huff, Louisa Joy, Lynn Joy, Maureen Joy, Rebecca Joy, Michelle Lee, Teresa Meyers, Clara Murphy, Diane Neczesny, Maria Papendrea and sister Camella, Karina Tabone and (welcome to) new baby Thomas Tabone, Joe and Carol Tyson, Lorraine Tyson, Fr. Chris Welch, John Zaleski
- ✕ all the men and women of our parish family serving in the military and all first responders and emergency personnel: Ryan Barry, Jim Barry, Meghan Barringer

SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2024

Mass Attendance: 48

Collection: \$1090.00

Pope Francis's March intention: For the new martyrs, may those who risk their lives for the Gospel inflame the Church with their courage.

Engage in Lenten Community

Join us for a community fish dinner this Friday, March 15, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Free will donations support local charities.



Dominican Retreat & Conference Center
LENTEN SCRIPTURE STUDY: Women Prophets of the Bible (via zoom), Tuesdays in March, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.; \$20/session, \$75 for all 4. Call (518) 393-4169 or email dslcny@nybiz.rr.com.

Diocese of Albany

To help you walk with our Lord this Lent, the diocese has compiled resources, articles, and ideas to delve deep into the season. Visit: www.RCDA.org/Lent/Resources

Talks from the NYS Eucharistic Congress
You can find the talks and homilies from the Eucharistic Congress in Auriesville in October at <https://www.rcda.org/nysec2023>. You can also find the page by clicking the Prayer and Worship tab under Offices & Ministries at <https://www.rcda.org/>

AARP FREE SENIOR TAX PREP: Volunteers will be at Elm Park Church (401 Chestnut St. Oneonta) through April to assist eligible residents with tax returns. For an appointment, call (607) 376-5542.

Upcoming Events

03/10: SPECIAL COLLECTION – Catholic Relief Services Annual Appeal
Coffee hour after mass

03/12: Liturgy of the Word, 10 a.m.

03/13: Lenten Penance Services, 12:10 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., St. Mary's Oneonta

03/15: Lenten Community Fish Dinner

03/17: Rosary after mass

03/18: Confessions, 6–7 p.m.

03/19: Liturgy of the Word, 10 a.m.

03/18: Synod Listening Session, 6:30–8:30 p.m. (virtual, register: rcda.org/synod)

03/22: Stations of the Cross, 4:30 p.m.

03/26: Liturgy of the Word, 10 a.m.

03/29: SPECIAL COLLECTION – Holy Land

Easter Triduum Mass Schedule St. Mary's Oneonta

Holy Thursday: 6:30 p.m. Mass of the Lord's Supper
10 p.m. Night Prayer

Good Friday: 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
1–4 p.m. Confessions
5:00 p.m. Service of the Passion

Holy Saturday: 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
8:00 p.m. Great Vigil in the Holy Night

Easter Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Mass
10:30 a.m. Mass