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**CHRIST'S SAVING GRACE**

If God was looking for a chance to condemn the world it is not for want of opportunities that he has not already done so. Beginning with the rebellion of Adam and Eve, continuing throughout the history of Israel's rebellion, and proceeding all the way through to our own, God has had ample opportunity to pull the plug on his disobedient creation. But he hasn't. So, rather than needing an excuse to destroy us, the real enigma is, what excuse does he have for saving us?

Often because we are conscious of our guilt we feel like we deserve God's wrath, not his love. Frequently, when terrible things happen to us, we subconsciously believe that it is God's punishment that is finally being meted out - which isn't true. Often, we also try to offset this sense of condemnation by doing things to warrant God's love - which we can't. God's feelings toward each of us are captured quite effectively by three phrases in this week's Scriptures; The great love with which he loved us, - the immeasurable riches of his grace and kindness toward us - God so loved the world. These and many more expressions of God's feelings toward us were all present and made before we did anything to merit them. That is what makes the Good News, Good News. God freely bestows his love on us who least deserve it.

The whole issue of what we can do to warrant his love and earn his salvation can be illustrated by the following imaginary conversation encountered when a person died and desired to enter heaven. Of course, St. Peter meets this person at the Pearly Gates. St. Peter says, Here's how it works. You need 100 points to make it into heaven. You tell me all the good things you've done, and I will give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in. Okay, the man says. I was married to the same woman for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart. That's wonderful, says St. Peter, that's worth three points. Three points? the man says. Well, I attended church all my life and supported its ministries with my tithe and service. Terrific! says St. Peter. That's certainly worth a point. One point? I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans. Fantastic, that's good for two more points, St. Peter says. Two points! the man cries. At this rate the only way I get into heaven is by the grace of God. Bingo, 100 points! Come on in!

Humorously, the story makes the point, however this statement by Pope John Paul II speaks with much more authority: "... we must first clearly affirm our faith in Christ, the one Savior of humanity, a faith we have received as a gift from on high, not as a result of any merit of our own. ... They should be ever mindful that they owe their distinguished status not to their own merits but to Christ's special grace..." Bingo! Could it be said more clearly?

Condemnation is the other side of the same coin. If salvation from condemnation is a gift freely given us in Jesus Christ, then condemnation becomes something of our own choosing when we refuse to accept the gift. God is a perfect gentleman; he will not force salvation on us. John's Gospel says, He who does not believe is condemned already. The presupposition behind this statement is that when a person has heard the story of Jesus' saving mission, and then makes a choice to either disbelieve the story or believing the story to not entrust their life to him, they expedite their own condemnation. God desires condemnation for no one, which is why he paid such a costly price to deliver us. "He who believes is not condemned." Hallelujah, what good news!!

Emmaus Journey Reflections

Bishop of the Diocese  
Most Reverend Gerard P. Bergie, D.D.  
Pastor  
Rev. Father Christopher Gerard Gillen P.P.  
Diocesan Social Justice Rep

Sunday Masses  
Saturday 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Weekday Masses  
Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri @ 9:00 a.m.  
Wed @ 6:30 pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament  
First Sunday of the Month

Reconciliation/Confessions  
Sat 4:00 - 4:30 p.m. or on request  
Baptism  
Catechesis and appointment necessary  
Marriage  
Contact the parish office  
Sacrament of the Sick  
Please call the office.

Secretary  
Sandy Johnson  
Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Bookkeeper  
Tracy Piggott

St Martin School  
Phone 905-957-3032  
Cemetery  
Ron Roscovich at 905-386-0648

Parish Organizations  
Catholic Women's League  
Knights of Columbus.  
Parish Groups  
Scripture Study  
West Lincoln Loaf of Bread  
Parish Events Group.  
Childrens' Liturgy

Diocesan Website: www.saintcd.com

**Ministry Schedule - Mar 17/18**

**Hospitality Ministers**  
5:00 pm - Dosseh & Claudette S.  
9:00 am - Alfons & Bea Blokhuis  
11:00 am - Justin & Deanne Long

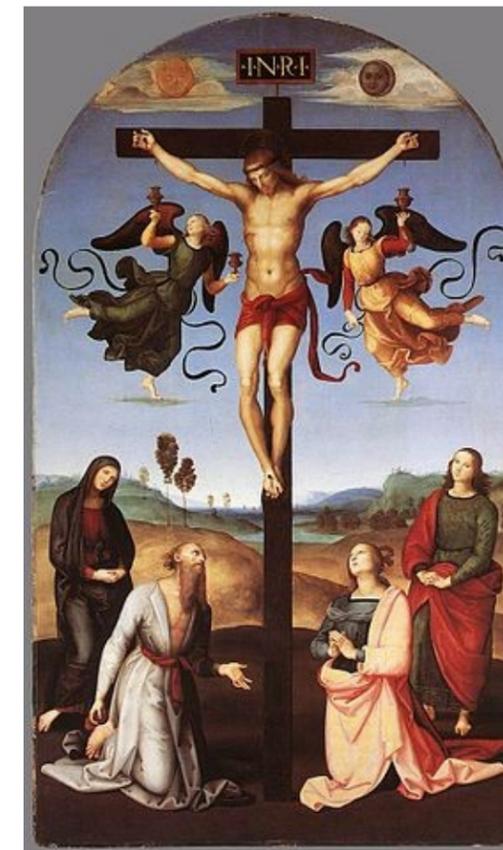
**Altar Servers**  
5:00 pm - Needed  
9:00 am - Needed  
11:00 am - Needed

**Children's Liturgy**  
Deanne Long

**Next Hospitality Sunday**  
May 6

Diocese of St. Catharines

**St. Martin of Tours Roman Catholic Church**



166 West Street, P.O. Box 74  
Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0  
Telephone: 289-956-0221  
Email: st.martins@cogeco.ca  
www.stmartinsparish.com

**Mar 11, 2018**

**The 4th Sunday of Lent**

**Lectors**

5:00 pm #1 - Mitch Pogoda  
#2 - Kelly Staples  
9:00 am #1 - Andrew Steger  
#2 - Caroline Steger  
11:00 am #1 - Sue Armstrong  
#2 - Gemma Bose

**Extra-ordinary Ministers**

5:00 pm - Doug, Maeve & Tom  
9:00 am - Bea, Marcel & Dick  
11:00 am - Vern, Helen & Andy

**Stewardship Counting**

Halina G. & Mary Ann P.

# March 11, 2018

## The 4th Sunday of Lent - Year B



*Lord, may the request of your people rise before you like a fragrant offering*

Monday	Mar 12	9:00 am	+For the repose of the soul of Jose Martins	by Maria Martins & family
Tuesday	Mar 13	9:00 am	+For the repose of the soul of Joe Mulder	by John & Riky Mulder
Wednesday	Mar 14	6:30 pm	+For the repose of all the souls in purgatory	by the Newman family
Thursday	Mar 15	9:00 am	+For the repose of the soul of Lou Zych	by Joan Pikula and family
		9:30 - 11:30am	<b>Parish Scripture Study in preparation for Sunday Liturgy. Come, join us.</b>	
Friday	Mar 16	9:00 am	For the intentions of Marg and Dick Van Geest and family	by Marg & Dick Van Geest
		6:00 pm	Stations of the Cross	
Saturday	Mar 17	<b>The 5th Sunday of Lent</b>		
		10:00am - 2pm	Diocesan Wide Penance and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament	
		5:00 pm	+For the repose of the soul of Lenard Lombardo	by Maria & Winston Mallia
Sunday	Mar 18	9:00 am	For the special intentions of St. Martin's Parish family	
		11:00 am	For God's blessings upon Heather Belmont on her birthday	by Anita & Bernie Duggan

### ST. MARTIN'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Lenten School Confessions each Wednesday in Lent beginning at 9:30am. No confessions Wednesday, March 14 - March Break!

### LENTEN FOOD DRIVE

The brown bag you kindly accepted can be returned on or before Holy Thursday! They will be picked up and taken to West Lincoln Community Care to help stock the shelves for Easter. If you have already received a bag through your child at St. Martin's school, please don't take another! We Thank You for your continued generosity!

### LENTEN SEASON, 2018

**The Stations of the Cross are held every Friday of Lent, but not during Easter Triduum. School Stations 2:45pm and Parish 6:00pm.**

### WEST LINCOLN LOAF OF BREAD

Our parish is "host" for the month of March.

We thank you the Parishioners for supporting this social justice outreach to the Community of Smithville. We acknowledge and thank our wonderful bunch of volunteers who serve a full hot meal every Thursday from 5:30pm to 7:00pm in the parish hall.

### LOOKING AHEAD TO HOLY WEEK/ EASTER

Sat March 24:	Passion Vigil Mass 5:00pm Reconciliation 4:00pm - 4:30pm
Sun March 25:	Passion Sunday Reconciliation after 9:00am & 11:00am Masses
Mon March 26:	9:00am morning Mass Evening Holy Hour 6:30pm - 7:30pm Reconciliation at this time. Benediction at 7:30pm
Tues March 27:	Morning Mass 9:00am Chrism Mass Cathedral 7:30pm
Wed March 28:	Parish Holy Hour 5:30pm Sacrament of Reconciliation 5:30pm - 6:15pm Mass at 6:30pm

### SACRED PASCHAL TRIDUUM

Thursday March 29:	Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30pm (12 Volunteers needed for Washing of Feet) Prayer at Adoration Chapel until 10:00pm
Good Friday March 30:	Commemoration of the Lord's Passion 3:00pm
Saturday March 31:	Easter Vigil 8:00pm
Easter Sunday April 1:	9:00am & 11:00am Masses.

### PARISH DISCERNMENT

Bishop Bergie has invited the Halimand Deanery, Group V, to begin the Parish Discernment Process Saturday **April 14, 2018**, at the Gethsemane Centre, 84008 Wellandport Road from **9:30am to 12 noon**. Sr. Margaret Kane, CSJ, will be the facilitator.

The Parish Team has now been discerned and confirmed. We thank those individuals willing to accept this wonderful opportunity as we move the parish forward and into the "New Evangelization"...

The team for St. Martin of Tours is:

**Father Christopher G. Gillen. Doug and Maeve Devlin. Josie and Vern Dell. Elaine Parry. Lisa Poort. Heather Tomascini. Andrew and Caroline Steger.**

### DIOCESAN PENANCE DAY

On Saturday, March 17, 2018 in every parish church across the diocese a priest will be available from 10am - 2pm to hear individual confessions. There will also be Eucharistic Adoration during this time. No matter how long it has been, you are welcome to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, which assists us in spiritual discipline as we turn away from sin and open our hearts to reconciliation and healing; or you can also simply come to pray before the Lord.

### DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE

#### SOLIDARITY SUNDAY

March 18, is Solidarity Sunday. Our annual Share Lent Collection will take place at all the weekend Masses. This Special Collection will remain OPEN until the Second Sunday of Easter. Thank you for supporting the good works of Development and Peace.

### 40 DAYS FOR LIFE

Be part of this peaceful campaign by prayer and fasting during Lent, February 14 - March 25. We ask each church to adopt ONE DAY from 8 am - 8 pm, with two or more people to give public witness for one or two hours standing on Portage Street at the Niagara Falls General Hospital, holding a sign "Pray to end Abortion - 40 Days for Life." To sign up: [www.wpcprolife.com](http://www.wpcprolife.com), and follow the link. You may sign up at your church or contact: Angela: [angelabraun@live.com](mailto:angelabraun@live.com) or Annette: [loeffenlife@gmail.com](mailto:loeffenlife@gmail.com) or phone 905-931-0363

### ST. MARTIN'S WEBSITE

Don't forget to visit our website. You can find the bulletin, the Ministry Schedule and upcoming events there. It is updated every Thursday.

### PARISH STEWARDSHIP MARCH 3/4, 2018

**Sunday Offering (77 Env) \$2,527.00**

**Loose \$192.30**

**Facility Maintenance (48 Env) \$613.00**

**Loose \$125.50**

**Hall Rental (Madzo Funeral): \$150.00**

**Bulletin Ads: \$450.00**

**Parish Debit \$31,377.88**

**Thank you for your tithe/stewardship.  
God Bless.**

### RETRouvaille

**Retrouvaille: A Lifeline for Marriages** - So many couples struggle alone and confused with their difficulties. Retrouvaille has helped countless marriages and the chance to rediscover themselves, their spouse and restore a loving relationship in their marriage. For confidential information about or to register for the program beginning with a weekend on **March 16, 2018** at the Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre in Niagara Falls, please call **905-664-5212** or email: [hamilton-retrouvaille1@cogeco.ca](mailto:hamilton-retrouvaille1@cogeco.ca) or visit the web site at [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org).

### SUNDAY (WEEKEND) MINISTRIES

We kindly remind you to please find a replacement if you cannot server your scheduled ministry. We also require all ministers and altar servers to arrive 15mins prior to Mass. We must begin Mass at the proper scheduled time. Thank you.

### 2018 BISHOP'S GALA

The Niagara foundation for Catholic Education is hosting the annual Bishop's Gala on April 20 at 5:30pm at Club Roma, 125 Vansickle Rd. St. Catharines. This event supports students in need throughout schools in the Niagara Catholic School Board. For information contact Sherry Morena at 905-735-0240 ext 213

### BEST WISHES THIS WEEK TO

#### Birthdays:

Naythan Pinto-Braccega/Kyle Messier - Mar 11  
Kelsey Nicholson - Mar 11  
Jacob Dell/Zoe Kristo - Mar 13  
Nicholas Shields/David Vieira - Mar 14  
Elizabeth Hutton - Mar 15  
Donna Kirchknopf - Mar 16  
Patricia Buchan/Isabel Prout - Mar 17  
Martin Ivanaj - Mar 17  
Heather Belmont - Mar 18