

Pope Francis' General Audience: On Giving of Our Riches to Share With the Poor

"If the jubilee doesn't reach pockets, it isn't a jubilee. Have you understood? And this is in the Bible! This Pope doesn't invent it: it's in the Bible"

Feb 10, Zenith.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning and a good Lenten journey!

It is good and also significant to have this Audience precisely on this Ash Wednesday. We begin our Lenten journey and today we pause on the ancient institution of the "jubilee"; it is an ancient thing, attested in Sacred Scripture. We find it in particular in the Book of Leviticus, which presents it as a culminating moment of the religious and social life of the people of Israel.

Every 50 years, "on the day of expiation" (*Leviticus* 25:9), when the Lord's mercy was invoked upon all the people, the sound of the horn proclaimed a great event of liberation. In fact we read in the Book of Leviticus: "And you shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family [...]. In this year of jubilee each of you shall return to his property" (25:10.13). According to these dispositions, if some one was constrained to sell his land or his house, during the jubilee he could repossess it; and if some one had contracted debts and, unable to pay them, was constrained to put himself at the service of the creditor, he could return free to his family and regain all his property.

It was a sort of "general amnesty," which permitted all to return to their original situation, with the cancellation of all debts, the restitution of land, and the possibility to enjoy freedom again as members of the People of God. A "holy" people, where prescriptions such as that of the jubilee served to combat poverty and inequality, guaranteeing a worthy life for all and a fair distribution of the land on which to dwell and from which to draw sustenance. The central idea is that the land belongs originally to God and has been entrusted to men (Cf. *Genesis* 1:28-29), therefore no one can arrogate to himself its exclusive possession, creating situations of inequality. We can think and rethink of this today; each one should think in his heart if he has too many things. But why not leave them to those who have nothing? Ten per cent, fifty per cent ... I say: may the Holy Spirit inspire each one of you.

With the jubilee, whoever had become poor had again what was necessary to live, and whoever had become rich restored to the poor man what he had taken from him. The aim was a society based in equality and solidarity, where liberty, land and money became a good for all and not only for some, as happens now. If I'm not mistaken ... more or less, the numbers aren't certain, but 80% of the riches of humanity are in the hands of less than 20% of the population. It is a jubilee – and I say this recalling the history of our salvation – to be converted, so that our heart becomes larger, more generous, more a child of God, with more love. I'll tell you something: if this desire, if the jubilee doesn't reach pockets, it isn't a jubilee. Have you understood? And this is in the Bible! This Pope doesn't invent it: it's in the Bible. The aim – as I said – was a society based on equality and solidarity, where liberty, land and money were to be a good for all, not for some. In fact, the jubilee had the function of helping the people to live a concrete fraternity, made up of mutual help. We can say that the biblical jubilee was a "jubilee of mercy," because it was lived in the sincere search for the good of the needy brother.

In the same line, other institutions and other laws also governed the life of the People of God, so that they could experience the Lord's mercy through that of men. For instance, the biblical law prescribed the giving of the "tithe" which was allocated to the Levites, in charge of worship, who were without land, and to the poor, the orphans, the widows (Cf. *Deuteronomy* 14:22-29). It provided, namely, that a tenth of what was harvested, or which stemmed from other activities, be given to those who were without protection and in a state of need, thus fostering conditions of relative equality within a people in which all should behave as brothers.

There was also the law concerning the "first fruits." What is this? The first part of the harvest, the most precious part, was to be shared with the Levites and with strangers (Cf. *Deuteronomy* 18:4-5; 26:1-11), who didn't have fields, so that for them also land would be the source of nutrition and life. "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with me," says the Lord (*Leviticus* 25:23-24). We are all guests of the Lord, in expectation of our heavenly homeland (Cf. *Hebrews* 11:13-16; 1 *Peter* 2:11), called to render the world, which receives us, habitable and human. And how many "first fruits" one who is fortunate could give one who is in difficulty! How many first fruits! First fruits not only of fields but of every product of labor, of wages, of savings, of so many things that are possessed and that sometimes are wasted. This also happens today. So many letters arrive at the Apostolic Charities with a bit of money: "This is part of my salary to help others." And this is beautiful; to help others, welfare institutions, hospitals, rest homes ...; to give also to foreigners, those who are strangers and are passing by. Jesus was passing by in Egypt.

And, in fact, thinking of this, Sacred Scripture exhorts with insistence to respond generously to the request for loans, without mean calculations and without taking impossible interest: "And if your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall maintain him; as a stranger and a sojourner he shall live with you. Take no interest from him or increase" (*Leviticus* 25:35-37). This teaching is always timely. How many families are on the street, victims of usury! Please, let us pray that during this Jubilee the Lord take from all our hearts the desire to have more — usury. That we return to be generous, great. How many situations of usury we are constrained to see and how much suffering and anguish they bring families! And so often, in despair, how many men end in suicide because they can't make ends meet and have no hope, they don't have the extended hand to help them; only the hand that comes to make them pay the interest. Usury is a grave sin; it is a sin that cries out to God. The Lord, instead, has promised His blessing to him who opens his hand to give with largesse (Cf. *Deuteronomy* 15:10). He will give you twofold, perhaps not in money but in other things, but the Lord will always give you twofold.

Dear brothers and sisters, the biblical message is very clear: to open oneself with courage to sharing, and this is mercy! And if we want mercy from God, we must begin to practice it. It is this: we begin to practice it between fellow citizens, between families, between peoples, between continents. Contribute to bring about a land without poor means to build a society without discriminations, based on solidarity that leads to sharing what one has, in a distribution of resources founded on brotherhood and justice. Thank you.

St. Gerard Catholic Church



640 Edrie St. NE
Aiken, SC 29801
803 649-3203

The First Sunday Of Lent February 14, 2016

Mission Statement
Called to be a People for Others

Vision Statement

*Anchored by faith hope and love in Jesus Christ,
we strive to be active disciples, serving each
other and all God's people by welcoming and
embracing the enriching diversity of our community of faith.*

Fr. Emmanuel Andinam: Administrator

SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:

Deuteronomy 26:4-10

Responsorial:

Psalms 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15

Second Reading:

Romans 10:8-13

Gospel:

Luke 4:1-13

Today's Missal

Lectionary Readings for the week of February 14, 2016

Monday: *Leviticus 19:1-2,11-18;*

Matthew 25:31-46

Tuesday: *Isaiah 55:10-11;*

Matthew 6:7-15

Wednesday: *Jonah 3:1-10;*

Luke 11:29-32

Thursday: *Esther C:12,14-16,23-25;*

Matthew 7:7-12

Friday: *Ezekiel 18:21-28;*

Matthew 5:20-26

Saturday: *Deuteronomy 26:16-19;*

Matthew 5:43-48

*Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the
Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the
desert, for forty days being put to the
test by the devil. During that time he ate
nothing and at the end he was hungry.
Then the devil said to him, 'If you are
Son of God, tell this stone to turn into a
loaf.' But Jesus replied, 'Scripture says:
Human beings live not on bread alone.'
Then leading him to a height, the devil
showed him in a moment of time all the
kingdoms of the world and said to him,
'I will give you all this power and their
splendor, for it has been handed over to
me, for me to give it to anyone I choose.
Do homage, then, to me, and it shall all
be yours.' But Jesus answered him,
'Scripture says: You must do homage to
the Lord your God, him alone you must
serve. Luke 4:1-8*



Mass Times: Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM, First Friday Benediction after Mass
Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:15 AM

Confessions: after weekday Masses and by Appointment

Office Hours: 9:00 AM till 3:00 PM Tuesday - Thursday

Bible Study: Fridays 10:00 AM (Insight to the scriptures)

Baptisms, Confirmations and Marriages: By Appointment, Contact the office.

Contact Us: Phone 803 649-3203, E-Mail stgerardscatholi@atlanticbbn.net

Facebook @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father 803 637-2027**



Pray for our sick:

Gary Gilbert
Marge Glouser
Leonard Saunders
Shirley Paige
William and Jackie Cobbs
Woody Alexander
Lena Mickens
Rosa Johnson
Brenda Ligon
Joe Fulmer
Patricia Bailey

Lent offers stewards the opportunity to rise from the daily deaths of sinfulness and indifference. We can use this season to open our hearts, to share, to listen, and to notice those in need around us. Support of our parish and the Bishop's Appeal are excellent ways to show your stewardship.



Pastoral Council:

Wayman Johnson, Chairman
Payson Borst
Jacqueline Brown
Fredrick Cadek
Nancy Durden
Marge Glauser
Janet Menefee
Gregory Wright
Joan Hesik

Finance Council:

Robert Erikson, Chairman
Leon Gagnon and Anna Marie Key, Auditors
Lisa Solenberger
Art Wagner

Mass Intentions

4:00 PM Mass is said for your own personnel intentions. 7:00 AM for the soul of Cherieann Herndon From: The Borsts, 11:15 AM for the soul of Tatay Adriano From: A Lauer

The Gathering Hymn is 288 H
Forty Days and Forty Nights
The Offertory Hymn is 783 H
Just A Closer Walk With Thee
The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 180 BB
Fly Like a Bird
Our Song of Praise is 284 H
The Glory of These 40 Days



Weekend Offering February 6-7 2016

Collection \$2,307.00
Needed \$2,612.00
Short \$305.00
Attendance 124

Stewardship a way of life

Lay Ministers

	Saturday February 20 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: Joan Hesik E E Ministers: Barbara Dixon	Sunday February 21 7:00 AM Mass Mary Kay L'Esperance Gerard L'Esperance	Sunday February 21 11:15 AM Mass Janet Menefee Jeanette Coleman	
	Saturday February 27 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: David Didimamoff E E Ministers: Mays Rose	Sunday February 28 7:00 AM Mass Denise Gelinis Roger Gelinis	Sunday February 28 11:15 AM Mass Patricia Hayes Marge Glauser	
Refreshments February 14 Shirley Paige/Anna Marie Key	February 21 Richardean Paige/Marilu Alarcon	Counters February 15 Mary Jo Erikson/Open		

36th Annual Cardinal Newman Lecture
Saturday, February 20th 9:30 AM-2:30 PM
Rock Hill Oratory
for more info call 803 327-2097
or e-mail oratorycenter@gmail.com

Soup Supper after stations during Lent.
Sign up sheet is in the hallway.

Stations of the Cross Wednesdays at 6:30 PM We will have lay leaders. (See Cathy Ciani)

The Legion of Mary meets Fridays at 1:30 PM here in the church hall.



Bible Study 10:00 AM Fridays



Second Collection for: Bishop Annual Appeal



ACTS is partnering with the Augusta/Aiken Warrior Project (AWP) to provide available assistance to local Warriors of all service branches, regardless of era of service or wounded status. Please ask any veterans (especially post-9/11 veterans) to contact ACTS at ph#803.642.5919

Frank Acosta and family would like to thank St. Gerard Parishioners for their prayers and Mass intentions for Shirley.

Starting this Sunday there will be a box in the rear of the church for donations for the three lady parishioners that are expecting this spring and summer. This is for a gift for each of them to be given the Sunday after Easter.

Volunteer Corner

Thanks to Cathy Ciani for doing the Stations of The Cross this Lent. Feel free to assist her.

Please pray for father's Prison ministry.

The first weekend of each month will be Feed The Valley Weekend. We had a wonderful response to our first collection.

Thank you and please continue the generous contributions.

Finance and Parish Councils meet on February 16th at 4:30 and 6:30 respectively.

Confirmation Classes at 9:30 AM Sundays see Jeanette Coleman

Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass.

Show your thanks for all your blessings by giving back. Sign up this holiday season to become an ACTS volunteer. ACTS is in desperate need of volunteers to serve in our Resale Store and Client Room assisting clients with their clothing vouchers. Shifts are available Monday thru Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Commit to as few or as many hours and/or days as fit your schedule.

It's not only rewarding but fun, as well!
Just e-mail usatvolunteer@actsofaiken.org, or call 803.649.3800 for more information.

South Carolina Catholic Men's Conference,

featuring Dr. Ray Guarendi (EWTN), Chad Judice (Author) with Fr. Dwight Longenecker and Fr. Matthew Gray is to be held at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Goose Creek, SC on Saturday, March 5, 2016. This one day event is open to all Catholic men wanting to grow their Catholic faith, deepen their relationship with Christ, and live up to their callings as Catholic men, husbands and fathers. For more info and registration: www.sccatholicmensconf.org or call Tom Monahan at 803 648-9925

Catholic Woman's Conference,

featuring Dr. Ray Guarendi (EWTN), Chad Judice (Author) Friday evening March 4th and Saturday March 5th (note: The same location and contact info as the men's conference)

16th ANNUAL MARRIAGE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

sponsored by the Diocese of Charleston- Office of Family Life Sunday, February 21, 2016 at 3:00 pm St. Mary Help of Christian Catholic Church 138 Fairfield St, Aiken SC 29801 The Marriage Anniversary Celebration is an opportunity to honor all married couples especially those in long-term marriages. The married couples will affirm their love and commitment to each other. Most Reverend Robert Guglielmone, Bishop of the Diocese of Charleston will be the main celebrant. The Mass will fulfill the Sunday obligation. (803) 547-5063 or email to FamilyLife@catholic-doc.org "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things." (I Cor 13:7) "Ensure that, like the wine in Cana, the external signs of your wedding feast reveal the presence of the Lord and remind you, and all those presence, of the origin of and reason for your joy". Pope Francis

Knights of Columbus Academic Scholarships

Each year the Aiken Knights of Columbus, Council #3684, awards scholarship assistance to eligible applicants. Scholarships are based solely on demonstrated ability and will be awarded based on: school grades, standardized test scores, quality of the. Essay submitted, letters of recommendation, and community or extracurricular involvement. With few exceptions, scholarship assistance will require a minimum grade average of B or 3.00 in high school and 1600 or higher SAT scores (or equivalent). All scholarship applications must be received by April 30, 2016. All scholarships awarded are renewable up on re-application; provided a recipient maintains a B or 3.00 grade average, and is a worthy campus citizen. Scholarship interviews may be an integral part of the evaluation. For more information or an application form, call Tom Meisner at (803) 649-4721 or Chuck Goergen at (803) 649-4097.

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: James Ligon, Robert McHugh, Jacob Hershey, and James Rossini. Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. I ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Hospital Visits: If you or a loved one is in Aiken Regional Hospital (ARMC) please let St Gerards know. Remember - ARMC does not inform us of Catholic patients, even if you register as a Catholic; it is up to the patient or family to do so. You can: ask the ARMC Chaplain to call the Catholic church, ask your nurse to inform the Catholic church (name & room number), call-St.Gerard at 649-3203 and leave a message or email St Gerard at: stgerardscatholi@Atlanticbbn.net.

Town Hall II: A Town Hall Meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2016 at 2:00 PM in the church hall. We will have 2 hours to discuss topics. The target subject is renovation of the entire campus. We will also have an open house for the newly remodeled rectory before and after the 4:00 PM mass.