

The Holy Father's Catechesis:
Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning!

Today we begin catecheses on mercy according to the biblical perspective, in order to learn mercy by listening to what God Himself teaches us with His Word. We begin from the Old Testament, which prepares and leads us to the full revelation of Jesus Christ who, in an accomplished way, reveals the Father's mercy.

The Lord is presented in Sacred Scriptures as "merciful God." And this is His name, through which He reveals to us, so to speak, His face and His heart. He Himself, as narrated in the Book of Exodus, on revealing Himself to Moses describes Himself thus: "The Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (34:6). We find this formula also in other texts, with some variation, but always the stress is put on mercy and on the love of God who never tires of forgiving (cf. <Gn> 4:2; <Gl 2:13; Psalm 86:15; 103:8; <Ne> 9:17). Let us look together, one by one, at these words of Sacred Scripture that speak to us of God.

The Lord is "merciful": this word evokes an attitude of tenderness as that of a mother in dealing with her child. In fact, the Hebrew term used by the Bible makes one think of the insides or even the maternal womb. Therefore, the image it suggests is that of a God that is moved and becomes tender for us as a mother when she takes her child in her arms, desirous only of loving, protecting, and helping, ready to give everything, even herself. This is the image that this term suggests. A love, therefore, that can be described as "visceral" in the good sense.

Written then is that the Lord is "gracious," in the sense that He gives grace, has compassion and, in His greatness, bends over one who is weak and poor, always ready to receive, to understand, to forgive. He is like the father of the parable reported in Luke's Gospel (cf. Luke 15:11-32): a father who does not shut himself in resentment because of the younger son's abandonment but, on the contrary, continues to wait for him -- he has generated him --. And then he runs to meet and embrace him, he does not even let him finish his confession -- as if he covered his mouth --, so great is his love and joy for having found him again. And then he also goes to call his older son, who is angry and does not want to celebrate, and yet the father bends over him and invites him to come in, he tries to open his heart to love, so that no one remains excluded from the celebration of mercy. Mercy is a celebration!

Said also of this merciful God is that He is "slow to anger," literally, "in the long term," that is wide-ranging in long suffering and the capacity to endure. God is able to wait, and His times are not the impatient ones of men. He is like the wise farmer that is able to wait, gives time to the good seed to grow, despite the darnel (cf. Matthew 13:24-30).

And, finally, the Lord proclaims Himself "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. How lovely is this description of God! Everything is here, because God is great and powerful, but His greatness and power are displayed in loving us, we who are so little, so incapable. The word "love" used here indicates affection, grace and goodness. It is not the love of soap operas ... It is love that takes the first step, which does not depend on human merits but is of immense gratuitousness. It is the divine solicitude that nothing can stop, not even sin, because it is able to go beyond sin, to overcome evil and forgive it.

A "faithfulness" without limits: here is the last word of God's revelation to Moses. God's faithfulness never fails. Because the Lord is the Guardian that, as the Psalm says, does not fall asleep but watches constantly over us to lead us to life:

"He will not let your foot be moved,

He who keeps you will not slumber,

Behold, he who keeps Israel

Will neither slumber nor sleep...

The Lord will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life.

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in

From this time forth and for

Evermore" (121:3-4.7-8).

And this merciful God is faithful in His mercy and Saint Paul says a lovely thing: if you are not faithful to Him, He will remain faithful because he cannot deny Himself. Faithfulness in mercy is proper to God's being. And therefore God is totally and always trustworthy -- a solid and stable presence. This is the certainty of our faith. And then, in this Jubilee of Mercy, we entrust ourselves totally to Him, and experience the joy of being loved by this "God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

St. Gerard Catholic Church



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

The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time January 17, 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:

Isaiah 62:1-5

Responsorial:

Psalms 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10

Second Reading:

First Corinthians 12:4-11

Gospel:

John 2:1-12

**Lectionary Readings for the
week of January 17, 2016**

Monday: 1 Samuel 15:16-23;

Mark 2:18-22

Tuesday: 1 Samuel 16:1-13;

Mark 2:23-28

Wednesday: 1 Samuel 17:32-33,37,40-51;

Mark 3:1-6

Thursday: 1 Samuel 18:6-9;19:1-7;

Mark 3:7-12

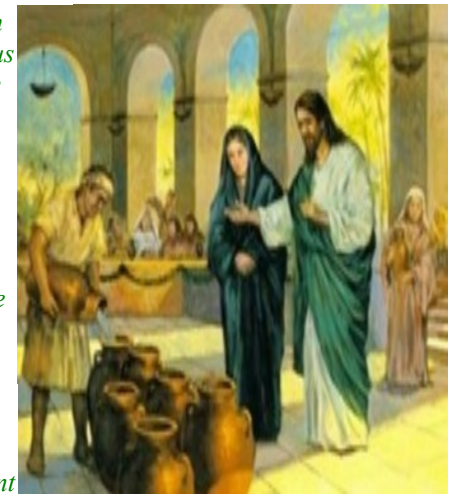
Friday: 1 Samuel 24:3-21;

Mark 3:13-19

Saturday: 2 Samuel 1:1-4,11-12,19,23-27;

Mark 3:20-21

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited. And they ran out of wine, since the wine provided for the feast had all been used, and the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' Jesus said, 'Woman, what do you want from me? My hour has not come yet.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' There were six stone water jars standing there, meant for the ablutions that are customary among the Jews: each could hold twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, 'Fill the jars with water,' and they filled them to the brim. Then he said to them, 'Draw some out now and take it to the president of the feast.' They did this; the president tasted the water, and it had turned into wine. Having no idea where it came from -- though the servants who had drawn the water knew -- the president of the feast called the bridegroom and said, 'Everyone serves good wine first and the worse wine when the guests are well wined; but you have kept the best wine till now.' This was the first of Jesus' signs: it was at Cana in Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him. After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, but they stayed there only a few days. John 2:1-12



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 Ligons
Joe Fulmer
Patricia Bailey

This month, on the first Sunday, we celebrate that Christ came to all of us, not just the Hebrews. He made us all one body with Him. We were all given different gifts; we all have different yet equally valuable roles to play in the Body of Christ. Ask God how He wants you to use your gifts so that we may all "be one" in this Year of Mercy and support St Gerard Parish.



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, 7:00 AM Masses are said for your own personnel intentions.
11:15 AM For The Soul of Shirley Acosta From: The Reichels

Weekend Offering

January 9-10 2016

Collection \$1,476.00
Needed \$2,612.00
Short \$1,136.00
Attendance 138

Stewardship a way of life

The Gathering Hymn 129 M
Praise to the Lord
The Offertory Hymn is 760 H
One Bread, One Body
The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 567 BB
Sing A New Song
Our Song of Praise is 127 M
Holy God, We Praise Thy Name



Lay Ministers

	Saturday January 23 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: Tami Schaeffer E E Ministers: Jerry Schaeffer	Sunday January 24 7:00 AM Mass Mary Kay L'Esperance Gerard L'Esperance	Sunday January 24 11:15 AM Mass Janet Menefee Marge Glauser	
	Saturday January 30 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: David Didimamoff E E Ministers: Mary Rose	Sunday January 31 7:00 AM Mass Denise Gelinas Roger Gelinas	Sunday January 31 11:15 AM Mass Patricia Hayes Wayman Johnson	
Refreshments January 24 Jackie Brown/ Jeanette Coleman	Counters January 24 Nancy Durden/ Open	Perpetual Novena in honor of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Tuesdays at the 8:15 Mass.		

The Legion of Mary meets Fridays at 1:00 PM here at the church. Please come and sit in and think about joining. We need to pray the Rosary.



Remember Dr. Martin Luther King on Monday



The next Finance Council meeting is 19 January at 5:30 PM, parish council meeting follows at 6:30 PM.

Renovation committee will meet on Monday the 18th

Building men of the Family of God

Third annual men's conference. March 12th at Immaculate Conception Church, Goose Creek, SC from 9:00 AM Till 4:00 PM

We still need one more person from each Mass to be responsible for the care of the church linens. This would mean that each person would have two months responsibility. We must have these items cleaned and available for Mass. Thank you

Beginning in January, the Rev. Franklin Graham, president of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, will hold one-day public events in each of our nation's 50 capitals. These are non-partisan, non-political events to bring Christians together and to pray for our nation. The goal is to encourage all believers to stand for Biblical morality and justice during these challenging times.

DATE: Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2016 TIME: noon to 1 p.m. WHERE: Capital Plaza (north side), Columbia
If you have any questions regarding this event, please contact Michael Acquilano, director of the South Carolina Catholic Conference, at 843-261-0535 or macquilano@catholic-doc.org.

Volunteer Corner

Thanks to Francisca Palacios for our Altar flowers and center pieces.

Light up someone's life, Donate Blood The Gift of Life.

The Knights of Columbus need you to Help save local lives!

Shepard Community Blood Center will conduct a Blood Drive At Saint Mary Help of Christian Church On Fairfield Street.
Saturday, January 30th from 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm and Sunday, January 31st from 7:45am -2:00 pm

Many things in this world can wait

But a transfusion of blood to a dying patient cannot. Donate Blood so that others may live.

Will you Choose 2 Give?

THE NEED IS CONSTANT. THE GRATIFICATION IS INSTANT.

GIVE BLOOD Thank You.

Donors should drink plenty of water prior to donating! You will need a picture ID, driver's license, or donor card to donate.

Each donor will receive a T-Shirt and a

Free Lipid Profile after your 3rd donation in a calendar year

If you know of someone that needs The Blessed Sacrament brought to their home or hospital please call the office.

"Many veterans are not aware of the services for which they are entitled or where to begin applying for those services. ACTS is partnering (on a sub grant basis)with the Augusta/Aiken Warrior Project (AWP) to 1) assist in identifying and gathering/maintaining demographic information on post 9/11 veterans, and 2) provide available assistance to local Warriors (veterans and service members) of all service branches, regardless of era of service or wounded status. ACTS remains autonomous throughout this process. ACTS needs your help in "spreading the word." Please ask any veterans (especially post-9/11 veterans) to contact ACTS at ph#803.642.5919 about filling in a Veteran's Information Sheet (VIS form)."

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

Shepherd Community Blood Center & Knights of Columbus

We would like to thank all of the parishioners who took time to donate at our blood drives in 2015.

Your generosity resulted in 322 participants, of which 281 donations were from the St. Mary's drives and 41 donations at Shepherd Community Blood Center. This helped in saving 966 lives at our local hospitals.

Let's try to make the 2016 numbers even higher!

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

No Smart Phone...

No Problem!

Call 1 (712) 832-2674

During our visits around the diocese, many have said, "I don't have a smartphone so I can't use the TuneIn app to listen to Catholic Radio." Well, there's a NEW way to listen to Catholic Radio in South Carolina and you can use a standard cell or landline to listen. Just dial 1 (712) 832-2674 (Powered by AudioNow.com), and your phone becomes a personal Catholic Radio listening device. There is no extra charge for this service but your normal call rates and limits do apply. BUT, as many plans have unlimited long distance or calling, you can essentially listen on your standard phone for free. Check your calling plan to be sure. Also, if you have friends and relatives who might enjoy listening to Catholic Radio on their standard phone, please pass the number on. Note: Smartphone users can still listen to our broadcast via TuneIn Radio - a FREE app for smart phones and app-based devices. After downloading the app, using the app's browse function, key in "wcki" and our logo will come up. Tap on our logo and the audio feed will play. Then you can save WCKI as a favorite station so that it is easier to access.

Our Lady of The Valley still needs food donations. All food collected here at St. Gerard is donated to OLV. Please continue to be generous. Thank You

The Salvation Army needs help at the shelter on Park Ave. They are losing older people that have been helping with serving lunch. We already have at least one parishioner helping. Please if you have the time to help call Rose at 641-4149 or call Mary Welsh at 648-2140. Feed God's children.

Bible Study Fridays at 10:00 AM
Read and understand the scriptures.

This weeks flowers provided by Leah Yanak in memory of Steven Yanak.