

POPE FRANCIS' GENERAL AUDIENCE: Christian Hope is also the "Expectation of the Resurrection"

Meditation on the theme: The helmet of hope of salvation

Rome, February 1, 2017. Zenit.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning! In the past catecheses we began our course on the theme of hope by rereading in this perspective some pages of the Old Testament. Now we want to put in light the extraordinary scope that this virtue assumes in the New Testament, when it meets the novelty represented by Jesus Christ and the paschal event: Christian hope. We, Christians, are women and men of hope.

It is what emerges clearly from the first text that was written, namely, the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians. Perceived in the passage we heard, is all the freshness and beauty of the first Christian proclamation. The Thessalonian community is a young community, recently founded, yet despite the difficulties and many trials, it is rooted in the faith and celebrates enthusiastically and joyfully the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus. So the Apostle heartily rejoices with all, in a much as those that are reborn at Easter truly become "sons of light and sons of the day" (5:5), in virtue of their full communion with Christ.

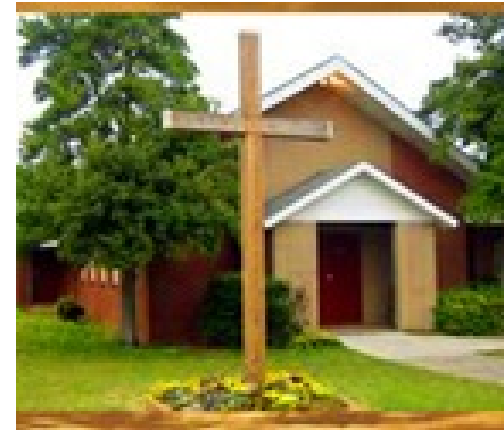
When Paul writes to them, the community of Thessalonica had just been founded, and only a few years separate it from Christ's Pasch. Therefore, the Apostle tries to make them understand all the effects and consequences that this unique and decisive event, namely, the Lord's Resurrection, implies for history and for the life of each one. In particular, the difficulty for the community was not so much to acknowledge Jesus' Resurrection, all believed in it, but to believe in the resurrection of the dead. Yes, Jesus is risen, but the difficulty was to believe that the dead will rise again. In this connection, this Letter is revealed all the more timely. Every time we find ourselves in face of our death, or that of a loved one, we feel our faith is put to the test. All our doubts arise, all our frailty, and we wonder: "But will there truly be life after death ...? Will I be able to see again and embrace again the persons I loved ...? A lady asked me this question a few days ago in an audience, manifesting a doubt: "Will I meet my own?" In the present context, we are also in need of returning to the root and foundation of our faith, so as to become aware of all that God has done for us in Christ Jesus and what our death means. We all are somewhat afraid of this uncertainty of death. I remember a little old man, and elderly good man, who said: "I'm not afraid of death. I'm a bit afraid to see it coming." He was afraid of this.

In face of the fears and perplexities of the community, Paul invites to have firmly on the head as a helmet, especially in trials and in the most difficult moments of our life, "the hope of salvation." It is a helmet. See what Christian hope is. When there is talk of hope, we can be led to understand it according to the ordinary meaning of the term, namely, in reference to something good that we desire, but which can or cannot be realized. We hope it will happen; it is like a desire. One says, for example: "I hope the weather will be good tomorrow!"; but we know that, instead, the weather could be bad the next day ... Christian hope is not like this. Christian hope is the expectation of something that has already been accomplished; the door is there, and I hope to arrive at the door. What must I do? I must walk to the door! I am certain I will arrive at the door. Christian hope is like this: to have the certainty that I am on the way to something that is, not that I wish it to be.

This is Christian hope. Christian hope is the expectation of something that has already been accomplished and which certainly can be realized for each one of us. Therefore, our resurrection also, and that of our dear deceased, is not something that might or might not happen, but it is a certain reality, in as much as it is rooted in the event of Christ's Resurrection. To hope, therefore, means to learn to live in expectation; to learn to live in expectation and to find life. When a woman realizes she is pregnant, she learns to live every day in the expectation of seeing the gaze of that child that will come. So we must also live and learn from these human expectations and live in the expectation of seeing the Lord, of encountering the Lord. This is not easy, but it can be learned: to live in expectation. To hope means and implies a humble heart, a poor heart. Only a poor one knows how to wait. One who is already full of himself and of his possessions does not put his trust in anything other than himself.

Again, Saint Paul writes: "He [Jesus] died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him" (1 *Thessalonians* 5:10). These words are always a motive of great consolation and peace. Therefore, we are also called to pray for loved ones who have left us, so that they will live in Christ and be in full communion with us. Something that touches my heart very much is an expression of Saint Paul, again addressed to the Thessalonians. It fills me with the certainty of hope. He says thus: "and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 *Thessalonians* 4:17). Something beautiful: everything passes but, after death, we will always be with the Lord. It is the total certainty of hope. The same that, much earlier made Job exclaim: "For I know that my Redeemer lives [...] whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold Him" (*Job* 19:25.27). And so we shall always be with the Lord. Do you believe this? I ask you, do you believe this? To have some force, I invite you to say it three times with me: "And so we shall always be with the Lord." And we will meet there with the Lord.

St. Gerard Catholic Church



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

SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:

Isaiah 58:7-10(73A)

Responsorial:

Psalms 112:4-5,6-7,8-9

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Gospel:

Matthew 5:13-16

Today's Missal

Lectionary Readings for the week of February 5, 2017

Monday: *Genesis 1:1-19;*
Mark 6:53-56

Tuesday: *Genesis 1:20-2:4a;*
Mark 7:1-3

Wednesday: *Genesis 2:4b-9,15-17;*
Mark 7:14-23

Thursday: *Genesis 2:18-25;*
Mark 7:24-30

Friday: *Genesis 3:1-8;*
Mark 7:31-37

Saturday: *Genesis 3:9-24;*
Mark 8:1-10

The Fifth Sunday In Ordinary Time February 5, 2017

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.

Father Emmanuel Andinam: Administrator

'You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled under people's feet. You are light for the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in people's sight, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.'

Matthew 5:13-16



Mass Times: Weekdays Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8:15 AM,
First Friday Benediction after Mass

Weekend Saturday 4:00 PM, Sunday 7:00 AM and 11:00 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, **CCD:** Sundays 10:00 AM

RCIA: No Class at this time

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

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

Facebook @stgerardaiken, **Emergency number for Father** 803 341-5933



Pray for our sick:
 Judy Riley
 Marge Glauser
 Leonard Saunders
 Shirley Paige
 William and Jackie Cobbs
 Woody Alexander
 Lena Mickens
 Rosa Johnson
 Brenda and Ike Ligans
 Joe Fulmer

*Lord Jesus, Create in us a new heart.
 Pour your Spirit upon us so that we
 may do the will of the Father.
 Nourish us with your Eucharist and
 heal us of sin. Let our commitment to
 stewardship be a sign of our love for you.
 Amen*



Pastoral Council:
 Marge Glauser,
 Chairperson
 Janet Menefee,
 Vice Chair
 Payson Borst
 Jacqueline Brown
 Fredrick Cadek
 Joan Hesik
 Gregory Wright
 Patricia Hayes
 Matt Fitzpatrick
Finance Council:
 Robert Erikson,
 Chairman
 Leon Gagnon and
 Anna Marie Key,
 Auditors
 Lisa Solenberger,
 Secretary
 Art Wagner

Mass Intentions
 4:00 PM & 7:00 AM Masses are said for your own
 personal intentions.
 The 11:00 AM Mass is said For The soul of Gertrude "Kit" Little

Weekend Offering
January 28-29, 2017


Collection	\$2,059.00
Needed	\$2,612.00
Under	\$553.00
Attendance	120


Stewardship a way of life

The Gathering Hymn 31 M
Blessed and Holy
The Offertory Hymn is 622 H
The Summons
The Communion Hymn is CHOIR 379 BB
The City of God
Our Song of Praise is 637 H
This Little Light of Mine



Lay Ministers

	Saturday 11 February 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: Diane Begic E E Ministers: Pam Ziomek	Sunday 12 February 7:00 AM Mass Mary Kay L'Esperance Gerard L'Esperance	Sunday 12 February 11:00 AM Mass Patricia Hayes Mary Rose
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	Saturday 18 February 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: Joan Hesik E E Ministers: Barbara Dixon	Sunday 19 February 7:00 AM Mass Denise Gelinaz Roger Gelinaz	Sunday 19 February 11:00 AM Mass Richardean Paige Marge Glauser
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Refreshment February 5 Patricia Hayes/Joan Lacombe	Refreshment February 12 Janet Menefee/Mike Solenberger	Refreshment February 19 Jean Schodowski/Richardean Paige
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*The Legion of Mary is meeting at 1:30 on Fridays.
 Please consider joining. Call the office with
 questions. Please Pray the Rosary.*

**Please come to Bible Study on Fridays at
 10:00 AM Father brings the true perspective
 to the scriptures. Please try to attend.**

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

The Brown Scapular
 St. Gerard's has scheduled Consecration of the Brown Scapular to Mary's Service. The date is February 19 at 2:00 PM details in next weeks bulletin. (for those who wear a Brown Scapular, Mary's promise to us is that "Whosoever dies clothed in this Scapular shall not suffer eternal fire." Please let Marge Glauser know if you would like to take part in this service and if you will be needing a Brown Scapular(no charge for the Scapular - Donations accepted).
 Deadline is February 12. Please contact Marge with questions, 803 649-7408, Thank you.

For Joe Dennis
 Joe Dennis will be ordained as a Deacon next Saturday the 11th at The Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Goose Creek SC at 11 AM. We have a few tickets and they are first come first serve. Please think about coming and supporting Joe. Call the office for tickets. There will be a pot luck dinner and reception after the 11:00 AM Mass on February 12, 2017. This is for Joe Dennis' first Mass as a Deacon. Please bring a dish. Sign up sheet in the lobby.
 The Church will provide the cake.

Volunteer Corner:
 Thanks, to the Legion of Mary members and Sheila Wagner, for their visitations to the home bound.

Parish Council
 Next meeting is on February 14 at 6:00 PM
 Agenda items to the office or Marge NLT 2/10/17

Although seats are limited for the upcoming diaconate ordination on February 11th, a live stream will be available during the event and available for viewing afterwards. Please use the following link on February 11, 2017 at 11:00 AM to see the ordination of Joe Dennis and his 14 classmates

**If you attend St. Gerard on a regular basis and feel welcome, Why not consider becoming a member. We would love to have you. Feel free to talk to a member or call the office 649-3203.
 Registration forms are in the the church hall lobby.**

With the donations from the various churches in the area. The food drives from schools and organizations and grants to purchase food from the food bank, Our Lady of the Valley was able to provide emergency food to 10,141 people for the year 2016, an increase of 1867 individuals that were served in 2015. Among those receiving food were 3429 children and 1795 would know how grateful the families are for your contributions. May this year bring many blessings to you, our benefactors. This is out prayer for you. Thank You, Sister Patricia

And Jesus Wept. John 11:35
GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
 St. Mary's has an ongoing grief support group that metes on Wednesdays. The 13-week program uses Griefshare, a special, lay-led weekly seminar and support group that embraces a biblical, Christ-centered approach to grieving. Please join us for help and encouragement after the death of a loved one. We provide a safe and loving environment to encourage sharing and exchanging of concerns and feelings as you are comfortable. This group is open to anyone in our community, regardless of Church affiliation. Please pass the information along to anyone you know who might need it. People may join the group at any point during the 13 weeks; each session stands alone. The meetings are held downstairs in Smith Hall from 3:30 until 5:00 pm but we join for coffee and fellowship any time after 3:00. The registration fee is \$20 and scholarships are available. Registration information is available at the St. Mary Parish Office. Please contact Bette Ross at 803.649-4777 or bross@stmarys-aiken.org for additional information or questions.
I will turn their mourning into joy; I will console and gladden them after their sorrows
 — Jeremiah 31:13

The Marriage Anniversary Celebration is an opportunity to honor all married couples especially those in long 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. **Sunday, February 12, 2017 at 2:00 pm, Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church**, 195 Amicks Ferry Rd, Chapin, SC 29036 For registration please contact, Kathy 803 547 5063 or FamilyLife@catholic-doc.org

Lector Development
 Lector study guides are available in the sacristy for those that were unable to attend the first training session. Please pick up yours the next time you are at church. Please read the preface, pages vii-x. The next sessions will be February 21 at 10 AM and Feb 23 at 6PM. All lectors should attend one of the sessions and prepare by being familiar with pages 3-13 and reflect on the questions on pages 14 and 15.

Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist (EM) Development
 Development sessions for Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist will be offered and February 2 at 6PM. All EM's should plan on attending one of the sessions.

Family Charitable Outreach:
 Someone in need? Maybe we can help.
 Contact Marge Glauser or the office.