

POPE FRANCIS' GENERAL AUDIENCE: On Jonah: Hope and Prayer

'However, God knows our weakness, He knows that we remember Him to ask for help, and with the indulgent smile of a father, He responds benevolently.'

Rome, Jan 18, 2017, zenit.org

Dear Brothers and Sisters, good morning. Among Israel's prophets, a somewhat anomalous figure stands out in Sacred Scripture, a prophet who tries to flee from the Lord's call, refusing to put himself at the service of the divine plan of salvation. It is the prophet Jonah, whose story is narrated in a small book of only four chapters, a sort of parable bearer of a great teaching, that of God's mercy, who forgives.

Jonah is an "outgoing" prophet, and also a prophet in flight! He is an outgoing prophet that God sends "to the periphery," to Nineveh, to convert the inhabitants of that great city. However, for an Israelite like Jonah, Nineveh represented a threatening reality, the enemy that put Jerusalem itself in danger, and therefore to be destroyed, certainly not to be saved. Hence, when God sends Jonah to preach in that city, the prophet, who knows the Lord's goodness and His desire to forgive, attempts to withdraw from his task and flees.

During his flight, the prophet comes into contact with pagans, mariners of the ship on which he embarked to flee from God and from his mission. And he flees far away, because Nineveh was in the region of Iraq and he flees to Spain, he flees in earnest. And it is, in fact, the behavior of these men, as it will be later of the inhabitants of Nineveh, which enables us to reflect somewhat today on hope, which in face of danger and death, is expressed in prayer.

In fact, during the crossing of the sea, a mighty tempest breaks out and Jonah goes down to the ship's hold and abandons himself to sleep. The mariners, instead, seeing themselves lost, "each cried to his god": they were pagans (Jonah 1:5). The captain of the ship awoke Jonah and said to him, "What do you mean, you sleeper? Arise, call upon your god. Perhaps the god will give a thought to us, that we do not perish" (Jonah 1:6).

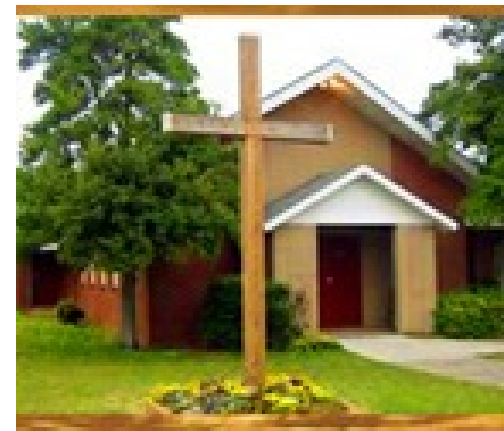
The reaction of these "pagans" was the right reaction in face of death, in face of danger, because it is then that man has a complete experience of his frailty and his need of salvation. The instinctive horror of dying awakens the necessity to hope in the God of life. "Perhaps the god will give thought to us, that we do not perish": are the words of hope that becomes prayer, that supplication full of anguish that comes to the lips of man in face of the imminent danger of death.

We disdain too easily from turning to God in our need as if it were only a self-interested prayer and, hence, imperfect. However, God knows our weakness, He knows that we remember Him to ask for help, and with the indulgent smile of a father, He responds benevolently.

When Jonah, acknowledging his responsibilities, had himself thrown into the sea to save his travel companions, the tempest was placated. Imminent death led those pagan men to prayer and, despite everything, made the prophet live his vocation at the service of others, accepting to sacrifice himself for them, and now leads the survivors to acknowledgement of the true Lord and to praise. The mariners who, prey to fear, turned to their gods and prayed, now, with sincere fear of the Lord, acknowledge the true God and offer sacrifices and make vows. Hope, which had induced them to pray so that they would not die, is now revealed more powerful and operates a reality that goes beyond what they hoped for: not only do they not perish in the tempest, but they open themselves to the acknowledgement of the true and only Lord of Heaven and earth.

Subsequently, the inhabitants of Nineveh, in face of the prospect of being destroyed, also prayed, spurred by hope in God's forgiveness. They would do penance, invoke the Lord and be converted to Him, beginning with the king, who, like the captain of the ship, gave voice to hope saying: "Who knows, God may yet repent and turn from His fierce anger, so that we perish not?" (Jonah 3:9). For them too, as well as for the crew in the tempest, to have faced death and come out saved led them to the truth. Thus, under divine mercy, and even more so in the light of the Paschal Mystery, death can become, as it was for Saint Francis of Assisi, "our sister death" and represent for every man and for each one of us, the astonishing occasion to know hope and to encounter the Lord. May the Lord make us understand this connection between prayer and hope. Prayer leads one forward in hope and when things become dark, there must be more prayer! And there will be more hope. Thank you.

St. Gerard Catholic Church



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

SUNDAY READINGS

First Reading:

Isaiah 8:23-9:3(67A)

Responsorial:

Psalm 27:1,4,13-14

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians

Gospel:

Matthew 4:12-23

Today's Missal

Lectionary Readings for the week of January 22, 2017

Monday: Hebrews 9:15,24-28;
Mark 3:22-30

Tuesday: Hebrews 10:1-10;
Mark 3:31-35

Wednesday: Acts 9:1-22;
Mark 16:15-18

Thursday: 2 Timothy 1:1-5;
Mark 4:21-25

Friday: Hebrews 10:32-39,
Mark 4:26-34

Saturday: Hebrews 11:1-2.8-19;
Mark 4:35-41

The Third Sunday In Ordinary Time January 22, 2017

Mission Statement

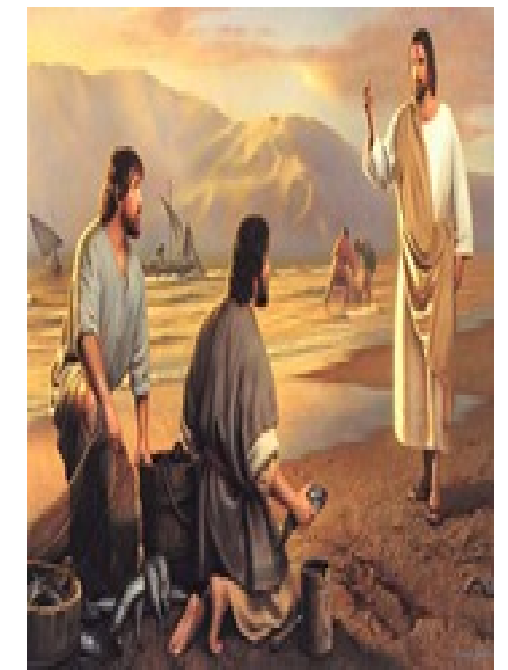
Called to be a People for Others

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

As he was walking by the Lake of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast into the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Come after me and I will make you fishers of people.' And at once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. And at once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him. He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing all kinds of disease and illness among the people.
Matthew 4:18-23



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 Ligons
 Joe Fulmer

"A Church without charity does not exist" - Pope Francis
 Each new year gives us the opportunity to renew our commitment as disciples of Jesus. We understand that all gifts are entrusted to us by God. We commit ourselves to return those gifts with increase. As stewards we offer our lives in service.



Pastoral Council:
 Marge Glauser,
 Chairperson
 Janet Menefee,
 Vice Chair
 Payson Borst
 Jacqueline Brown
 Fredrick Cadek
 Joan Hesik
 Gregory Wright
 Patricia Hayes

Finance Council:
 Robert Erikson,
 Chairman
 Leon Gagnon and
 Anna Marie Key,
 Auditors
 Lisa Solenberger,
 Secretary
 Art Wagner

Mass Intentions
 4:00 PM Mass for Wendy Bailey, 7:00 AM & 11:00 AM
 Masses are said for your own personal intentions.

Weekend Offering
 January 14-15, 2017


Collection	\$2,113.00
Needed	\$2,612.00
Under	\$499.00


Attendance 119
Stewardship a way of life

<i>The Gathering Hymn</i>	136 M
<i>God, We Praise You</i>	420 H
<i>The Offertory Hymn is</i>	604 BB
<i>I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light</i>	
<i>The Communion Hymn is</i>	123 M
<i>Christ, Be Our Light</i>	
<i>Our Song of Praise is</i>	
<i>Holy God, We Praise Thy Name</i>	



Lay Ministers

	Saturday 28 January 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: Joan Hesik E E Ministers: Barbara Dixon	Sunday 29 January 7:00 AM Mass Mary Kay L'Esperance Gerard L'Esperance	Sunday 29 January 11:00 AM Mass Sheila Wagner Wayman Johnson
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	Saturday 4 February 4:00 PM Vigil Mass Lector: David Didimamoff E E Ministers: Ellen Heim	Sunday 5 February 7:00 AM Mass Denise Gelinas Roger Gelinas	Sunday 5 February 11:00 AM Mass Lisa Solenberger Mike Solenberger
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Refreshment January 22 Sheila Wagner/Matt Fitzpatrick	Refreshment January 29 Shirley Paige/Anna Marie Key	Refreshment February 5 Patricia Hayes/Joan Lacombe
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The goal is to have the contribution tax letters in the mail by 31 January

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

The Legion of Mary is meeting at 1:30 on Fridays. Please consider joining. Call the office with questions. Please Pray the Rosary.



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



The Brown Scapular

St. Gerard's will be scheduling a Consecration of the Brown Scapular to Mary's Service. If you wear or would like to wear a Brown Scapular (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 (there will be no charge for the Scapular - Donations accepted). Deadline is January 29th. Please contact Marge with questions, 803 649-7408, Thank you.

Parish Council

Father Emmanuel and Pastoral Council have appointed Marge Glauser as of your Pastoral Council Chairman and Janet Menefee as Vice-Chairman. Father would like to recognize Wayman Johnson who has been the Chair of Council for the last few years. Wayman has been very dedicated to St. Gerard's and has done much more than just the Chairman's job. Wayman stepped in and chaired our Fall Festival which was a great success. And he has taken on many other jobs for St. Gerard's over the years. Also we would like to recognize Nancy Durden for her many years of hard work and service to St. Gerard's. Over the years she has worn many hats and is still active in other ministries. These two individuals will be missed on Council. Pat Hayes has stepped forward to join council. And Fred Cadek will be taking over as the Chair of our Bishops Stewardship Appeal here at St. Gerard. We thank all of them.

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 January 31 at 10 AM and February 2 at 6PM. All EM's should plan on attending one of the sessions.

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.

Please ask any veterans (especially post-9/11 veterans) to contact ACTS at ph#803.642.5919 They served us now let's help ACTS serve them.

For Joe Dennis

Joe Dennis will be ordained as a Deacon on February 11, 2017 at The Immaculate Conception 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.

Light up someone's life, Donate Blood The Gift of Life. The Knights of Columbus need you to Help save local lives! Sheppard Community Blood Center will conduct a Blood Drive At Saint Mary Help of Christian Church On Fairfield Street. Saturday, January 28th from 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm and Sunday, January 29th from 7:45am -1:30 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

In Harms' Way: Please remember in your prayers our Nation and loved ones of our parishioners currently serving in harms' way: James Ligons, Robert McHugh 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.