

Faith Loops

Faith Loops are PowerPoint presentations with images and information that will help us grow in the understanding of our Catholic faith. They will be projected on the screens during the twenty minutes prior to each weekend mass. To learn more about your faith while waiting for Mass to begin, come a few minutes early.

The slides will loop, or repeat, themselves. Thus, the name: Faith Loops.



What Do You Know About Sacraments?

The “Seal of Confession” refers to _____.

- a) a special stamp on your confession card
- b) the priest’s obligation not to reveal what is said in confession
- c) locked confessionals
- d) approval the priest gives after a good confession

What Do You Know About Sacraments?

b) the priest's obligation not to reveal what is said in confession

“Every priest who hears confessions is bound under very severe penalties to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that his penitents have confessed to him. This secret, which admits of no exceptions, is called the ‘sacramental seal’” (CCC, n. 1467).



Saints of the Week:

St. Perpetua & St. Felicity

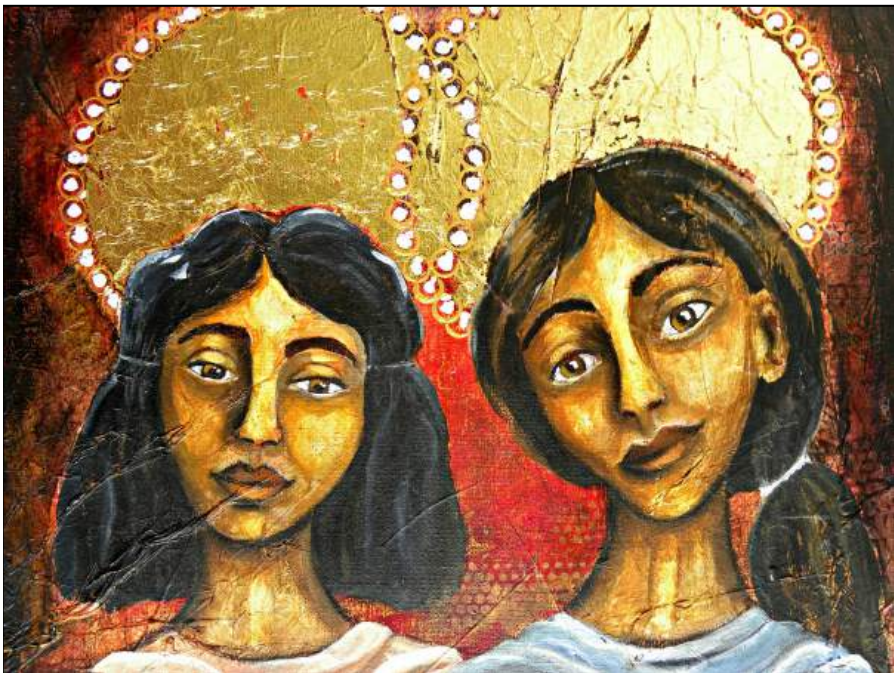
On March 7, we honor two saints – one a wealthy woman, the other her slave. Despite their differences, they shared a common faith in Jesus Christ and were martyred in 203 A.D. Even though they lived so many years ago, their story was written in a diary and in several eyewitness accounts.



St. Perpetua & St. Felicity

In those days, Christians were often persecuted. The rich woman, whose name was Perpetua, was one of those arrested, even though she had a baby son. Her father tried to convince Perpetua to deny her faith and save her life, but she refused. The other woman

Felicity, was pregnant at the time of her arrest. Both were thrown into a large amphitheater where people watched them be devoured by lions.



St. Perpetua & St. Felicity

This seems like such a tragic, horrid story ... and it is. The wonderful lesson to be learned from the lives of Perpetua and Felicity is that their faith was so



important that they were willing to die for it. They were *martyrs*. The Church recognizes this incredible faith, and we now know these two women as Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicity.

Test Your Knowledge:

The New Testament

Who is the central personality in the Acts of the Apostles, is noted as the author of nine or more letters in the New Testament, and is known as the 'Apostle to the Gentiles'?

- a. James
- b. Stephen
- c. Peter
- d. Paul



Test Your Knowledge: **The New Testament**

d. **Paul**

Paul was a true missionary. He called himself “Christ’s apostle”. Because of his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus, he felt that he was being sent to tell others about Christ and the teachings of the Church.

Paul established Christian churches in various places and wrote epistles – a total of nine letters – to these communities so as to instruct them in the faith and to address disagreements and misunderstandings. Paul’s letters are the oldest Christian documents, written even before the four Gospels.

Learning About Liturgy

What is the significance of the Sign of Peace?

Before we approach the altar for either a blessing or the Body of Christ, we prepare ourselves by wishing each other peace. We need to be in harmony with each other and with God before taking part in the



'banquet' of the Lord. For this reason, the Church asks that, if we are aware of any serious sin, we must first go to confession and reconcile with God before receiving Holy Communion.

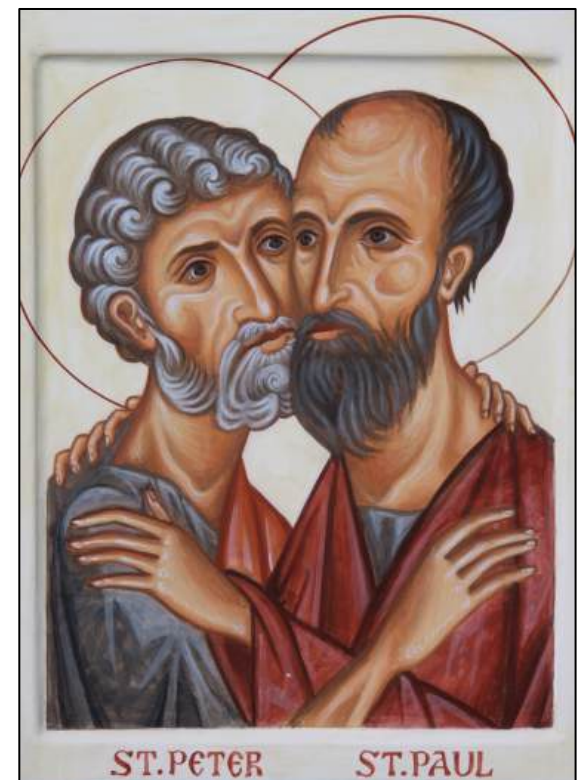
Learning About Liturgy

The Sign of Peace

The peace we offer each other is not the peace we feel when the kids are finally in bed and the company is gone. It is a peace we can feel in the midst of chaos and in times of trial. It is a peace that only Christ can give.

It is a peace that comes from knowing that God is always with us, that He can transform burdens into blessings, and that, at the end of our lives, God has promised us salvation.

It is a peace beyond understanding.



You Asked Us ...

Why do we traditionally eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday?

In Medieval times, the period between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday evolved into a time of Carnival as people enjoyed all that they would miss during Lent. This culminated in events on Shrove Tuesday.

The word 'Shrove' originates from the word 'shriven', meaning 'absolved of one's sins'. It was an early custom for Christians to be shriven, that is, *assigned a penance*, before Lent.

You Asked ... **about Shrove Tuesday**

In New Orleans and Rio de Janeiro, Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) erupts in wild festivities and street parades. A tradition of making pancakes on this day grew so that people would use up the butter and oil in the house prior to Lent. Ingredients took on symbolic meaning:

- flour (staff of life)
- milk (innocence)
- eggs (rebirth)
- salt (wholesomeness)



You Were Wondering ...

What is the significance of ashes on Ash Wednesday?

Every year, on the first day of Lent, Catholics receive ashes on their foreheads in the form of a cross. The priest says,

"Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel."

The ashes come from the burning of last year's palms, which were distributed on Palm Sunday. Parishioners are invited to return these palms to the church shortly before Ash Wednesday.



You Were Wondering ... About Ashes

When we receive ashes, we may also hear the words: “Remember you are ashes, and to dust you shall return.” Genesis tells us God made man from dust, and in death, we return to dust. The ashes remind us



of our mortality and call us to repentance and mourning. They symbolize letting go of worldly concerns to focus on everlasting life in Christ.

You Were Wondering ... About Ashes

During Lent we strive to die to self and sinfulness in the hope of rising to new life in Christ at Easter. Engaging in acts of justice during Lent transforms our **prayer, fasting,** and **almsgiving** into life-giving efforts, connecting us with our brothers and sisters in need. To Christians, the cross is a sign of both suffering and healing. Our personal sacrifices, while meaningful, cannot compare to the profound love and sacrifice of Christ on the cross. His ultimate act of love offers us the hope of redemption and eternal life.



What is Catholic Social Teaching?



Faced with injustice and inequality in our world – unemployment, poverty, war, racism, etc. – what is our responsibility? The basic needs of many are not being met.

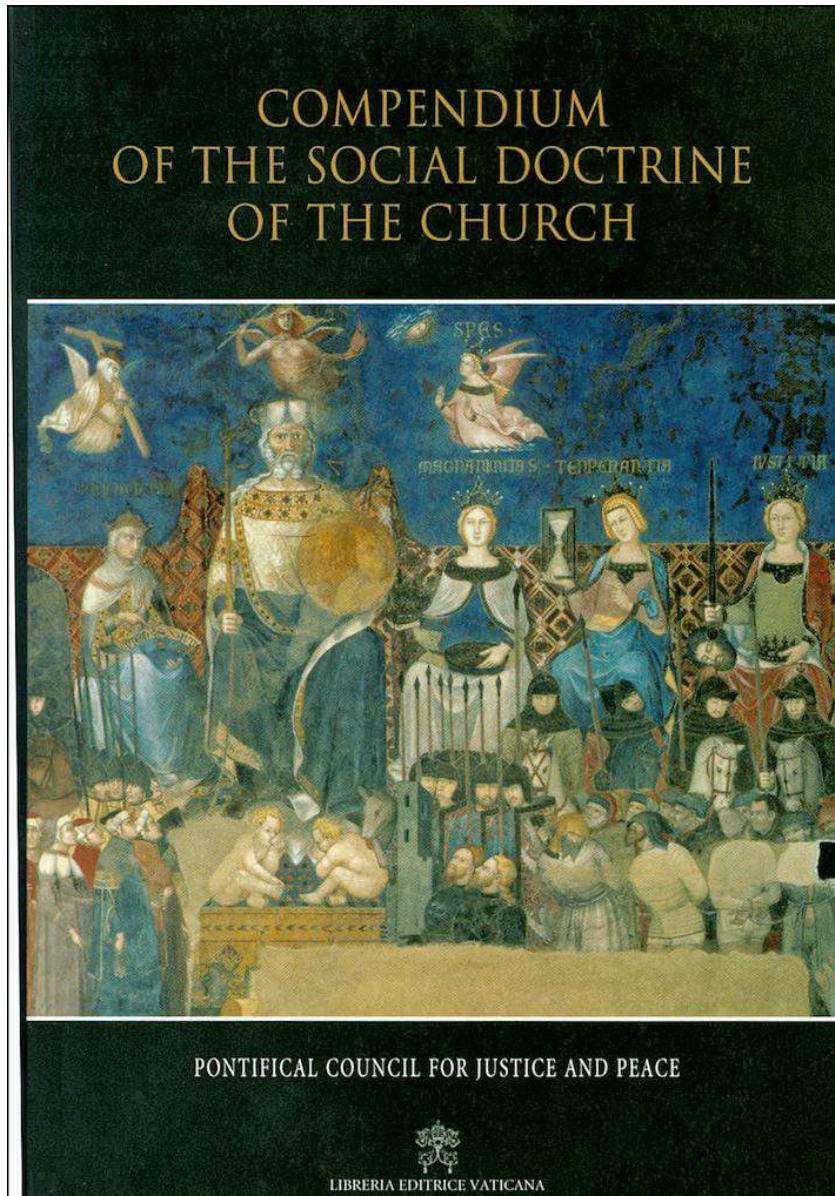
The Catholic Church has identified seven principles we need to

embrace so we can build a just and peaceful society and grow in holiness amidst these challenges.

What is Catholic Social Teaching?

The fact that the Catholic Church has identified these seven principles – and has written a comprehensive compendium of the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church – is said to be one of the Church’s best-kept secrets.

Let’s not keep it a secret any longer.



Catholic Social Teaching Principle #1: **Life and Dignity of the Human Person**



God created each person in his image and likeness, so every life is important and should be protected.

- Human life is sacred.
- The dignity and respect of the human person is absolutely important.
- Current issues: abortion, assisted suicide, war, death penalty, cloning, etc.

Clergy Vestments – **the History**

The use of special clothing for religious ceremonies has its roots in the Old Testament. Exodus 28



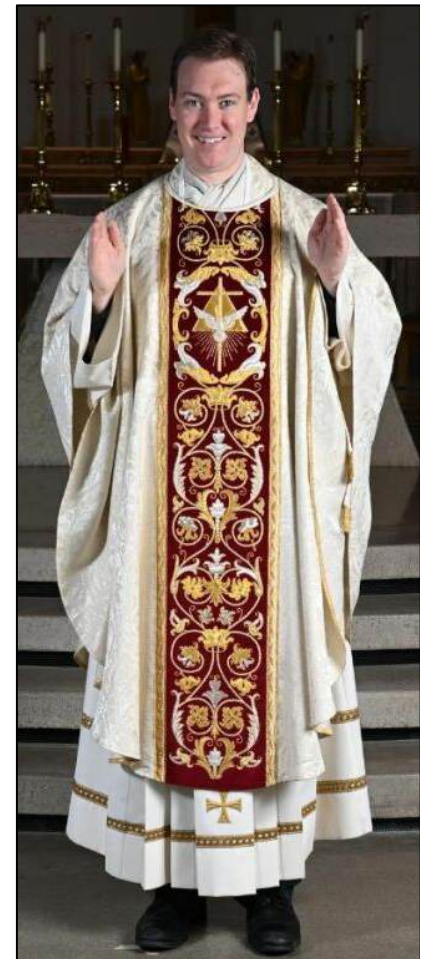
provides detailed and specific instructions regarding the clothing to be worn by the priests of that time. These vestments included a breastpiece, a robe, a tunic, a turban, and a sash.

There is historical significance to the wearing of vestments. They are part of a sacred tradition that goes back over 3000 years.

Clergy Vestments – **the Symbolism**

The vestments worn by our clergy add beauty and symbol to the liturgical celebrations. The vestments uplift our spirits, and inspire the reverence we are called to embrace during the Mass, which is a sacred encounter with Christ that fills us with hope and joy.

Seeing Fr. Les and Deacon Dan in their vestments reminds us that our liturgies are sacred and set apart from ordinary life. The vestments signal to us that something extraordinary will be taking place.



You Asked Us ...

What is the World Day of Prayer?



Every year, on the first Friday of March, we celebrate the World Day of Prayer.

Its history dates back to 1918, when a group of women formed the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada. Their mission is to empower Christians to pursue justice, reconciliation and peace, by standing together in prayer and action. Each year this global ecumenical movement gathers 1.5 million Christians of many faith traditions in over 150 countries for a common day of prayer.

Their motto is 'Informed Prayer & Prayerful Action'.

Prayer Before Mass

Dear God, help me to be open to all that you want to give me at Mass today.

My heart is open. I come in hope.

I come empty and unsure and troubled.

I come in need to be loved by you,
united with this faith community,
strengthened by your word,
and nourished by the Bread of Life.

Cleanse me. Refresh me.

Strengthen me for the journey ahead.

Lead me to heaven.

Thank you, God, for this time together.

Thank you, God, for everything. Amen.



Questions???

Do you have a question about the Catholic faith or about the celebration of the Mass? If so, write it on a piece of paper and drop it into the marked shoebox on the table at the back of the church. We will try to answer it in a Faith Loop at a later date.

Thank you.

