



# Huron-Superior Catholic

## DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### Catholic Culture Update #21

#### Quote to carry through the week

“I will sing of your salvation.” Ps. 71.15ab

**January 30 is the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time. “Practice of Charity –** The prophet Jeremiah points out that each of us is precious and that we have a purpose in this world. No matter the obstacle, God will deliver us. Jesus was protected when thrown out of the synagogue. God will be with us too.

- ✚ Write or call civic leaders if legislation under consideration would be harmful to others. Consider becoming more active about resolving issues that negatively impact the most vulnerable in your community.
- ✚ Discern how your personal gifts and talents can advance some positive initiatives in your parish, school, workplace, or neighbourhood.
- ✚ Discover how your abilities can inspire others to get involved. Perhaps your parish is championing an effort to assist the homeless or protect the unborn. If there’s an initiative that you would like to explore with other parish team members, start gathering information and resources.” AT HOME with the WORD 2022, Liturgy Training Publications, page 37.

**Scripture Insights** > “Today’s readings speak to the vocation of the prophet. In contemporary speech, a “prophet” is often identified with a future seer, a “fortune teller.” This, however, is not the case in the biblical tradition. The Greek *prophetes* means to “speak for.” A true prophet, therefore, is one who speaks for God. Prophets are mediators between God and humankind, a calling that encompasses great glory but also intense suffering. Jeremiah, our model of the reluctant prophet who suffers for his vocation, is no less staunch in sharing God’s Word. He embodies the Lord’s strength and fortitude. The apostle Paul characterizes prophecy as a spiritual gift. He grounds every gift of the Holy Spirit in love. Sharpening and implementing such gifts must be, not in pursuit of selfish ambition, but for the good of all. In our time, we often meditate on Paul’s hymn to love in the context of romantic engagement, but in his original context, Paul is concerned with the proper foundations of our inspiration and work in the community: faith, hope, and love. If love, steadfast and true, is the crux of our embodiment of the gifts of the Spirit, then they – and we – are properly oriented to the other and the good of all. Jesus, as he embodies the Word of God professed by Isaiah, becomes a prophet in his own right as he challenges his audience’s comfortable notion of being “chosen.” He reminds them that God has traditionally looked beyond

expectations and the status quo to work his will and implement his plan. Our challenge, likewise, is to be open to the very God in whom we profess to believe, the God who works in anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, custom, or convention.

- ✚ Are you open to God's call, no matter the form it might take? What steps could invigorate the openness to which God calls you?
- ✚ Reflect on the reading from Jeremiah. How has God called you to something more?
- ✚ How have you considered Paul's hymn to love in 1 Corinthians 13 in the past? How does its integration in today's readings impact your understanding?" AT HOME with the WORD 2022, Liturgy Training Publications, page 37

January 31 is the memorial of **St. John Bosco**, Priest. "God gifted St. John Bosco (1815-1888) with the ability to read and interpret the signs of the times. Living during rapid industrialization and growing anti-clericalism, he became very concerned about the emotional and spiritual livelihood of people, especially the plight of the young. He worked to provide positive and affirming environments, including orphanages and oratories, where the young could learn and recognize their infinite potential. In the spirit of his favourite hero, St. Francis de Sales, he founded the Salesians, a religious congregation devoted to works of charity, with an emphasis on empowering young people to become strong pillars of faith in a culture of instability. His work among young men living in the slums proved to be a worthy endeavor. Whether he was presiding at Mass or playing games with children or carrying the sick to hospitals, it was obvious he lived until his "last breath...day and night, morning and evening" for the neglected and abandoned (as quoted in *Butler's Lives of Saints* [New Full Edition – January], p. 229)."

Companion to the Calendar – A guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year, Second Edition, page 41

**Month of February** – "The second month of the year takes its name from the Latin word for *purification*. The ancient Roman calendar had ten months, March through December. (*December* means "tenth month.") There was no January and no February. These months were left off the calendar. Strange as it seems, people didn't feel the need to keep track of the days during winter. For the Romans, this late winter period before March became a "season" of purification and renewal, almost like Lent. When the Romans began using a 12-month calendar, the old names for the months continued to be used. The month before March was named for the time of purification." Companion to the Calendar – A guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year, Second Edition, page 42

February 1 is the memorial of **St. Brigid**, Virgin. "St. Brigid of Kildare (c. 451-524) is, along with St. Patrick, a patron saint of Ireland. Many legends grew surrounding her life, but she was probably the daughter of a slave in the court of her faith, King Dubhthach of Leinster. Tradition says that she made monastic vows and founded twin monasteries at Kildare (*Cill-Dara* or "the church of the oak"), one for men and one for women, and as was not uncommon at the time, was abbess over both. Brigid is remembered for her great joy." Companion to the Calendar – A guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year, Second Edition, page 43

February 2 is the Feast of the **Presentation of the Lord**. “Forty days after Christmas, we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, which recalls the event described in the Gospel according to Luke: “When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, ‘Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord’)” (Luke 2:22). Joseph and Mary bring Jesus to the Temple, and while they are there, they meet two extraordinary people. First they meet Simeon, who, taking Jesus in his arms, recognizes him as the long-awaited Messiah. Not only that, Simeon knows that this Messiah. Not only that, Simeon knows that this Messiah has come not only to the Jewish people, but to all. He is “a light for revelation to the Gentiles” (Luke 2:32). There is a note of sorrow in this joyful encounter: Simeon prophecies over the child, telling Mary that Jesus will encounter great opposition, while her own heart is pierced by a sword. They also meet Anna, a widow, 84 years old, who prays and fasts in the Temple night and day, and who also recognizes who Jesus is, and begins to proclaim him: “At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem” (Luke 2:38). Jesus is the light to the nations, and from the moment of his birth, people are drawn to his light. That is why on this Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we carry lit candles, and the priest blesses the candles to be used in the celebration of the liturgy during the coming year. Because of this today’s Mass is often called Candlemass.” Companion to the Calendar – A guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year, Second Edition, page 44

February 2 is also the **World Day for Consecrated Life**. “...The Gospel today tells the story of Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to the temple “to present him to the Lord” (Luke 2:22). Simeon and Anna recognize in this little child the Saviour whom they have awaited with eager expectation. It’s the perfect feast to take some time to give thanks to God for the gift of consecrated life – for all the men and women who have dedicated their lives to the Lord and to service in his Church. Men and women religious throughout the world renew their commitment to the consecrated life this day. It’s also a time to encourage young men and women to consider whether God might be calling them to this mode of life. “What would become of the world if there were no religious?” St. Teresa of Avila once asked. “This is a question which brings us to give unceasing thanks to the Lord, who by this singular gift of the Spirit continues to enliven and sustain the Church in its demanding journey through this world” (Pope John Paul II, Message for the First World Day for Consecrated Life, 1997).”

February 2 is also **Groundhog Day**. “The Celtic people divided the year differently than we do now. For them, February 1 was the first day of spring. The first days of May, August, and November marked the beginning of the other natural seasons. That way of dividing the year makes a lot of sense in northern Europe, where the change in the length of days is dramatic. St. Brigid’s feast day and the Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas Day) are associated with folklore about the arrival of spring, or at least the arrival of lengthening days. German farmers say that on Candlemas the badger interrupts its winter nap to check the weather. If the day is sunny, the badger sees its

shadow and gets scared, and then goes back to hibernate for six more weeks. The bright, cold days of winter aren't over yet. But if the day is cloudy, the badger cannot see its shadow. That means that hibernation is over, the cloudy, warmer weather of spring is about to arrive. Good news for the farmers! German farmers who immigrated to Pennsylvania did not find badgers. They decided that groundhogs would provide the spring forecast, instead. So on Candlemas Day we wonder if the groundhog will see its shadow or if spring is coming soon.” Companion to the Calendar – A guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year, Second Edition, page 44

February 3 is the memorial of **St. Blaise**, Bishop and Martyr. “St. Blaise was a physician, bishop of Sebaste (Turkey), and martyr who was born sometime in the third century and died around the year 316. The earliest written reference to him doesn't appear until the fifth or sixth century, where he is reputed to have healed a boy who was choking on a fish bone. For this reason, his intercession is invoked for illnesses of the throat, and it is customary for throats to be blessed on his memorial, using crossed candles. The instruments of his martyrdom were steel combs that would normally have been used to comb wool, and for this reason he is the patron saint of the wool trade. He was very popular in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, and is one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers whose story is retold in the Golden Legend. The Fourteen Holy Helpers are a group of saints who are invoked against diseases.” Companion to the Calendar – A guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year, Second Edition, page 45

### **CEW 2022 Friday's theme of Rediscover Together**

May we each discover our own form of spiritual electricity - and light up our world. Eileen Rivers

### **February Virtue of the Month – Love, l'Amour, Zaagidwin, Kahsagahetin**

Love is a theological virtue meaning that it is a gift we receive from God and it is a gift that takes us to God. Love means caring for one another, making sacrifices for one another, and rejoicing in one another's companionship. Love is the crown of all the virtues and an intimate participation in God's life. Without love, all other virtues are empty. There are many types of love: self-love (good self-love), friendship; sexual love; romantic love; nurturing and parental love; love of nature and love of God.

### **Our Mission Statement – Rooted in Jesus Christ**

Jesus died on a cross of wood rooted in the soil of the Earth. As his followers we are reminded to carry our cross as Jesus did. These days our cross may be sadness that we feel because our lives have been turned upside down with the pandemic. We may desire to stop wearing masks and physically distancing. We may want closeness with our staff members and our classmates. Ask Jesus for strength and peace.

**Strategic Directions – Success and Well-Being of our Students –** We will provide relevant education with a particular focus on each community's history and cultures. Each of our communities (Espanola, Massey, Elliot Lake, Blind River, Chapleau, SSM, Wawa, White River, Hornepayne) have unique histories. The communities were originally on traditional Indigenous lands of many first nations. Most early settlers came

from European countries and eventually from other continents. Now many newcomers are settling as refugees. We need to know our history so we can learn from the past so we don't make past mistakes again.

### Twenty-first Century Learning

<http://wccm.org/> > World Community for Christian Meditation > This is a site for Christian Meditation for teachers and students alike.

[www.CARFLEO.org](http://www.CARFLEO.org) > best kept secret for religious education teachers of every grade

[www.vocations.ca](http://www.vocations.ca) > In our GIF GIC religion program, many vocations are promoted. Go to this website to see how you can promote vocations more effectively. There is also information about discernment.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/family/family-faith-and-fun/> - great resources for families.

**Saints Kit – All the saints of the Roman Calendar and More** by Sister Mary Kathleen Glavich, S.N.D., and other Sisters of Notre Dame, Chardon

**“St. Agatha – Virgin and Martyr – February 5<sup>th</sup>,”** In Italy people celebrate St. Agatha's feast with fireworks. Many stories are told of her. According to these, she was born of noble parents. Her reputation for loveliness and kindness came to the attention of Quintian, governor of Sicily. When Agatha rejected his proposal, he had her sent to a house of prostitution. She was preserved from harm. Then Quintian put her into prison for being a Christian. There she underwent extreme tortures. At one point St. Peter supposedly healed, but the tortures finally killed her. We know for certain that Agatha was a martyr. She probably died during the persecutions under Decius that lasted from 240-251. Although Agatha lived in Sicily, devotion to her was so widespread and so fervent that her name came to be included in the first Eucharistic Prayer. She has long been honoured for her great courage in suffering and for remaining pure for the sake of Christ. Pictures often show Agatha holding a plate, a candle, or a house in flames. A year after her death a city survived the eruption of the volcano Mt. Edna. People said it was because of Agatha's prayers. In the sixteenth century two churches in Rome were named for her. *St. Agatha, pray that we may be strong followers of Christ!* Card 18

**A Blog for Eclectic Readers** - by Pat Carter csj

**Squeeze Me** by Carl Hiaasen, 2020. This book is outrageous. It captures the Trumpian era with characters that are bizarre and situations that sound familiar. Carl is a story teller with a savage humour. It is a fast read. I give this book /5 happy faces.

**Taking Jesus to the Movies** ...A blog by Sister Pat

**12 Mighty Orphans**, 2021. Based on a true story of an underdog football team that beats all the other teams in the league. It stars Martin Sheen, Treat Williams, Robert Duvall, and Vanessa Shaw. Juanita and Rusty Russell were teachers for 16 years at the Mason Home in Fort Worth, Texas and Rusty, played by Luke Wilson, coached football. Martin Sheen plays Doc Martin who is the team's defensive coach. I give this movie ♥♥♥♥/5

**Catholic WORD of the Week – For Those Who Read to the end...Just like the credits at the movies**

**“Eminence** – “Your Eminence” (“His Eminence,” “Most Reverend Eminence”) is the proper form of address given to cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. The only exception to this is the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem who is also addressed as “Eminence.” This title was first bestowed on cardinals by Pope Urban viii in a decree of 1630. At one time it had also been the form of address of German ecclesiastical prince-electors.” Our Sunday Visitor's CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA, page 351