

Bulletin Letter January 31, 2021 Fourth Ordinary Cycle B

From the Pastor:

Today we find Jesus in a synagogue at Capernaum on the Sabbath. On a Sabbath this faithful Jew attends the synagogue, seemingly one of his favorite places to meet, greet, and teach people. We are told immediately however, that as a teacher, Jesus was, shall we say, in a class by himself. Those who heard him were amazed, astonished. Jesus was different. He did not teach as the traditional experts in the law. His style and command of the law was unique. He spoke, as we are told, *“with authority.”* Given the fact that Jesus was not a known scribe or a rabbi, his teaching surprised the people who heard him. *Who could this be?* Needless to say, his fame spread throughout Galilee. He drew crowds. He healed. He fed. Jesus becomes known and successful. Yet, it won't be long before his popularity begins to fade. People will question him. They will speak with suspicion about him, *“who does he think he is?”* The authorities will be threatened by him. The admired Jesus will become the hated Jesus. The salvation Jesus brings will not be accomplished by casting out evil spirits as we see in the gospel today. It will come through his suffering, death, and resurrection, which is far more amazing and astonishing than any kind of exorcism or healing.

Since the pandemic started, I have been holding a weekly or bi-weekly session entitled, **“Tuesday Chats.”** So far we have completed over 40 chats and covered many topics including the explanation of the inside of the IC church and rectory; the rectory gardens (with guest star **Grace the dog!**); my biological family; and, most recently a visit to St. Joseph's Church and an interview with long time parishioners, **Bob and Marianna Gatta.** We are planning a visit to Our Lady of Grace soon. My expressed thanks to the *Tuesday Chat* director, **Christine Goss,** our sound producer, **Tom Bigos,** and wardrobe design by **Gingras Design of NY.** Keep an eye out for us and let us know if there anything you would like us to review and visit here on the three campuses. All episodes can be found at our video archive on our webpage - <https://www.icglenville.com/video-archives>

The **trustees of Our Lady of Grace, St. Joseph's and Immaculate Conception** continue to meet on a weekly basis. We are making some headway regarding the look of the local Church in months to come. Our biggest hurdle obviously, is how the three campuses can remain functioning parishes with only one parish priest. The liturgy committees from all three parishes are meeting, along with Our Lady of Grace sharing cantors and accompanists at St. Joseph's Church. We have also decided to have one liturgy along with the distribution of ashes **one time at each parish on Ash Wednesday:** St. Joseph's at 7:30 am, Our Lady of Grace at 12 noon, and Immaculate Conception at 6 pm. We are also planning on celebrating Holy Week as one community here at Immaculate Conception. Please join us as we do our best to navigate through these unprecedented times of priest shortage and the pandemic. Know that we three families of parishes are united as one in Christ. Be assured that I am aware that it can be anxiety provoking as we navigate this time, but I ask that we all trust in God's greater wisdom. You will note that we are adding a prayer at the end of my letter, and we will include this prayer in my weekly updates.

Our Prayer: Loving God, be present to us and grant us wisdom, so that we who may feel anxious about change might trust in Your love, and rest in the Changelessness that is You.

Until next week, be well, do good deeds, and say your prayers. **Fr. Jerry**