



Society of African Missions

23 Bliss Avenue
Tenafly, NJ 07670
Phone: 201-567-0450
Visit our website
www.smafathers.org



Mass Schedule

Sundays

10:00 am; 12 noon

Weekdays & Holy Days

11:45 am

Christmas & New Year's Day

10:00 am; 12 noon

Confessions

By appointment. Contact

Fr Dermot Roache 201-567-0450 Ext 212

Bereavement & Visit to the Sick

Contact Fr. Dermot Roache
201-567-0450 Ext. 212

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday
from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr. Julien Esse, SMA
551-449-4357

Sunday Collection: \$828

Thank you for your support.

Please remember to support
your local parishes.

Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,
Provincial Superior

Fr Dermot Roache,
House Superior

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Masses for the week of January 24, 2021 - January 30, 2021

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv & Dec Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Jan. 24	10:00	Mary Jean Quinn+	Lisa McCarthy
	12:00	Christine Sarner (Liv.) Birthday	Victoria Costa
Mon. Jan. 25	9:30	Ralph Sabbatino & Marian V Sheehy+	
	11:45	Edmund J. Wilson+	Mary Fischbach
Tue. Jan. 26	9:30	Special Intentions Martha Paladino	
	11:45	Mary Ann McElroy+	Rich Kane
Wed. Jan. 27	9:30	Maria Achacoso Gadioma+	Villarosa & Santamaria Families
	11:45	Manuel Villarosa+	Cely Rosal
Thurs. Jan. 28	9:30	Juliana & Joseph Lee (Liv.)	Thomas & Jessica Lee
	11:45	Souls of Purgatory	Victoria Costa
Fri. Jan. 29	9:30	Maria R. Valdes+	Friend
	11:45	John Hamil+	Daughter
Sat. Jan. 30	9:30	Thomas Micklas+	Rosemarie Micklas
	11:45	Nancy Dillingham+	Diana Bruno

Today's Readings:

First Reading *Jonah 3:1-5. 10*

Jonah preaches to the people of Nineveh and they repent.

Second Reading *1 Corinthians 7:29-31*

How to live in a world that is rapidly passing away.

Gospel *Mark 1:14-20*

Jesus calls his first apostles and they follow him.

“At once they left their nets and followed him.”

Illustration

When we read the lives of the saints it is striking how many changed their lives in dramatic ways to follow Christ. The earliest example is St Paul who, because of his personal encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, changed from being a committed persecutor of Christians to being the great apostle of the pagans. The change was not always as dramatic but involved a movement away from one lifestyle to a very different one. We think of St Augustine of Hippo searching restlessly through a variety of philosophical and religious traditions until eventually ending up in Milan. There the combination of his encounter with St Ambrose and the ceaseless prayers of his mother, Monica, resulted in his conversion and his return to North Africa where he would become a bishop and a great theologian whose works are influential even today. St Ignatius of Loyola and St Camillus de Lellis were both dedicated soldiers whose injuries brought them to reflect more deeply on their lives. As St Ignatius expressed it, when he read his staple diet of romances and chivalry he remained dissatisfied and discontented; when he read the Bible and lives of the saints he felt at peace and fulfilled.

Interestingly enough, many women saints do not seem to have this abrupt change of path. It is more often that they are clear in their minds from an early age but have to fight both the Church and society to follow their vision and be allowed to follow Christ in the way in which they feel he calls them. We can think of St Teresa of Avila and St Thérèse of Lisieux and perhaps also of St Jane Frances de Chantal, who would probably have social services in pursuit in our times for seemingly abandoning her family in pursuit of the religious life.

Gospel Teaching

The word “Gospel” means good news, and St Mark’s intention behind his Gospel is to persuade his listeners and readers that, despite the persecution they were undergoing, it really was “good news”. He does this by showing Jesus in action. There are far fewer of the teachings of Jesus in St Mark’s Gospel than in the other Gospels. He talks about Jesus teaching but, apart from the parables, the Jesus we encounter is the person who heals and nourishes and calls people to follow him.

There is something very restless in St Mark’s account, an urgency right from the start in the underlying message that the kingdom is close at hand and we need to change our hearts, change our ways. The kingdom is Mark’s description of the presence of God, brought about through and in the person of Jesus, and it is the person of Jesus who is the good news. There is also something very curt about the way Jesus calls his disciples. Simon and Andrew, James and John are going about their daily activities, fishing and preparing to fish. With his joke about now being made “fishers of men” rather than of fish, Jesus calls them and, immediately, they follow him. There is no debate or discussion, seemingly not even farewells. The meeting with Jesus is sufficient for them to get up and go.

Application

We are all at different stages of our lives. Probably few of us are at the point where we are looking for what is missing in our lives. Some of us may, like the people of Nineveh in the first reading, have become stuck in a rut that we would like to change but lack the willpower or conviction. Others of us may, like the apostles, be happily dealing with our daily lives without giving too much thought to what Christ might be asking of us over and above that. Others may have experienced that change that comes about through the encounter with Christ and are trying to tread a path that expresses that deeper commitment.

At the start of a New Year, at the start of a reading once again of a different Gospel, it is a good time to renew our awareness of what our belief in Christ means. As with the experience of the apostles, it is not so much a question of reflecting on ourselves but asking what we think Christ is asking of us. Who is this person who wanders into our lives and asks us to follow him? And can we get up and follow him, even though we don’t know where he is leading us? During this year St Mark’s Gospel will help us to discern that path.