



Society of African Missions

“The Mission”

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

9:30 am & 11:45 am

Christmas & New Year’s Day

10:00 am; 12 noon

Confessions Saturdays:

After 11:45am Mass.

Or by appointment.

Contact Fr. James McConnell

201-567-0450 Ext. 242

Bereavement & Visit to the Sick

Contact Fr. James McConnell

201-567-0450 Ext. 242

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday
 from 9:30am to 3:00pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr Dermot Roache, SMA

Director

201-567-0450 Ext. 253

S.M.A. Museum

Open Monday-Sunday from
 9:00am –5:00pm

Sunday Collection: \$1192

Thank you for your support.

Please remember to support
 your local parishes.



Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,
 Provincial Superior

Fr James McConnell,
 House Superior

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Masses for the week of FEBRUARY 4, 2024 – FEBRUARY 10, 2024

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv. & Dec. Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Feb. 4	10:00	Lilia R. Tocker+	Friend
	12:00	Arthur Flynn+	Flynn Family
Mon. Feb. 5	9:30	William Cole Hackman (Liv.)	Joseph & Noreen
	11:45	Deceased Loved Ones	
Tue. Feb. 6	9:30	Kyung Sil Kim	Friend
	11:45	Mary Tietjen+	Family
Wed. Feb. 7	9:30	Margaret Hayes+	Breda Walsh
	11:45	Michael James Harte+	Family
Thurs. Feb. 8	9:30	Paul Hamel Jr. & Oscar Brillo+	
	11:45	Clifford Tavares+	Breda Walsh
Fri. Feb. 9	9:30	Ramon Ambulo+	Rosanne Ambulo
	11:45	Daniel Yi & Anna Yi (Liv.)	Julianna Lee
Sat. Feb. 10	9:30	Aggoero & Laura Passarelli+	Enrico Salituro
	11:45	Theresa & Dolly Molloy+	Angela Hickey

Today’s Readings:

First Reading Job 7: 1-4. 6-7

Life is a burden for the melancholy who have no hope.

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 9: 16-19. 22-23

To preach the Gospel is a duty, even if it’s one that is not chosen.

Gospel Mark 1:29-39

He cured many who were suffering.

February — Black History Month.- The African Art Museum of the S.M.A. Fathers at Tenafly, New Jersey is one of five museum around the world founded by the Society of African Missions (S.M.A.) an international Roman Catholic missionary organization that serves the people of Africa. The museums continue the vision of S.M.A’s founder, Bishop Melchior de Marion Brésillac (1813-1859). The French-born clergyman urged his Society to respect and preserve the culture of the peoples they serve, the unique vision among missionaries of his time. Visit our S.M.A. African Art Museum. Open daily - Monday to Sunday 9am to 5pm

Next Saturday, February 10 at 8pm - HOLY HOUR

“He cured many who were suffering.”

Illustration

If you've ever come into contact with a charity or other organisation that works with people who are really down on their luck – people who are suffering from homelessness, say, or unemployment, or drug and drink problems – then you will have heard tales of how it's not just the experience of physical suffering that is so hard, but how troubled they have been, often feeling as if they have no hope left. But you often hear remarkable stories of transformation – of how those who have fallen by the wayside have been picked up by an organisation and helped to have their lives turned around. Even more extraordinary are the stories of those who, with help, have not only rebuilt their lives and rediscovered hope, but have then volunteered to help others. It's like a reverse domino effect: once one is built up, others are too. A community is formed where once people felt isolated, worn down by life, and are now healed.

Gospel teaching

This account from Mark's Gospel is typical of many of the stories of Jesus' ministry. It is the Sabbath and Jesus has been to synagogue with James and John, and then they went on to Simon and Andrew's house. They would have followed tradition by resting for the rest of the Sabbath, until they discover that there is someone in need – Simon's mother-in-law, who is sick. So, Jesus puts scruples to one side and focuses on what matters and attends to the woman. She is only the first of many to call for his help that day. By sundown, the end of the Sabbath, practically the whole town is crowding into the house.

Nobody of faith is turned away, but eventually there comes a time when even Jesus needs a break. It's worth noting how often we are told in the Gospels that Jesus takes times to pray. Prayer is as much a part of his life as action, before he again fulfils his mission by preaching. There is one line in this Gospel that could easily be overlooked but is deeply significant because it confirms how the impact of Jesus means conversion: when Simon's mother-in-law is cured of her fever, she doesn't relax, or run to tell people all about it. It is her moment to wait on the others – to serve them, just as Jesus had served her.

Application

The verses from Job, heard as part of the readings, suggest a sense of isolation, of feeling that life offers no purpose, no meaning and is overwhelming. Those are sentiments that could equally be expressed by people today. Job's world seems very small: he doesn't look out to others, nor is there a sense of God being there to sustain him.

Mark's Gospel is very different. Even on a quiet Sabbath day, this world is teeming with people: Jesus and his apostles, Simon's mother-in-law, the crowds who flock to Simon's house. Jesus is at the centre of a community. There is not the same isolation. But it is Jesus who makes a difference, turning to each person who needs him, one by one.

Like those who follow him in Mark's Gospel, we too can have our lives transformed by Jesus. Conversion requires trust, though, and like those who came to Simon's house at the end of the Sabbath day, trusting that Jesus would cure them, so we must be ready to offer him our trust if we are to undergo our own conversion.

A cure of a physical ailment may take a moment and last a lifetime, but conversion is not a one-off. Like a physical cure, it is about one's life changing for good, but it also requires our constant engagement.

Conversion is a relationship, a mutual exchange between God and ourselves. God's love is there for us – but are we willing to reciprocate?

We glimpse an insight into what full engagement – that conversion – means from what happens to Simon's mother-in-law. Jesus overturns the Sabbath order to cure her of fever that day, and what he gives to her inspires her to in turn give to others as she waits on them.

Conversion brings us to God, just as the encounter of Simon's mother-in-law with Jesus brought her to God. But sustaining our conversion needs prayer, just as Jesus also needed prayer. And that prayer will also help us build our relationships with our communities. Converted to Jesus, ready to serve others, we will, unlike Job, be able to cast aside our melancholy and our eyes will indeed see joy.