



# Society of African Missions

## “The Mission”

23 Bliss Avenue  
 Tenafly, NJ 07670  
 Phone: 201-567-0450  
 Visit our website  
[www.smafathers.org](http://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: \$963**

Thank you for your support.  
 Please remember to support  
 your local parishes.



**Administration:**

**Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,**  
 Provincial Superior

**Fr James McConnell,**  
 House Superior

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**  
**Masses for the week of FEBRUARY 18, 2024 – FEBRUARY 24, 2024**

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
<b>Sun.-Sat.</b>	<b>8:00</b>	<b>Liv. &amp; Dec. Benefactors of the SMA</b>	
Sun. Feb.18	10:00	Rufina Albamento+ & Marilyn Roy Benedeto+	
	12:00	Norman Tavares+	Breda Walsh
Mon. Feb. 19	9:30	Charles LaGreca+	Paul LaGreca
	11:45	Monica Kang Family	Cecilia Kay
Tue. Feb. 20	9:30	Catarina Yuni Rhee	Cecilia Kay
	11:45	Ludivina Fineza+	Rosanne Ambulo
Wed. Feb. 21	9:30	Bill Moran+ Anniversary of death	Jinnie Moran
	11:45	Catherine M. Hamill+	Friend
Thurs. Feb. 22	9:30	Family Mueller (Living)	Family Member
	11:45	Dennis & Patricia (Living)	Patricia Gorman
Fri. Feb. 23	9:30	William Cole Hackman (Liv.)	Joseph & Noreen
	11:45	Elizabeth Betley+	Breda Walsh
Sat. Feb. 24	9:30	Sung Whan Choi (Liv.)	Juliana and Joseph Family
	11:45	Birthday of Jessica Lee (liv.)	Juliana and Joseph Family

**Today’s Readings:**

**First Reading** Genesis 9:8-15

*God establishes a covenant with Noah, his descendants and every living creature. God sets a bow in the clouds as a sign of the covenant.*

**Second Reading** 1 Peter 3:18-22

*Peter gives hope to his listeners. As we prepare to renew our baptismal vows at Easter, we are called to repent, to change and to believe in the Gospel.*

**Gospel** Mark 1:12-15

*Jesus stays in the desert for forty days. He emerges to tell the crowds that the kingdom of God is close at hand.*

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:**

Every Friday during Lent  
 at **7:30pm**

**CONFESSIONS:**

Every Saturday afternoon  
 from 4-5pm or  
 by appointment.

**HOLY HOUR.- Saturday, March 23, 2024 at 8pm**

## **“Repent and believe the Gospel.”**

### **Illustration**

*“People always say that I didn’t give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn’t true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in.”*

*It was in December 1955 that Rosa Parks, an African American woman, was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white person. Her fight against racial injustice began early in her life. “Back then,” she said in an interview, “we didn’t have any civil rights. It was just a matter of survival, of existing from one day to the next.” As a child she had seen the Ku Klux Klan riding by, and she had been afraid that her house would be burnt down. She decided that it was important for her to get involved and to challenge the authorities that introduced racial segregation. Her actions resulted initially in the Montgomery bus boycott and eventually in a legal ruling that segregation on public transport was unconstitutional. Her determination not to be seen as a second-class citizen brought about massive change in society. It was not without personal cost, though, as she was arrested and lost her job. In an interview in 1992 she said, “I had not planned to get arrested. I had plenty to do without having to end up in jail. But when I had to face that decision, I didn’t hesitate to do so because I felt that we had endured that too long. The more we gave in, the more we complied with that kind of treatment, the more oppressive it became.”*

### **Gospel Teaching**

*Today we hear of the time that Jesus spent in the desert, after being baptised. We learn that he goes on to Galilee and calls on the people to repent and believe in the gospel.*

*There is a strong theme of repentance in today’s readings, as well as a sense of the opportunity of a fresh start. In the first reading, we hear that when the flood is over, God creates a covenant with Noah, his descendants and all living creatures. In the second reading, Peter reminds his listeners that they are changed through baptism. In both the first and second readings there is a turning around that brings comfort and encouragement – a turning towards God and away from the things that keep us from God.*

*Another theme here is relationship. We are creatures in relationship with our neighbours and with all living creatures, as well as with God. We hear today how Jesus tells the crowds that the kingdom of God is close at hand. The kingdom is good news for all, especially those who are poor or disadvantaged, oppressed or enslaved. It is freedom – not to hurt, but to heal, not to divide, but to bring together.*

*The crowds listening to Jesus are invited to change direction – to create better relationships with each other, with God and with their neighbour. The kingdom is one of justice and of peace. Injustice keeps us all apart from one another; it divides and polarises us.*

### **Application**

*Sometimes it feels as if Lent could be a rather gloomy season, but it is also a time of blessing. It gives us time to reflect and it is a great opportunity to commit to change, to take a new direction in our lives, to make a fresh start. As Sr Laurentia Johns OSB writes, “From wherever we may have wandered through neglect, poor choices, stress, busyness, God never tires of calling us back.”*

*In order to commit to change and to seek a different direction, we first need to be aware of what needs to change. What is pulling us in the wrong direction, and how can we turn around?*

*It is not that we will never make mistakes or choose the wrong path. But as Pope Benedict XVI reminds us, “Holiness does not consist in never having erred or sinned. Holiness increases the capacity for conversion, for repentance, for willingness to start again...”*

*Because we are creatures in relationship, this conversion – this need for change – is not just an individual matter. Like Rosa Parks, if we open our eyes we can see the need for change at a community level. Where do we see poverty and injustice? Where do we hear words of hatred and condemnation towards those who are different? What is happening to the beautiful world full of exquisite living creatures that God created? It is time to raise our voices in witness to the truth of the Gospel, even at personal cost. The kingdom is at hand.*

Living the Word

**SYMPATHY.**– The SMA Community send our sympathy to Felicitas Guinto and family in the passing of her husband Gilberto Guinto. May He Rest in Peace.

And also to Angela Hickey and family in the passing of her brother William Malloy. May He Rest in Peace.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.