

Fr. Joseph's Corner

A Short Story by Manfred Koehler

Jack took a look at his speedometer before slowing down: 73 in a 55 zone. The flashing red in his rearview mirror insisted he pull over quickly, but Jack let the car coast.

Fourth time in as many months. How could a guy get caught so often? When his car had slowed to 10 miles an hour, Jack pulled over, but only partially. Let the cop worry about the potential traffic hazard. Maybe some other car will tweak his backside with a mirror.

He slumped into his seat—the collar of his trench coat covering his ears. He tapped the steering wheel, doing his best to look bored, his eyes on the mirror. The cop was stepping out of his car, the big pad in his hand.

Bob? Bob from church? Jack sunk farther into his trench coat. This was worse than the coming ticket. A Christian cop catching a guy from his own church. A guy who happened to be a little eager to get home after a long day at the office.

Jack was tempted to leave the window shut long enough to gain the psychological edge but decided on a different tack. Jumping out of the car, he approached a man he saw every Sunday—a man he'd never seen in a uniform.

"Hi, Bob. Fancy meeting you like this."

"Hello, Jack." No smile.

"Guess you caught me red-handed in a rush to see my wife and kids."

"Yeah, I guess." Bob seemed uncertain. Good.

"I've seen some long days at the office lately. I'm afraid I bent the rules a bit—just this once." Jack toed at a pebble on the pavement. "Diane said something about roast beef and potatoes tonight. Know what I mean?"

"I know what you mean." (Blank stare.)

Ouch. This was not going in the right direction. Time to change tactics.

"What'd you clock me at?"

"At 71. Would you sit back in your car, please?"

"Now wait a minute here, Bob. I checked as soon as I saw you. I was barely nudging 65." (The lie seemed to come easier with every ticket.)

"Please, Jack—in the car."

Flustered, Jack hunched himself back into the car and stared at the dashboard. The minutes ticked by. Bob scribbled away on the pad. Why hadn't he asked for a driver's license?

A tap on the door jerked his head to the left. There was Bob, a folded paper in hand. Jack rolled down the window just enough for Bob to pass him the slip.

"Thanks," Jack said with a sneer in his voice, and Bob returned to his car without a word, while Jack watched his retreat in the mirror. When Bob vanished inside his car, Jack unfolded the sheet of paper. How much was this one going to cost? Wait a minute. What was this? Some kind of joke? Certainly not a ticket. Jack began to read:

Dear Jack,

Once upon a time I had a daughter. She was six when killed by a car. You guessed it—a speeding driver. A fine, three months in jail, and the man was free. Free to hug his daughters—all three of them.

I only had one, and I'm going to have to wait until Heaven before I can ever hug her again. A thousand times I've tried to forgive that man. A thousand times I thought I had. Maybe I did, but I need to do it again—even now. Pray for me. And be careful. My son is all I have left.

—Bob

Jack shifted uncomfortably in his trench coat. Then he twisted around in time to see Bob's car pull away and head down the road. Jack watched until it disappeared.

A full 15 minutes later, he, too, pulled away and drove slowly home, praying for forgiveness and hugging a surprised wife and kids when he arrived.

—Prayerful wishes, Fr. Joseph

Please Pray for Those on Our Prayer List:

David Leonard ♦ Steve Forrester ♦ Carl Johnson ♦ Dolores Koivisto ♦ Anita Marquez
Ben Guyger ♦ Georgia Fitzgerald ♦ Lloyd Rodgers ♦ Pierre Jones ♦ Sammi Pedersen
Jordan Ortega ♦ Chuck Renwick ♦ John Huthmacher ♦ Ed McNamara
Duncan Osgood ♦ Doni Bachand ♦ Karen Evans ♦ Brittany

St. Joseph Catholic Church

150 E First St., P.O. Box 1315, Prineville OR 97754
February 11, 2024 † The 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Vigil Mass Saturday	5:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass (English)*	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Mass (Spanish)	12:00 p.m.
Holy Days	8:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Mondays • Tuesdays • Thursdays	8:00 a.m.
Wednesdays • Fridays	12:00 p.m.

**Coffee and Donuts are served after the 9 a.m. Mass.*

Pastor ♦ Very Rev. Fr. Joseph Kunnelaya T.
Secretary ♦ Darlene Counts

Parish Office Hours ♦ Monday – Thursday ♦ 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Parish Office Telephone: (541) 447-6475

Fr. Joseph: 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. ♦ (541) 420-4458

Parish Website: <https://stjosephsprineville.org>

Email: stjosephparish@bendbroadband.com

Pastor: fatherjoseph@bendbroadband.com / joekunel55@gmail.com

Facebook: St. Joseph Parish / Instagram: [st_josephparish](https://www.instagram.com/st_josephparish) Director of Religious

Education ♦ Barbara Dalton

RCIA ♦ Jim Friese

Parish Bulletin Designer / Editor ♦ Tina Hill



Confessions

Wednesdays: 11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Saturdays: 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

(other times by appointment)

Anointing of the Sick

Contact Fr. Joseph for this Sacrament

- ♦ DIVINE MERCY CHAPLET AND CENACLE GROUP: Every Monday after the 8 a.m. Mass.
- ♦ FRIDAY ROSARY at 11:30 a.m., MASS at 12:00 p.m., EXPOSITION of the Blessed Sacrament immediately following Mass, EUCHARISTIC ADORATION 1–2 p.m., BENEDICTION AND REPOSITION



Baptisms

Baptisms will be held on Saturdays.

Parents of children to be baptized must be registered members of the parish 6 months prior to baptism.

A Baptismal Preparation Class is mandatory for both parents and godparents.

For more information, call the Parish Office.

Marriages

Couples need to make an appointment with Fr. Joseph 6 months before the proposed date.

A Marriage Preparation Course is mandatory.

MASS INTENTIONS / DAILY READINGS

The practice of requesting a Mass to be offered for loved ones, living or deceased, is a beautiful and wonderful part of our Catholic tradition.

👉 Please Call the Parish Office to Have a Mass Intention Reserved 👈

Monday	2/12/2024	8:00 a.m.	Fr. Cornelius Kiely (D)	Jas 1:1-11; Mk 8:11-13
Tuesday	02/13/2024	8:00 a.m.	Lorraine & Charles Popish (D)	Jas 1:12-18 ; Mk 8:14-21
Wednesday	02/14/2024	8:00 a.m.	BJ Barrus (D)	Jl 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Wednesday	02/14/2024	6:00 p.m.	Mike Mulvihill (D)	Jl 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20-6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thursday	02/15/2024	8:00 a.m.	Patricia Carroll (D)	Dt 30:15-20; Lk 9:22-25
Friday	02/16/2024	12:00 p.m.	Tocher Family (L)	Is 58:1-9a; Mt 9:14-15
Saturday	02/17/2024	5:00 p.m.	Elle Edgerly(L)	Gn 9:8-15; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15
Sunday	02/18/2024	9:00 a.m.	Lu Streetman (D)	Gn 9:8-15; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15
Sunday	02/18/2024	12:00 p.m.	Martina Ortiz (D)	Gn 9:8-15; 1 Pt 3:18-22; Mk 1:12-15

(L) Living ♦ (D) = Deceased

Today's Homily

EVERY TIME I hear this Gospel, I wonder how awful it must have been for someone who had leprosy, especially in the time of Jesus, when they didn't have any type of cure for it.

As you know, lepers were shunned and ignored by everybody—even their own friends and loved ones. To be shunned and ignored by someone we love has to be one of life's greatest heartaches.

Most of us have experienced being ignored, but it's usually only for a short while. How horrible it must be to be shunned permanently—a real tragedy. And that's how it was for the leper who asked Jesus to cure him.

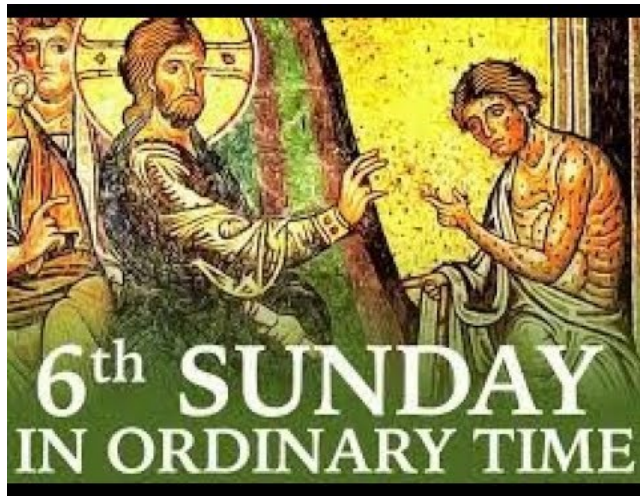
Try to remember that leprosy, even today, is not a “pretty” disease. So, notice how Jesus reacts to this outcast. Jesus doesn't react with revulsion, afraid that He'll be contaminated. Jesus has pity on this man. Although everyone else shuns him, Jesus doesn't. Although everyone thinks that that this man's situation is hopeless, Jesus doesn't. Although everybody flees from this ugly man in horror, Jesus doesn't. Instead, Jesus does the unthinkable. Jesus reaches out and actually touches the man, and this leper is cured. His life is changed dramatically for the better in one single moment. He is restored to society and can now live a normal life.

This simple story has good news for us who are alive today. It says that Jesus is a true friend of the outcast—that Jesus won't reject anybody who comes to Him. Now, as then, Jesus' touch gives us hope where we don't see any hope. Jesus restores people to fellowship with one another and to God. And, how great is that!?

The Good News of our Gospel today is that our situations are not hopeless. Always remember that God loves us just the way we are and not the way we think we ought to be. He doesn't love us because we are “good”—because we're not good. God doesn't love us because of what we can “do” for Him—because we can't do anything to earn His love.

God loves us because He is good, and He wants to share His love and goodness with us. And this love is absolutely unconditional—not the kind of love that says, “I will love you if . . .” or “I will love you when . . .”

For this love of God to bear fruit in our lives, however, we need to do what the leper did. He recognized



the hopelessness of his situation and came to Jesus for help. And so must we.

The leper didn't need any reminder of his hopelessness. Everyone around him—those who shunned him—reminded him of his situation every minute of every day.

Unfortunately, far too many people today have great difficulty recognizing the things in their lives that cry out for Jesus' healing touch—for His for-

giveness. These people have been in denial or have worn a mask for so long that they can no longer see their “real” selves anymore. These people are completely satisfied with their lives. They think that their attitudes and ideas are always the correct ones. Their achievements are always the best. In their own minds, their character is impeccable. So, the Good News in today's Gospel is not good news for these people. They have their act together and have no need for Jesus and His healing power.

If we are willing to humble ourselves and come to Jesus as the leper did—if we will tell Him how desperately we need Him—then we, too, will experience His healing touch. All we have to do is go to Him because He is there just waiting for us. And, if we think about it, all of us have a different kind of leprosy, don't we? Our leprosy might be gossip—ruining people's reputations instead of building them up. It might be that we are hard-hearted, or mean, or we are a liar, or unforgiving. Maybe we've become a sourpuss with an “I don't care attitude” toward life. These kinds of things can eat us away just as viciously as leprosy eats away at our body.

So, the real question is “Do I want to be cured?” And, if we do want to be cured, all we have to do is go to Jesus and ask Him to cure us. Sometimes these are two of the hardest things that we'll ever have to do in life because it's very hard to humble ourselves.

And it is humbling. Take off your mask of denial and do it. You will never be sorry.

Jesus can and will change our life for the better. He'll heal us of whatever ails us—whether it is physical or spiritual. All we have to do is admit our needs and come to Him. His compassion and love for us will do the rest. The Lord heals the broken-hearted regardless of whatever type of leprosy we have. Jesus lovingly invites us to “Come. Come and be healed.”

February—The Month of the Holy Family

Meetings

- February 11th—Hispanic Ministry at 1 p.m. in Room 4 in the Parish Hall
- February 20th—Knights of Columbus at 7 p.m. in the Parish Hall

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Shrove Tuesday Community Pancake Supper

On Tuesday, February 13th, from 5 to 7 p.m., there will be a Pancake Supper held at the Prineville Presbyterian Church. There is no charge for this—but “Free-Will Offerings” are accepted—with all proceeds going to the Redemption House Ministries.

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Lenten Schedule

- Ash Wednesday—the 1st day of Lent—is on February 14th. Masses are at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Stations of the Cross—are every Friday Night at 6 p.m., starting February 16th to March 29th, with a Soup Supper to follow.
- Lenten Penance Service is on Wednesday, March 13th, beginning at 6 p.m.
- Chrism Mass in Baker City is on Thursday, March 21st, at 11 a.m.—Invitations are on the table in the narthex.
- Palm Sunday, March 24th—Mass at 9 a.m., and Spanish Mass at 12 p.m.
- Holy Thursday, March 28th—at 6 p.m.
- Good Friday, March 29th—Way of the Cross at 3 p.m.; Passion Service and Veneration of the Cross at 6 p.m.
- Holy Saturday, March 30th—Easter Vigil Mass at 7 p.m.
- Easter Sunday, March 31st—Mass at 9 a.m., and Spanish Mass at 12 p.m.

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Benediction

This year, Benediction will be on the last weekend of every month—except for Easter weekend.

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Free Piano!

Would you like a piano? There is one in the Parish Hall that we are giving away. Contact the Parish Office at (541) 447-6475 to arrange a time to pick it up.

Friday Soup Supper

Every Friday during Lent our volunteers will provide a Soup Supper after the Stations of the Cross. This year's schedule is:

- February 16—Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers
- February 23—Hispanic Ministries
- March 1—Acolytes
- March 8—Pro Life
- March 15—Knights of Columbus
- March 22—Religious Education



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Young Adults, 18–39: Diocesan Lenten Retreat

Come begin your Lenten journey on Saturday, February 17th, and Sunday, February 18th* with engaging speakers (including Bp. Liam Cary, Sr. Ignacia Carrillo, FMA, Fr. Caleb Cunningham), Eucharistic Adoration with an opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance (with Bp. Cary, Fr. Mena, or Fr. Cunningham), time for personal prayer and reflection, small group fellowship, and Sunday Mass celebrated by Bishop Cary at the beautiful, peaceful Cascade View Retreat Center in Powell Butte. For more information or to register, please visit: dioceseofbaker.org. (Supported by the BAA.) *early/late arrival/departure available by request.

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Diocese of Baker Men's Conference

Join Catholic men from around the diocese for talks that inspire, conversations that give strength, and prayer that will help us become the husbands, fathers, and brothers God is calling us to be. Join us!

IN SPANISH: February 24th in The Dalles

IN ENGLISH: March 16th in Redmond.

For more info and/or to register: dioceseofbaker.org/mens-conference or call Bryce at (541) 388-4004.

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Usted puede ayudar a su matrimonio

¿Se siente sola o solo? ¿Están frustrados o enojados entre los dos? ¿Hablar de eso lo hace más difícil la situación? Retrouvaille (se pronuncia retro vay) ayuda a las en los momentos difíciles de su matrimonio. Retrouvaille es para las parejas que desean tener un redescubrimiento en su matrimonio y mejorar su comunicación. Puede visitar <https://helpourmarriage.org/es> para conocer testimonios. Para información confidencial o para registrarse para el fin de semana en **March 15–17** en Pasco, Washington. Llame al (800) 966-7981 ó al (509) 521-3733 ó al (541) 936-2448; ó visite el sitio <https://helpourmarriage.org/es>.