

“Behold the Lamb of God” was the message John the Baptist gave his disciples. John had faithfully listened to the voice of the Father who had called him and sent him with a mission to ‘prepare the way of the Lord’. Despite the lack of acceptance from the religious authorities John remained steadfast in denying that he was the ‘coming one’ and faithfully pointing to ‘one greater than (himself)’. So it is that John fulfills his role and mission by pointing Jesus out to his disciples by saying... ‘Behold the Lamb of God’.

We hear in the Gospel account how two of his disciples listen to the voice of the Father through the words of John and begin their journey of faith by following Jesus. They begin by moving from where they are to seeking where Jesus is staying which will entail many other changes in their lives...all the way to the cross.

We are called by the Father in many ways on this journey of life and faith. And we must remember that it is an ongoing journey of growth and change. How are we listening to the voice of the Father calling us to ‘joy’? What must we leave behind and what must we change to remain with and grow in love of Jesus?

This Sunday we hear of the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. John the Baptist is arrested and imprisoned which seems to be the signal for Jesus now to act and establish the ‘Kingdom of God’ and free humankind from its enslavement to the ‘prince of this world’. Jesus begins by calling his disciples to be a part of this great mission and we hear that they respond immediately and completely to his ‘word’.

Here again is that theme of the power of Jesus’ word...because as John’s Gospel tells us...Jesus is the ‘Word’ from the beginning through whom all things were made. Now the disciples will be formed to become instruments of gathering men into this Kingdom of God...fishers of men. Are we willing to be disciples who are sent to ‘make disciples of all nations’? Are we willing to stay close to Christ listening to the voice of the Father? Are we aware and willing that God will speak through us to others so they will come to him in faith and love?

Catholic Schools Week...is always a special time of celebration of the gift of our Catholic Faith and the schools of formation that pass it on to our children and enrich our families. The theme of the week... Catholic Schools, communities of faith, knowledge, and service.

We have enjoyed the benefit of SSPP School for nearly 150 years...the anniversary will be in 2018! We thank God for the faith, love, and dedication of so many over all these years and those who now give of themselves so generously to support and make our school such a great place to grow and learn.

New Church Gathering Space & Office Area...presentation by our Master Plan Committee went very well this past weekend. There was a good showing of very interested parishioners with good questions and insights into the needs of our parish and the practicality of this project. Things are not set in stone yet...and we are open to everyone’s input.

One of the issues is that we have to do something because of the IL 159 expansion and its effect on the entrance to our church with many safety issues involved. The highway has been expanded closer to our front entrance three times...this being the latest...any closer and it would be inside. One of the big concerns as with any project like this is our financial ability to take it on and complete it. We have been successful and very generous in the past, but we do need everyone to get excited about this for the present and the future for SSPP church and parish. If you have not yet pledged or given...this would be a great time to join in!

Candlemas & St. Blaise...are two feast that come back to back...Feb. 2nd & 3rd. We bless candles on the Feb. 2nd, with a procession into church...and bless throats on Feb. 3rd during the Mass.

Sign Up for...our Lenten Study Program... ‘Living the Eucharist’ next weekend...or anytime.