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### The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions For This Month

#### General Intention:

That all peoples may have access to water and other resources needed for daily life.

#### Mission Intention:

That the Lord may sustain the efforts of health workers assisting the sick and elderly in the world's poorest regions.

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# Disciple

A monthly resource for adult Catholics of  
the Diocese of Scranton

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## Breaking Open the Word—Notes on the Sunday Gospels

### Feb. 5 (Mk. 1:29-39)

In today's Gospel we see that Jesus labors tirelessly in spreading the Gospel in both word and deed. We see that He manifests the Gospel in deed through His healing of Simon's mother-in-law, as well as the gathering crowd. He manifests it in word through His preaching, which was so central to His mission that He moved on to the next town in order to bring the Good News to them, even though there were still some who had not been healed where He was staying.

### Feb. 12 (Mk. 1:40-45)

In today's Gospel Jesus tells the healed leper to "say nothing to anyone." We call this the "Messianic Secret," which is a major theme in Mark's Gospel (He often asks both demons and men to remain silent about His

identity). There are several possible reasons for this strategy: "1. He wanted to avoid a sensationalist reputation for being no more than a wonder-worker. Publicizing His deeds by word of mouth comes with the danger that rumors will begin to disconnect His miracles from His saving message. 2. He wanted to sidestep popular expectations that the Messiah would be a political and military leader. 3. He did not wish to ignite the wrath of His enemies before the appointed time of His Passion."

### Feb. 19 (Mk. 2:1-12)

In today's Gospel we see Jesus healing the paralytic who is lowered through the roof of the house by his friends. It is interesting to note that Jesus considers healing from sin to be more of a source for joy than physical healing, which is what his friends

are hoping for. In the end the paralytic receives both spiritual and physical healing, in that order.

### Feb. 26 (Mk. 1:12-15)

In today's Gospel we hear about Jesus being tempted in the desert and inaugurating His public ministry. In many ways, Jesus' temptation in the desert is a re-living of the experiences of Israel. We hear today that He was tempted in the desert among the wild beasts, just as Adam was tempted in the garden among the beasts. Likewise, He spends 40 days in the desert being tempted, just as the Israelites spent 40 years wandering and being tested in the desert. The greatest dissimilarity, of course, is that whereas Adam and Israel failed and gave in to temptation, Jesus overcomes Satan and proves His fidelity to the Father.

## Faith Foundations—Basics of Catholic Christian Belief

### The Church

*(From the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church)*

The following is a brief overview of Catholic belief about the Church.

#### What does the word "Church" mean?

The word 'Church' refers to the people whom God calls and gathers together from every part of the earth. They form the assembly of those who through faith and Baptism have become children of God, mem-

bers of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit.

#### What is the origin and the fulfillment of the Church?

The Church finds her origin and fulfillment in the eternal plan of God. She was prepared for in the Old Covenant with the election of Israel, the sign of the future gathering of all the nations. Founded by the words and actions of Jesus Christ, fulfilled by his redeeming death and Resurrection, the Church has been manifested as the mystery of salvation by the outpour-

ing of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. She will be perfected in the glory of heaven as the assembly of all the redeemed of the earth.

#### What is the mission of the Church?

The mission of the Church is to proclaim and establish the Kingdom of God begun by Jesus Christ among all peoples. The Church constitutes on earth the seed and beginning of this salvific Kingdom.

(continued on next page)

## Faith Foundations...Continued

### In what way is the Church a mystery?

The Church is a mystery in as much as in her visible reality there is present and active a divine spiritual reality which can only be seen with the eyes of faith.

### What does it mean to say that the Church is the universal sacrament of salvation?

This means that she is the sign and instrument both of the reconciliation and communion of all of humanity with God and

of the unity of the entire human race.

### Why is the Church the 'people of God'?

The Church is the 'people of God' because it pleased God to sanctify and save men not in isolation but by making them into one people gathered together by the unity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

### In what way is the Church the body of Christ?

The risen Christ unites his faithful people to himself in an

intimate way by means of the Holy Spirit. In this way, those who believe in Christ, in as much as they are close to him especially in the Eucharist, are united among themselves in charity. They form one body, the Church, whose unity is experienced in the diversity of its members and its functions.

### Why is the Church called the temple of the Holy Spirit?

She is so called because the Holy Spirit resides in the body which is the Church, in her Head and in her members.



**"Founded by the words and actions of Jesus Christ...the Church has been manifested as the mystery of salvation...."**

## Faith and Media—Reading and Viewing Recommendations

### Book of the Month:

#### **Saints: A Closer Look** by Thomas Dubay, S.M.

This short book examines what it is about saints that makes them who they are. Recognizing, of course, that they are humans like the rest of us, Dubay attempts to outline what their basic attitudes and attributes are that enable them to live lives of heroic virtue and how we too can follow in their footsteps. Dubay's chapters are brisk and his style is clear,

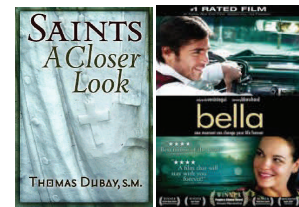
which makes this a great book for personal reading (Lent is right around the corner) or a parish book club.

### Film of the Month:

#### **Bella**

Since the annual March for Life has just come and gone it got me thinking once more about this great little life-affirming movie. A well done film that affirms the dignity of every

human life and extols the virtues of family. *Bella* was the highest rated movie by filmgoers in 2007. One of those rare movies that delivers a message without being preachy or heavy handed, it is appropriate for a teen and up audience.



Left: *Saints: A Closer Look* (Servant)

Right: *Bella* (Lions Gate)

## Catholic Calendar—Upcoming Opportunities for Adult Faith Formation

### Day of Reflection

#### **"Letting God Act During Lent: The Sunday Scriptures of Lent 2012"**

Presented by

Rev. James Price, C.P.

Wednesday, February 22, 2012

9:30a.m.-2:30p.m.

Fatima Renewal Center, Dalton

**Cost:** \$30 (includes lunch)

To register, please call the Fatima Renewal Center at

563-8500

### Continuing Education

#### **"Living the Eucharist"**

(Paulist Evangelization Ministries)

Presented by

Rev. James Price, C.P.

Six consecutive Tuesdays be-

ginning February 21, from 6:00-7:30p.m.

Diocesan Center, Scranton

**Cost:** \$30 (includes workbook)

To register, please call 207-2213, ext. 1133.

[A session for teens will also be held at St. Joseph Oblate

Seminary, Pittston]

**"Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you...."**

**~1 Pt. 3:15**