

Saint Anthony of Padua Parish

With the Eucharist at the centre, we are a community desiring to be saints, sent out to love like Jesus and proclaim Him in every circumstance.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 3, 2019

Speaking the Truth in Love

Have we ever practiced self-censorship? It means we don't say what we're really thinking because we're afraid of offending people, getting in trouble or losing people's friendship. [...] Someone recently e-mailed me saying I censor myself. Quote: "Your homilies are straight and to the point, but at the same time I get the feeling that you're holding back on saying a lot more. [...] And then he even quoted Darth Vader against me: Search your feelings, you know it be true!" I did search my feelings and found that he's right: I fear that some people here can't handle the whole truth, that some people who are coming to Christ may not come back and their spiritual journey will end. While that's a legitimate concern, I may not be trusting enough in God and in your maturity to handle something difficult.



But God calls us to be prophets who speak the truth. The First Reading is about the call of Jeremiah who lived in the 6th-7th century B.C. The people of Israel were immoral and following false gods, so God sent him to tell them their sins and to repent. "The word of the Lord came to me saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a Prophet to the nations'" (Jer 1:4-5).

1. God knows us before we're alive because He exists outside of time. He has this great plan for us: to be loved and to love.
2. 'Consecrated' means to separate something or someone for God's service, especially for worship (New Jerome Biblical Commentary). But Pope Benedict says that separating things or people from everyday life is also done in order to serve and heal people. Consecrated people exist also for the good of other people (Jesus of Nazareth, Vol. 2).
3. Like we've said before, a prophet in the Bible isn't someone who primarily predicts the future, but who reveals Who God is, shows us His face, and the path to take.
4. And it's not just to a small group of people, but "to the nations," because Israel was called by God to be the elder brother to the nations who would lead them back to the Father (Scott Hahn, Catholic Bible Dictionary).

When we hear this, we realize: God loves us so much that He had the idea of us before we were born. We've always been loved. And we've been chosen to speak the truth, to say what no one else is saying. And to do it in love! The unique reality about Jeremiah is that when he speaks the truth it's done out of love. Of all the prophets, He was the most sensitive to God's love for his people, and our love for Him (New Jerome Biblical Commentary). So, we speak the truth, why? Because God wants to bring us home. God then says, "Therefore, gird up your loins; stand up and tell them everything that I command you. Do not break down before them..."

And I for my part have made you today a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall ... They will fight against you; but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you... to deliver you." 'Gird up your loins' means to carry out God's call promptly and get ready for combat, while "fortified city" refers to "steadfast strength... a firm man of God."

Let's apply this to our situation. The verse, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" has been used by the Church for thousands of years to support the truth that human life starts in the womb, at conception. And because, in a

month, we're going to do four days of pro-life witness outside B.C. Women's hospital, we need to talk about abortion. [...]

When we talk about abortion or any difficult topic, Jesus has told us today to speak the truth in love. So, be assured of my love. We do it to stop the murder of 41 million babies every year worldwide. We do it so that people who have had abortions may turn to God for forgiveness and healing, because, whether we admit it or not, people suffer from abortion. We do it to stop anyone else among us from choosing abortion. This doesn't mean being rude or offensive. It means showing respect for people while not holding back. As the famous Ben Shapiro says, "Facts over feelings." I realized that if I as a preacher hold back, that's an insult to you, because it means I don't believe you're able to accept it.

The foundational argument in the abortion debate is that truth matters. Choice is important, but what kind of choice are we talking about? When we go to the store, we can choose what food we want to buy, but we can't choose to steal it—one choice is about my preferences and one is about right and wrong. These choices are frowned upon by society and even made illegal. Whenever some meat is contaminated, the government will take it off the shelves because it can kill us or unborn children. They take away our choice because it's a lethal choice. So we can't choose to do whatever we want, especially if that choice is lethal. Same with abortion. Yes, it's a choice, but that doesn't mean it should be legal. For instance, if a woman were to intentionally buy contaminated meat and feed it to her children, the government would arrest her for child abuse. So the question isn't, "Is it a choice?" but, "What kind of choice is it? Is it lethal?"

People in favour of abortion often sidestep that question saying that whether the fetus is a person or not depends on the mother: Pro-life mothers think it's a person so they can treat it as a person whereas pro-choice mothers disagree so they don't have to treat it as a person. They argue that since there's no consensus on whether it's a person or not, we should leave it up to the individual mother. Using that logic, pro-choice people would have to admit

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 1:00 pm—3:00 pm
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Parish Registration

Our parish family warmly welcomes new parishioners. Please register by filling out a registration form located in the vestibule or the Parish Office. If you are registered and moving, please advise the parish office.

Sunday Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm
 Sunday 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm

Weekdays

	Masses	Confessions
Monday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Tuesday	7:30 pm	
Wednesday & Thursday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Friday	8:00 am	7:45 to 7:55 am
Saturday	9:00 am	9:45 am

Confession

Saturday afternoon 4:45 pm to 4:55 pm
 1st Saturday each month 9:45 am to 1:00 pm;
 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm;
 7:00 pm to 9:45 pm

Eucharistic Adoration enter at 1365 West 73rd Avenue
 Tuesday to Friday: 9:00 am to 10:00 pm

First Saturday of each month: 9:30 am to 9:30 pm in the church during all-day confessions.

First Friday of each month: 8:45 am to 10:00 am in the church followed by **Benediction**.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

Please call the parish office for more information on RCIA classes and other Sacraments.

St. Anthony of Padua School

Kindergarten to Grade 7
 1370 West 73rd Avenue,
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 School Email: *office@stanthonyofpaduaschool.ca*

Weekday Masses & Intentions

Day	Feast or Memorial	Missal Page	Intention
Monday, February 4	Ferial	471	Eve Erdman †
Tuesday, February 5	<i>Memorial</i> St. Agatha	474	Remembrance Tree
Wednesday, February 6	<i>Memorial</i> St. Paul Miki & Companions	476	Agnes Burke †
Thursday, February 7	Ferial	478	Don Rencz †
Friday, February 8	Ferial	480	Gaspare Leone †
Saturday, February 9	Ferial	482	Carlos Peralta †

Prayers for the Sick At Holy Mass we remember the sick including: Nita Carvajal, Nung Chum, Isobel Clancy, Nick De Vos, Tamara Dixon, Elaine dos Remedios, Kathleen Francis, Teresa Gaio, Feli Hempl, Cecile Hernandez, Yvonne Kharoubeh, Molly Loui-Ying, Huguette Piché, Barney Rousseau, Therese Rozario, Christina Sayo, Filomena Sison, Liliana Taylor, Fernando Tiago, Theresa Yoshioka.

Upcoming Homily Themes

February 9 & 10
A Plan of Growth



February 16 & 17
Guest Preacher:
Deacon Felix Min

February 23 & 24
How to Love Those
Who Hurt Us



March 2 & 3
The Fruits of the
Eucharist

ANNOUNCEMENTS



40 DAYS FOR LIFE Wednesday, March 6 to Sunday, April 14 Take part in this campaign by committing to an hour to stand vigil at West 32nd Avenue and Willow Street, by BC Women's Hospital. Our parish has designated 4 days: Thursday, Mar. 7, Friday, Mar. 8, Saturday, Mar. 9 and Sunday, Mar. 10 to participate in the vigil. You can sign up for an hour on any one of these days by filling out one of the cards in the pews or calling the Parish Office.

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat He is waiting, and He is listening. He yearns to fill your heart with mercy and His love. Join us on a Rachel's Vineyard™ Retreat and discover what our Father's loving embrace can do to heal what the abortion decision has brought to your life. Come join us on a Rachel's Vineyard™ Retreat. Next Retreat is May 2019. For confidential information and to register call 604.525.0999.



Changing Minds & Saving Lives: Becoming an Effective Pro-life Ambassador on Saturday, February 16 at 10:00 am in the Church Hall

For over 30 years, abortion has been legally unrestricted in our country, and the lives of millions of Canadian children have been ended as a result. As Catholics, it is our God-given duty to respond to this crisis. Join **Cameron Côté**, Western Outreach Director for the **Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform**, as he explains how you can be a part of the movement to end the killing. He will discuss the history of abortion in Canada, how the pro-life movement is responding, how to have compassionate and compelling conversations about abortion, and how you can make a difference locally, provincially and nationally. The workshop will be followed by the opportunity to put this invaluable training into action by registering for pro-life outreach as well as the 40 Days for Life project.

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that, since there's no consensus on the value of women worldwide, we should let each individual society determine what rights women have—that doesn't make sense. The pro-choice argument undermines the claims of women's rights.

Pro-life people aren't making preference claims, but factual claims, about facts and truth. If, for example, I offer you an apple or an orange, it wouldn't matter what choice you make because it's a preference claim. But if one of the fruits were poisoned, it would matter which you chose because it's no longer about preferences but about facts: which fruit nourishes and which kills. So, when we argue that fetuses are persons, we're not making a preference claim, but a factual claim, and people have to provide better facts than we do about why they think an unborn baby isn't a person, rather than avoiding finding out the truth with the evasive idea of choice.

And ignorance isn't sufficient. If we were about to demolish a building and someone said that they don't know if anyone's inside, would it be okay to start the demolition? No, because we would need to be sure that no one's inside. In the same way, our society can't do abortions until it knows for sure that fetuses aren't persons. Don't dodge the question saying we don't know. Give us facts proving it's not human. [...]

God doesn't want us to censor ourselves because we were called from before we were born to be prophets. Our calling is to be like Jesus, who always spoke the truth in love. And now we're going to have the testimony of one of our sisters who had an abortion. Like Jeremiah, she will speak out against sin and proclaim God's mercy.

What could be worse than a daughter- fresh out of college, single, coming home pregnant? I was all of the above, my parents' favourite daughter, but ironically, their greatest disappointment.

Where was God when I felt alone and miserable? Where was God when I thought that taking away my child inside of me was the best option? He was there, but I looked the other way. I thought I had faith, I didn't and a big part of me died. Abortion may have brought me back to my family and the comforts of home, but it did not give me peace. The physical pain caused by abortion is nothing compared to the mental anguish knowing that you've taken away one of God's human creations. Thirty years of living in tremendous remorse and in a state of mortal sin finally caught up with me.

God sent help to fill the empty space in my heart. Fr. Justin's homilies in part led me to confession, but ultimately, it was the grace and the will to choose what is right and what my conscience is telling me to do that finally liberated me from spiritual death. Was it easy? It's never easy to quantify sins and say them out loud to a priest. It was painful having to relive the past and realize how you've hurt God in so many ways, but that good Confession made me realize how merciful God is and brought peace in my heart. It was too late when I realized the irreversible damage that I had done to my baby, but it will never be too late to trust in God again, because through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, He makes all things new. In spite of my brokenness, He blessed me with something I've always yearned for - my family. It was difficult to tell my children about my abortion, but spending hours in adoration gave me the courage to speak the truth to them about my past. I wanted them to know that serious mortal sins like abortion are realities in life that they may be tempted to choose. Speaking the truth to them has made us closer. I thank my husband for being patient and understanding, and my children for their love and acceptance. I may never be their perfect mom and wife, but I can still be the perfect daughter whom God has created in His image and likeness, if I put my faith and trust in Him completely.

Participating in 40 Days for Life gave me the courage to stand in front of all of you tonight to tell you my story, not to embarrass myself and my family, but to let you know that abortion is not the solution, that there are other options. To say, therefore, that God is patient would be an understatement. He, after all, waited for some 30 years for his prodigal daughter to find her way back home. So whatever grave mortal sins you have committed, take those agonizing steps to confession, because it's guaranteed to give you a happy ending. Nothing compares to what having a relationship with God can give.

Four years ago, as I watched Father Justin come out of the confessional on his first weekend here in Marpole, it wasn't him that I saw, but God's mercy. His first weekend homily challenged me to "Give God Permission" to take control of my life. I did, and that has made all the difference.

- excerpt from Fr. Justin's homily, February 3, 2019

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