

# 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 OF LENT

MARCH 31, 2019

## Do all good people go to heaven?



Rembrandt's *The Return of the Prodigal's Son*

We want everyone to be saved, and God wants everyone to be saved; but our culture and the Bible disagree on how they can be saved. 1 Timothy 2:3-5 says, “God our Savior... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” To understand the Biblical answer, we need to be rational, not emotional. We need to seek the truth, even if it hurts, because the truth is always better than a lie. Being a good person is good and praiseworthy, but it's not enough to go to heaven, for three reasons.

**Reason #1: When people say that someone was a good person, how good were they?** Are people good based on Biblical standards, or are they good compared to the rest of society? Being good in our culture means being...? Nice. But a lot of nice people live more or less selfish lives and don't stand up against evil. So, are they really that 'good'? Is this type of goodness extraordinary or heroic? No. If goodness is more or less selfish and can't stand up against evil, that's not goodness.

God speaks to us through our conscience and tells us what's right and wrong. How many of us can say that we've obeyed our conscience throughout our life? Before I practiced my Catholic faith I can tell you honestly that I violated my conscience a lot. Why? Because everyone else was doing it. And if people criticized me, I'd just respond, “But I'm still a good person.” Was I? I was just using the good person idea as an excuse to do what I wanted. Don't a lot of us do that? So, it's reasonable to think that people who don't believe in Jesus would do the same.

Here's the point: I don't think we're all as good as we think we are. I think many people, including Christians, use the good

person idea to excuse their bad behaviour. There's so much crime in Canada, and so much crime that's never caught, and so much lying, and it's done by a lot of good people, and a lot of good people do nothing to stop it, and they don't need to, because they're already good people.

**Reason #2: Everyone needs a saviour, Christians and non-Christians alike.** Because we all sin and need to make up for them. As we talked about in January, sin isn't just breaking of a rule. It's more fundamentally a damaging of a relationship with God, and we need to repair that relationship. Every person who has ever lived has disobeyed God the Father in their conscience and not trusted Him. Who's going to make up for this? Will there be any human being who will obey, trust and love the Father the way He deserves? Yes. That's Jesus. The man who died without believing in Jesus was a sinner like the rest of us, and needs a saviour, just like we do.

**Reason #3: Here we come to the essence of the answer. Being a good person is not enough to get to heaven, because what's the nature of heaven? It's being in God's house with God Himself.**

The Gospel today illustrates this truth: “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So the father divided his property between them” (Lk 15:11-12). Scripture scholars point out how this would be insulting to the father, to ask for an inheritance that would only come once the father had died! The son represents humanity, who says to God, “I don't care about You. You're as good as dead. I want to do my own thing. Leave me alone.”

“A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country” (Lk 15:13). The distant country means “interior estrangement from the world of the father... interior rupture of relation...” (Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth*, Vol. 1, 203). “When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. The young man would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything” (Lk 15:14-16). Some people honestly believe they don't need God, and they are pretty happy. But there is still deep down a desire for perfect happiness planted in them by God. And when we don't know and love Him, “we underlive our lives, undervalue ourselves and others, and underestimate our full destiny and call” (Fr. Robert Spitzer, SJ, *Finding True Happiness*, 65).

“But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands’” (Lk 15:17-19). These “words show that his whole life is now

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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 3:45 pm to 4:45 pm  
 1<sup>st</sup> 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 73<sup>rd</sup> 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.

## Weekday Masses & Intentions

Day	Feast or Memorial	Missal Page	Intention
Mon., Apr. 1	Ferial	202	Yeh Family
Tues., Apr. 2	Ferial	205	Remembrance Tree
Wed., Apr. 3	Ferial	207	Margarito Velasco Jr. †
Thurs., Apr. 4	Ferial	211	Josephine Ong †
Fri., Apr. 5	Ferial	214	Gaspere Leone †
Sat., Apr. 6	Ferial	217	The Unborn

**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, Susan Panlican, Huguette Piché, Ron R.,  
 Barney Rousseau, Therese Rozario, Christina Sayo, Liliana Taylor, Fernando  
 Tiago, Cynthia Wing, Theresa Yoshioka.

## Holy Week Schedule

**Sunday, April 14**

**Penitential Service 7:00 pm**

**Tuesday, April 16**

**Stations of the Cross, 7:00 pm**

**Thursday, April 18**

**Mass of the Lord's Supper  
 7:30 pm**

**Nocturnal Adoration,  
 9:00 pm until 3:00 pm  
 (Friday)**

**Friday, April 19**

**Stations of the Cross, 12:00 pm  
 Celebration of the Lord's  
 Passion, 3:00 pm**

**Saturday, April 20**

**Easter Vigil, 9:00 pm  
 Easter Vigil Reception, 12:00 am  
 Please bring something to share.**

**Sunday, April 21**

**Easter Sunday Masses  
 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm**

## Upcoming Homily Themes



**April 6 & 7**

***Judging is Wrong,  
 But Sometimes it's Right***

**April 13 & 14**

***What's Better: Spending Time  
 with a Picture of a Friend or  
 Spending Time with That  
 Friend?***

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ALL DAY CONFESSIONS & ADORATION: SATURDAY, APRIL 6

### CONFESSION TIMES

9:45 AM — 1:00 PM

1:30 PM — 4:30 PM

7:00 PM — 9:45 PM



SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR ADORATION  
ARE IN THE FOYER OF THE CHURCH



PRAISE & WORSHIP AT 7:30 PM

### Do you feel called to be a

#### Permanent Deacon?

Men between the ages of 35 and 60 interested in ordained ministry, along with their spouses, can learn more about the permanent diaconate at information sessions this April and May in Vancouver and Langley. To register, please visit <http://stmarkscollege.ca/news-events/events/permanent-diaconate-information-sessions> or email [deacons@rcav.org](mailto:deacons@rcav.org).



The CWL is preparing for their next bake sale on Passion Sunday, and are requesting donations of Easter-themed baked goods for their April 7 event. If you can help, kindly bring your baked goods to the ladies in the church hall before the 8:00 am and 10:00 am Sunday Masses. Thank you, in advance to those who can help the CWL!



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a steady progress leading 'home'" (Pope Benedict, 205).

**This is the answer to our question! Being a good person isn't enough to get into heaven, because heaven's about a relationship!** Remember this question: Can someone go home to the Father's house without loving the Father? [...] If heaven were just earth but better, then being a so-called good person would be enough. But, if heaven is God's home where the Father is, then it's not about being a good person. It's about our relationship with Him.

So, will that good person who didn't believe in Jesus go to hell? The answer is: We don't know. He was a sinner like the rest of us and needed a saviour. [...]

Vatican Council II explains it another way: "Those also can attain to salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience" (Lumen Gentium, 16). Let's read this carefully:

The Church is saying salvation is possible for non-Christians, but it's not saying it's likely. We don't know who is saved, even for Christians. Baptism gives us a pledge of salvation (Cf. CCC 1274) but we can lose it through mortal sin; that's why we pray for each other when we die, because our assumption is that we go to purgatory, but we don't know for sure. Jesus teaches, "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (Mt 7:13-14). The road to hell, the road away from the Father, is wide and easy, and many people take it. The road home, to the Father, is narrow, hard, and few find it.

Going back to the text from Vatican II, which says "through no fault of their own." This is important because it's possible that non-Christians may turn away from Jesus through their own fault. Maybe they choose not to follow Jesus' teachings. It continues by saying that they can be saved if they

"sincerely seek God." [...]

Lastly, the text says, "Strive to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience." Do they obey their conscience? For me, I need the Church to tell me when I'm doing wrong and I need confession. Some people may say, "But some people never know the Father. So, there's nothing for them to reject." On the contrary, there is something to reject, because all people hear God whispering to them in their conscience. If people can reject their conscience, they can reject God. If they can seek greater goodness and truth, they're morally bound to seek it. [...]

The Father is waiting for everyone to come home! But we shouldn't be naïve and think that everyone's sincerely seeking God and just haven't found Him. Vatican II also says, "But often men, deceived by the Evil One, have become vain in their reasoning and have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, serving the creature rather than the Creator." If people are saved who never knew Jesus, it's reasonable to think that these are the people who would have loved him, would have chosen to receive baptism had they known about it.

Today, let's do what Jesus does: 1) Stop thinking about individual people and whether or not they go to heaven or not. It's completely useless to worry about it. Pray for all people who die, because they all need God's mercy. 2) Spend more time praying for the salvation of the whole world, because people are separated from Him, and the point of life is to know and love Him (Cf. Jn 17:3). 3) Seek God today. Do His will. Don't complicate the issue. 4) Jesus went looking for people and so should we (Cf. Lk 19:10). Not in a pushy, aggressive way because that's not right, but in a loving, inviting way. Jesus always invites. We should talk to people about life, their frustrations, their longings. [...]

God the Father is so good and wants everyone to be saved. We don't know if everyone will be saved, because it's not about being a good person. It's about being with the Father.

- excerpt from Fr. Justin's homily, March 31, 2019

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