

AD LUCEM!



INSTITUTE FOR
DIACONAL STUDIES

APRIL 2016

TO: INSTITUTE FOR DIACONAL STUDIES COMMUNITY
FROM: DEACON BOB PUHALA, DIRECTOR



This month, first-year candidates in IDS' 2018 cohort will be instituted into the Ministry of Reader by Most Rev. Joseph N. Perry. This is a meaningful benchmark in the formation journey for those candidates, along with their wives, families and friends who support them. Though we could spend some time reflecting on the duties and responsibilities of this instituted ministry that was reformed by Pope Paul VI in 1972, it might be just as meaningful to examine the man who is the patron saint of all readers and lectors --- St. Bede the Venerable.

St. Bede was born in Wearmouth-Jarrow, England, near the twin monasteries of St. Peter and St. Paul, established in 672 and 681, respectively. Little is known about St. Bede's early life, but evidence suggests he came from a noble family. He was sent to the monasteries when he was seven to be educated and he eventually became a monk, spending almost all his life at the monastery and devoting himself to the study of Sacred Scripture. St. Bede was certainly in the right spot for that endeavor since Wearmouth-Jarrow was a powerhouse of intellectual inquiry, boasting one of the greatest libraries of Europe at that time.

St. Bede is known for his commentaries on the Pentateuch and various other books of the Bible, as well as theological and scientific treatises, historical works, and biographies. *Historia Ecclesiastica*, a history of the English Church and the English people, completed in 731, is his best known work.

Bede was called 'the Venerable' to acknowledge his wisdom and learning, and this title was formalized at the Council of Aachen in 853. In 1899, he was declared the only English doctor of the Church. He died in Wearmouth-Jarrow on 25 May, which is his feast day.

Like St. Bede, readers and lectors are called to study Sacred Scripture and grow in holiness. Proclaiming the Word is so essential to the Church's mission that, during Holy Mass, the Church teaches that it is God himself who speaks to His people through the reader/lector. Let us all give the Lord thanks for being blessed with the gift of this wondrous ministry.

St. Bede, as a Doctor of the Church, lover of God and of the truth, you are a model for all readers of God's inspired Word. We beg that through your intercession, readers and lectors be moved to careful study and preparation for proclamation by prayerfully pondering the sacred texts and invoking the Holy Spirit. Help them all to proclaim the truth in such a way that those who hear may be touched by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Divine Mercy



This year the Church celebrated Divine Mercy Sunday in the special context of the Jubilee Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis. In the gospel reading, the disciples are gathered together in hiding. They are hiding due to a real fear for their lives and futures. The risen Jesus appears to them with the greeting, "Peace be with you," words he repeats several times. He offers peace and comfort in place of fear, anxiety, and uncertain direction. Ultimately, Jesus sends these disciples forth into the world as instruments of God's divine mercy, delivering the good news of salvation.

What does divine mercy look like? Jesus himself teaches us about true love for neighbor, as the Church's liturgical celebrations remind us perennially. On Holy Thursday we learned about God's love manifested in humble service of others. On Good Friday we stood before God's ultimate act of mercy, love, and sacrifice – Jesus on the Cross. And, of course, throughout Lent we were all invited to practice almsgiving, that is, finding compassion in our hearts and sharing our material wealth with others.

In his *Summa* St. Thomas Aquinas defines mercy as "the endeavor to alleviate the misery of another." In his life, and in his ultimate sacrifice, Christ demonstrates this to perfection. His entire life is an endeavor to alleviate our misery – our alienation from the Lord and really from each other – due to sin.

Each of us has been graced with God's loving kindness – an unconditional, unending love that never wearies of seeking reconciliation. It is a free gift and one that evokes gratitude. Several psalms open with these words: "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever!"

Whether lay or ordained, we are all called to acts and relationships marked by kindness, compassion, and forgiveness. As ministers of the Church, we are called to be even more public examples of these qualities. We are called to help alleviate the misery of others, whether it is material, physical, or spiritual in nature. Let us take to heart these words from Pope Francis' prayer for the Jubilee of Mercy:

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified. You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Around IDS

Courses

Spring Semester courses continue:

- Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Aspirancy)
- New Testament (Year 1)
- Ecclesiology & Mariology (Years 1 & 2)
- Moral Theology (Years 2 & 3)
- Presiding at the Rites II (Year 3)

Other formation sessions:

- Apr. 2 – Wives' Day of Recollection (Key Event – Years 1, 2, 3)
- Apr. 9 – Moral Theology II & Vestment Fitting with House of Hanson (Year 3)
- Apr. 16 – Institution of Reader Retreat (Year 1)
- Apr. 17 – Institution of Reader (Key Event – Years 1, 2, 3)
- Apr. 23 – Wives' Day of Recollection (Key Event – Aspirancy)
- Apr. 30 – Meeting with Archbishop Cupich (Key Event – Year 3)

Exploring the Diaconate

Once again this year, IDS held *Exploring the Diaconate* information sessions at all six vicariates of the archdiocese, and four additional sessions at USML. These sessions were intended to raise vocation awareness of potential applicants who would begin formation in August 2016.

However, just because our formal *Exploring* sessions have been completed, it doesn't mean that we aren't counting on all of you to spread the word and the awareness about the possibility of a diaconate vocation. Please remain active in surfacing candidates in your parish and bringing these names to the attention of your pastors. Deadline for application for the 2016-17 formation year is 1 May 16. For more information, contact Deacon Bob Puhala, bpuhala@usml.edu, 847.837.4564.

IDS April Birthdays

Prayers for a special blessing on these folks who celebrate birthdays this month:

4/5 – Linda Wojnar; 4/5 – Julie Brenner; 4/16 – Rajan Fernando; 4/18 – Andy Baker; 4/19 – Bill Flamm; 4/23 – Sheela Fernando; 4/25 – Laura Ruzevich; 4/30 – Lisa Onischuk

Let Us Remember in Prayer Those Entrusted to Our Care

Pray for our beloved who have passed from this life to the next: Johnny Miller, Bridget Lenihan, Ann Chester, Elizabeth Ruth Lynch, Dr. Gerry Girdaukas, Maria Carmen Woodard, Kathy O'Brien, Robert Kunkel, Rev. Richard Mueller, Rev. Luc Tran, Tom Tricarico, Anna Georgen, Jerry Cerabona, Deacon Joseph Walsh, Kathy Fekete, Alice P. Anthony, JoAnn Streppa

Pray in a particular way for all of our sick: Stanislaw Ciomek, Marites Negrón, Catherine O'Hearn, Rita Farina, Justin Souta, Tom Seehausen, Yuki Birck, Lorraine Olley, Barbara Kupsak, Gloria Enriquez, Joan Madej