

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 13 - 14, 2021**

Valentine’s Day/President’s Day

**Gospel reading**

Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to him [and kneeling down] begged him and said, “If you wish, you can make me clean.”

Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, “I do will it. Be made clean.” The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once.

Then he said to him, “See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.”

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

**Homily helper / connection to stewardship / giving / charity / almsgiving**

* Valentine’s Day
* President’s Day (George Washington and Abraham Lincoln)
* Love, kindness, and gratefulness
* Stewardship is love; in giving, praying and in serving

**Appeal Script/Talking Points**

*(This weekend is Announcement Weekend and it serves as a precursor to the in-pew solicitation weekends happening on February 20-21 and 27-28. Use these talking points below during the weekend of February 13-14 to thank your parishioners and ask them to support the Appeal online.)*

* The Annual Diocesan Appeal brings a new sense of hope for people in our diocese.
* As this year’s Appeal begins, I encourage each of you to support not only our parish offertory, which directly supports our parish, but I also ask you to prayerfully consider giving to the Appeal.
* The Appeal helps to engage the next generation, provide for those in need and build Catholic communities in many important ways.
* We are so blessed at <PARISH NAME> because of the assistance of the Appeal. [List the blessings and parish ministries supported by the Appeal. For example: We have a beautiful church, we have a great school, or we have a wonderful religious education program.]
* I know it’s not always easy to support the church, whether that is our parish or the diocese and I know it’s not always easy for me to stand up here and ask you week after week. But, please know the importance of what the Appeal is doing and the impact it’s making in the lives of others.
* During this Appeal season, many of you have received a letter from Bishop Knestout and I ask you to 1) read through it closely and 2) reflect on how you can help him fulfill his mission so, together, we can build the Body of Christ.
* For those of you who did not receive a mailing or have not had time to respond to it, we will conduct our In-Pew pledge process at all Masses during the weekends of February 20-21 and February 27-28.
* With the reality of an ongoing pandemic, our in-pew process will be **fully digital** this time. Instead of handing out pledge cards at Mass, we will be having our parishioners make their 2021 Appeal contribution securely and conveniently online at <https://richmondcatholicfoundation.org/appeal/>.
* If you have any questions at all about the Appeal, or about how to make your gift online, please reach out to <PARISH CONTACT NAME> at the parish office.
* We look forward to all of you helping us make this year’s Appeal a success.

**Intercession**

That through the love and charity of the ministries supported by the Annual Diocesan Appeal, God may be glorified.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

As we prepare to celebrate “Presidents’ Day” holiday, it is important to remember the deep faith of our founding fathers. On October 3, 1789, George Washington gave a Presidential Proclamation to acknowledge God and offer “thanksgiving” to him. The proclamation stated, in part, “...it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor” — and “to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God…”

And, we are all familiar with the greatness of Abraham Lincoln, whose purpose was to free the slaves and heal a nation. In his second inaugural address on March 4, 1865, he stated, "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan…”.

These are examples of their faith in and reverence for God. This week, as we celebrate them and celebrate LOVE through St. Valentine’s Day, let’s remember the work of charity, kindness and love that is accomplished through the Annual Diocesan Appeal, as well. Please make your pledge today.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

As we prepare for St. Valentine’s Day and the Presidents’ Day holidays, let us remember the love we share and the deep faith of our founding fathers as we make our pledge to the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

**Social media posts/content**

Photo: Monstrance photo | *“God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.” – 1 John 4:16*

Copy: “And thank you for sharing your blessings with those who need it most!”