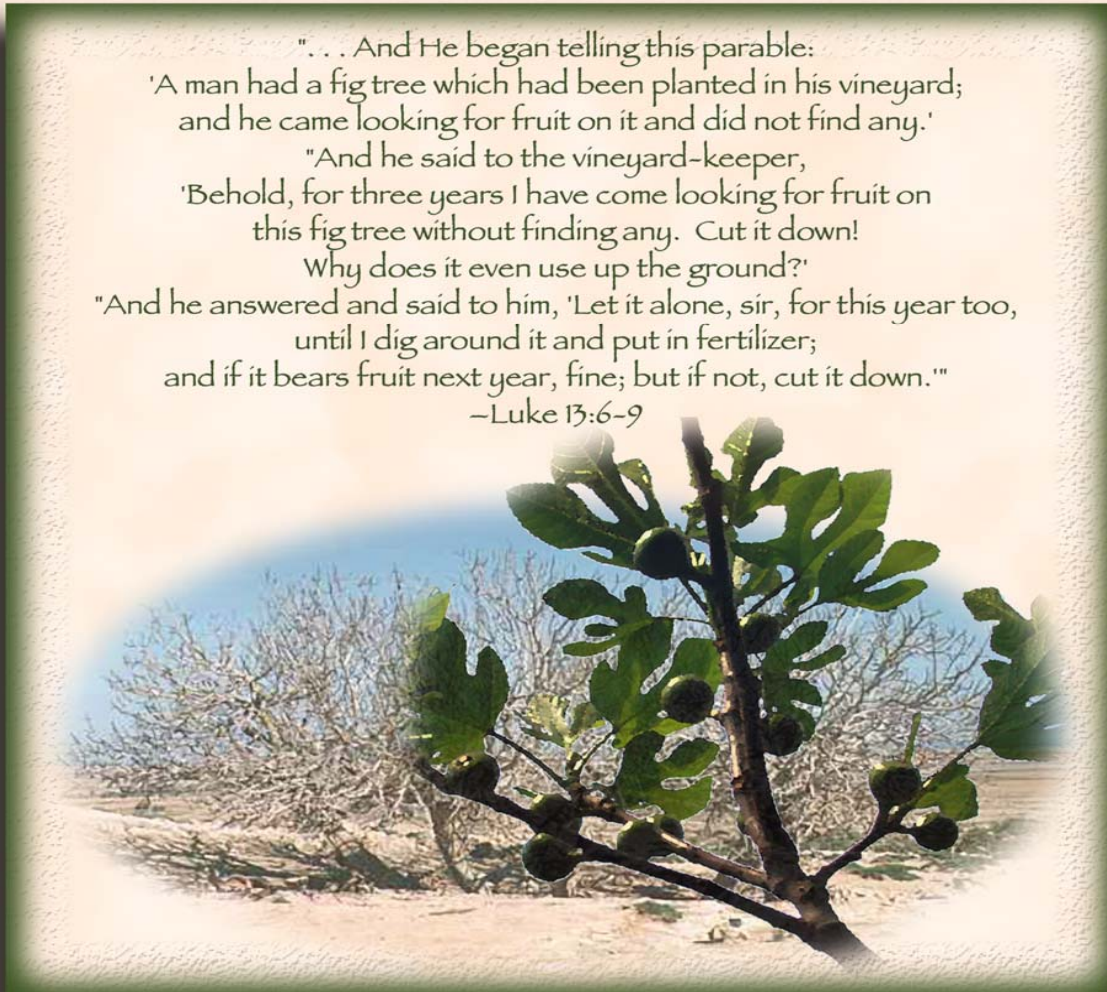




... And He began telling this parable:
'A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard;
and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any.'
"And he said to the vineyard-keeper,
'Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on
this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down!
Why does it even use up the ground?'
"And he answered and said to him, 'Let it alone, sir, for this year too,
until I dig around it and put in fertilizer;
and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.'
—Luke 13:6-9



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St. John the Baptist Parish, Haverhill, MA
March 7, 2010

*Father of all, we pray to You for those whom we love, but see no longer. Grant them Your peace; let light perpetually shine upon them; and in Your loving wisdom and almighty power work in them the good purpose of Your perfect will through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. This week the Sanctuary Lamp is given in remembrance of **Elizabeth Hayes** by her husband, **Eddie Hayes** & friend, **Mary Belanger**.*



Mass Intention

Saturday, March 6	4:00 PM	Alma Richard (Memorial Mass by Family)
Sunday, March 7	8:30 AM	Frances Gaudette & Mary Giuntini (Memorial Mass by Family)
Sunday, March 7	10:30 AM	Intention of the Celebrant
Monday, March 8	9:00 AM	All the Departed Souls in Purgatory
Tuesday, March 9	9:00 AM	Mass of Thanksgiving
Tuesday, March 9	6:30 PM	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Evening Prayer
Wednesday, March 10	9:00 AM	Nellie LeBlanc (Anniversary Mass by Son)
Thursday, March 11	9:00 AM	Prayer service
Friday, March 12	9:00 AM	Intention of the Celebrant
Saturday, March 13	9:00 AM	Deceased Members of St. John the Baptist Parish Family
Saturday, March 13	4:00 PM	Alice Grieco (Birthday Remembrance by Daughter)
Sunday, March 14	8:30 AM	Suzanne LeBlanc (Memorial Mass by Family)
Sunday, March 14	10:30 AM	Lionel Sevigny (Anniversary Mass by Family)

Mass Schedule

Saturday ~ 9 AM, 4 PM;
 Sunday ~ 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM Family Mass
 Monday to Friday ~ 9 AM
 Eve of Holy Days; Holy Days ~ As announced

Sacraments

Reconciliation ~ Saturday 3 to 3:45 PM; also by appointment; **Marriage** ~ Couples are asked to call the parish office at 978-372-2780 at least 6 months prior to the planned wedding date; **Baptism** ~ 2nd Sunday of each month @ 1 PM
 Contact the parish office at 978-372-2780 for more information

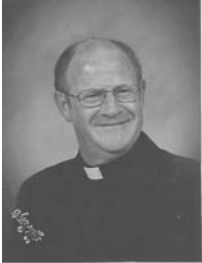
Religious Education

Grades K to 4: Sunday, 9:00 AM to 10:25 AM
Grades 5 to 10: Sunday, 5:30 PM to 6:55 PM
Classes meet every other week in the lower Church hall
Phone: 978-521-4557
Administrator: Renee Barrick (rbarrick@parishmail.com)
Safety Coordinator K to G 3: Kim Shapiro (kshapiro@parishmail.com)
Safety Coordinator G 4 to 6: Jennifer Connolly
Safety Coordinator G 7: Deacon Tom Anthony

Parish Contact Information

Address: 110 Lincoln Ave, Haverhill, MA 01830
Phone: 978-372-2780 **Fax:** 978-469-0947
Website: www.stjohnhaverhill.org
Pastor: Fr. Keith LeBlanc (stjohn@parishmail.com)
Permanent Deacon: Tom Anthony (978-973-0437; razorsedge1970@aol.com) **Secretary:** Diane Forte (dforte@parishmail.com) **Pastoral Council:** Deacon Tom Anthony, Bill Bibeau, Donna Bibeau, Joann Corthell, Linda LeBlanc, Celeste McCusker, Joan Pechnik, Mary Peel, Anne Six & Bill Vlahos **Finance Council:** Deborah Conner, Bill Dale, Mary Duchemin & John Stevens **Activities Committee** (stjohnactivitiescommittee@parishmail.com) ~ Roberta Alicata, Deacon Tom Anthony, Donna Bibeau, Sue Brewster, Betty Burrill, Don Clough, Pauline Clough, John Connor, Kathy Connor, David Corthell, Joann Corthell, Mary Duchemin, Celeste McCusker, Barbara O'Shea, Joan Pechnik, Mary Peel, Frank Perra, Joan Perra, Margaret Pfifferling, Anne Six & Bill Vlahos **Youth Group** ~ Leslie Crowe (stjohnyouthgroup@parishmail.com) **Health Ministry** ~ Donna Bibeau (dbibeau@parishmail.com) **Prayer Shawl Ministry** ~ Donna Bibeau, Diane Forte, Celeste McCusker, Barbara O'Shea, Norma Pappas, Kay Poole, & Marsha Tartaglia

Welcome to St. John the Baptist. We're glad you are here to celebrate Mass with us today. If you are new to our parish or haven't been here in awhile, *WELCOME*. If you would like to register as a parish family, registration forms can be found at the back of the Church. You can either mail it to the Rectory or drop it in the collection basket. God Bless.



From the desk of Father Keith...

Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

As I spoke to you at all the masses last week this weekend we ask for your support and pledge in the Annual Catholic Appeal. The Catholic Appeal is the major source of revenue for the Archdiocese of Boston. In past years you have been very gracious in your support and in the last four years we have either met or exceeded our goal. Last year, even under tough economic constraints, we managed to reach at least 85% of our goal. The theme of this year's goal is **Called to Love and Share**. As is mentioned in the material I have received, as a Church we are called to reveal God's love to the world and to build a community of love through our faith practice, witness and actions. The work of renewal in our Archdiocese requires Catholics to join together in prayer, service and sharing. We are all called to share some of God's blessings with others through gifts to the Catholic Appeal and to one's parish. These gifts help further the work of the Church and our collective efforts at renewal.

I invite all of you to please give your support and prayers to this most important link to our parish and to the Archdiocese of Boston. Our goal for the parish this year is \$34,500. This goal, which may seem to some to be quite high, is based on the average of our giving over the past four years. Please also know 25% of any funds that exceeds our goal goes back directly to our parish to support our own parish programs. The Catholic Appeal is not only an opportunity of support for this parish but also for the 291 parishes that comprise the Archdiocese of Boston. This collection is similar to the regular offertory collection we have at the parish every week. The importance of this collection, however, is much greater.

By your giving you are helping and supporting the many ministries made available to countless people in the Archdiocese throughout the year. I think all of us realize that all we have is a gift from God. We are responsible for using these gifts as God intends. Thus, we are all responsible for providing the resources the Church needs to carry out its mission. The Catholic Appeal is a significant opportunity to embrace that responsibility.

Like any institution the Central Ministries and Offices of the Archdiocese require funding to do its work. The proceeds from the Catholic Appeal comprise 73.7% of the operating income that the Archdiocese needs to provide for the Central Ministries. Without the resources made available through the Catholic Appeal, the staff and the Pastoral Center could do much less meaning that parishes, schools and agencies would be expected to provide that same service at a greater cost or in a less efficient manner. I only ask that when considering you pledge or donation this weekend to the Catholic Appeal that you give what you can or perhaps just a little bit more.

Let us all pray for the success of this year's Catholic Appeal. Let us thank God for the many ways He has blessed our parish as we celebrate our 55th Anniversary as a parish. With your help and the other 291 parishes of the Archdiocese I know God's work will continue to blossom and grow in His name. On behalf of myself and Cardinal Sean O'Malley I thank you all for your generous support to this very important collection.

God Bless, Father Keith

Readings for the Mass begin on page 84 of the *Breaking Bread Missal 2010*. Proper parts of the Mass begin on page 3.



In addition to our Saturday schedule for confessions on **all Wednesdays in Lent from 6:30 to 8 PM**, we will be offering **confessions** here at St. John the Baptist, together with all the Catholic parishes and chapels in the Archdiocese of Boston. This outreach is called "The Light is On For You," and is an effort on the part of the Archdiocese to highlight the importance of the Sacrament of Confession in the life of Catholics and to make it as easy as possible for every Catholic to come to or return to this great source of God's mercy and healing love. You are welcome to come here or to any other Catholic parish or chapel.

The Archdiocese has set up a website, www.TheLightIsOnForYou.org with lots of great material and videos to help you prepare. Please make plans to come yourself and to invite others to take advantage of this great opportunity to be reconciled and begin anew your journey in faith this Lent. Copies of the guidelines are available at the entrances to the church.



Lenten Suppers Every Friday evening during Lent, the ministries of St. John's will host **Lenten Suppers** from 5 to 6 PM in the lower church hall. At-will donations will be accepted on the evening of the supper. All are welcome to attend. The supper on Friday, March 12 will be hosted by the Activity Committee. They will be serving tomato soup and grilled cheese sandwiches.

Please join us in for this fellowship as we observe Lent and prepare for the Easter season.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will be every Friday during Lent (except Good Friday) immediately following the **9 AM Mass**. Sign-up sheets can be found at the main entrance to the church. Stations of the Cross and the Rosary will be at 6 PM and concludes with the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.



Come and spend an hour with our Lord Jesus Christ from whom all good things come!

Join Deacon Tom Anthony for **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** followed by **Evening Prayer on Tuesdays at 6:30 PM**.

Morning Prayer Service with Deacon Tom will be every **Thursday at 9 AM**. All are welcome.

Have you been called to serve Christ? Do you want to help your parish and church?



If you answer "yes" to either of these questions, take a moment out of your day and have a cup of coffee and a conversation with Deacon Tom Anthony. Call him anytime at 978-973-0437.



Beginning next weekend, there will be a basket of **Easter eggs** available at the front of the church. Please take an egg (or two) home with you and purchase the items

listed on the eggs to help support our Youth Group in putting together **Easter baskets for the children of St. Charles' Home**, Rochester, NH. Monetary donations will also be accepted and can be placed in the basket. Please make checks payable to St. John the Baptist Church.

Purchased items and the Easter egg need to be returned by Sunday, March 27. Thank you.

The Youth Group will present a **Passion Play** on Good Friday, April 2 at 7 PM.



Our next **practice** will be Sunday, **March 7** after the 10:30 AM Mass and Monday, **March 8** at 6:30 in the main church. Questions? Contact Deacon Tom or email Leslie at stjohnyouthgroup@parishmail.com.



The **Prayer Shawl Ministry** is in need of **donations of dark-colored yarn** to support our Troop Cap ministry. If you can help, please leave your yarn at the back of the church or drop it off at the Rectory any weekday.

The next **meeting** of the **Parish Pastoral Council and the Parish Finance Council** will be Sunday, **March 7 at 5:30 PM** in the Rectory. **Please note the change in time.**

St. John the Baptist Parish

St. John the Baptist's ministry devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary will offer the Rosary every Saturday morning at 10 AM in the main church. Everyone is welcome.

Coffee and light refreshments will follow in the lower church hall.

Rosaries and handouts will be available for those who are unfamiliar with this beautiful devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Come and pray with us.



*"He who does not take up his Cross
and come after Me is not worthy of Me." Mt. 10:38*

*The Cross is the greatest gift God could bestow
on His elect on earth. There is nothing so
necessary, So beneficial, so sweet, or so glorious
as to suffer something for Jesus.*

*If you suffer as you ought,
the Cross will become a precious yoke
that Jesus will carry with you.*

*Lord Jesus, impress upon me
That without a cross on earth
There will be crown in Heaven.*

*Through your intercession O Blessed Mother,
Help me to bear my Cross daily As Your Son
Bore His Cross for me and all humanity.
All this we ask through Your Son,
our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.*

Readings of the Week

Sunday, March 7

Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15/1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12/Lk 13:1-9,

Monday, March 8

2 Kgs 5:1-15b/Lk 4:24-30

Tuesday, March 9

Dn 3:25, 34-43/Mt 18:21-35

Wednesday, March 10

Dt 4:1, 5-9/Mt 5:17-19

Thursday, March 11

Jer 7:23-28/Lk 11:14-23

Friday, March 12

Hos 14:2-10/Mk 12:28-34

Saturday, March 13

Hos 6:1-6/Lk 18:9-14

Sunday, March 14

Jos 5:9a, 10-12/2 Cor 5:17-21/Lk 15:1-3, 11-32



3rd Sunday in Lent ~ March 7, 2010

Fruits of the Fig

By Scott Hahn

In the Church, we are made children of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—the God who makes known His name and His ways to Moses in today's First Reading.

Mindful of His covenant with Abraham (see Exodus 2:24), God came down to rescue His people from the slave-drivers of Egypt. Faithful to that same covenant (see Luke 1:54-55 72-73), He sent Jesus to redeem all lives from destruction, as today's Psalm tells us.

Paul says in today's Epistle that God's saving deeds in the Exodus were written down for the Church, intended as a prelude and foreshadowing of our own Baptism by water, our liberation from sin, our feeding with spiritual food and drink.

Yet the events of the Exodus were also given as a "warning"—that being children of Abraham is no guarantee that we will reach the promised land of our salvation.

At any moment, Jesus warns in today's Gospel, we could perish—not as God's punishment for being "greater sinners"—but because, like the Israelites in the wilderness, we stumble into evil desires, fall into grumbling, forget all His benefits.

Jesus calls us today to "repentance"—not a one-time change of heart, but an ongoing, daily transformation of our lives. We're called to live the life we sing about in today's Psalm—blessing His holy name, giving thanks for His kindness and mercy.

The fig tree in His parable is a familiar Old Testament symbol for Israel (see Jeremiah 8:3; 24:1-10). As the fig tree is given one last season to produce fruit before it is cut down, so too Jesus is giving Israel one final opportunity to bear good fruits as evidence of its repentance (see Luke 3:8).

Lent should be for us like the season of reprieve given to the fig tree, a grace period in which we let "the gardener," Christ, cultivate our hearts, uprooting what chokes the divine life in us, strengthening us to bear fruits that will last into eternity.

*A service of the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology
www.SalvationHistory.com*