

Homily

All Saints' Day - C

Rev. Peter G. Jankowski
November 01, 2025

Rev 7: 2-4, 9-14
Ps 24: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6
1 Jn 3: 1-3
Mt 5: 1-12



**Stained Glass
Window Donated to
the Church in 1907
from the Family of
Matilda Cunea.**

Every so often, I like to return to this small chapel of St. Anne here in our beloved church and first shrine of the United States because in the front of the door of entering the chapel is a stained glass window dedicated to Matilda Cunea, as offered by her family. As you know, Matilda back in the early 1900s was healed by the veneration of the relic of St. Anne and her family in thanksgiving dedicated the window entering our side chapel as a lasting memory of God's grace bestowed



on this family. Her wheelchair adorns the back of the church and although Matilda is no longer with us on earth, that wheelchair

remains as does this stained glass window.

I was thinking about the story as I heard about Matilda and her family. According to the tale, when Matilda was wheelchair bound in the early 1900s, during one St. Anne's day her father remained in Chicago to work while Matilda, her mother and her family all travelled by train for the annual St. Anne's Day Feast Day and veneration of the relic (similar to what we do in today's age).

I was thinking how this mother had bring her suffering daughter by train to our little slice of heaven. Obviously that mother and that family very much loved their daughter and they made an extra effort to ask God to provide grace for Matilda, both physical in this case, but definitely spiritual. We also know that in this one case, God's love shone

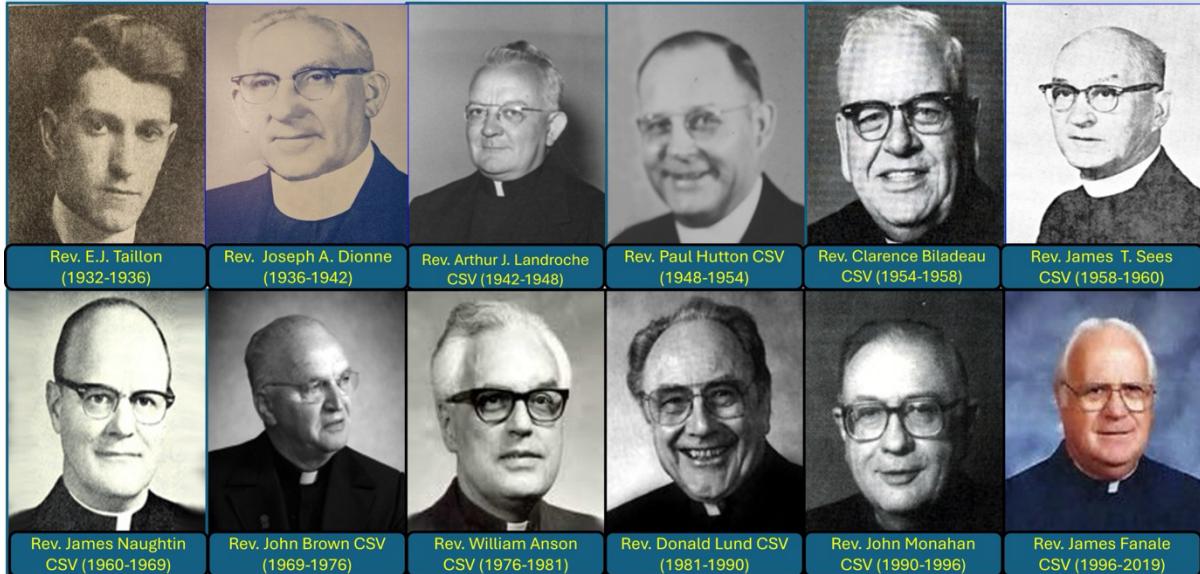
forth in a most physical way, as Matilda was able to stand up after venerating the relic, never to use her wheelchair again.

We know that no matter how many miracles we receive in life, physical or otherwise, eventually each of us are going to die. That is the suffering that we endure by leaving the Garden of Eden. Nevertheless, we also know that God is with us in the journey.

I was reflecting on Matilda's family who made that effort to bring their daughter to St. Anne's for the sake of God is grace. I also reflected about another mother named Paula Dandurand, whose husband Tom was not doing well this year, who was hospitalized. Tom & Paula had asked me to come visit Tom over in Kankakee recently in one of the care facilities before he died. When I arrived at the care facility, both Tom & Paula were telling me about a priest named Father James Sees (1958-1960) who in 1959 had married them here in St. Anne's Church. Father Sees was only here for a couple years; he, too, had to endure an illness and if I am correct, he died in 1966. But Tom and Paula very much remember Fr. Sees lovingly in their lives and the importance of the grace of God that was bestowed upon them by the good father.

FORMER PASTORS OF ST. ANNE'S CHURCH (ST. ANNE, IL)

Revs. E. Lapointe, J. Cote, Plucroux, Gaunthier, Merechal, Bloisvert, Kerston & Diemess (1852-1871);
Rev. M. Letellier (1871- 1883); Revs. Michaud & A Goulet (1883-1886); Rev. Z.P. Berard (1886-1932);



When Tom died and after we celebrated the funeral, Paula has decided to make an effort to attend the services here at St. Anne, even in her own frail condition, because she loves God so much and she loves this community that much. Thus, Paula has spent a great deal of time to join us for services on behalf of her children and her children's children, because that is what a good mother does.

Over at St. Patrick's, after one of our daily Masses I went to the house of Ron & Judy Gaul. Actually, Ron Gaul's son lives nearby in one of the farmhouses in on the outskirts of the city of Momence. So, after one of our daily Masses, I travelled to the son's house and spent a bit of time

with the son's two bulldogs, as well as Ron and Judy. Offered Ron the anointing; he is now in hospice care. Ron was not doing well at the time of this recording; his son told me that Ron's spirits are good now that he is back home from the hospital, but the doctors did not have a good prognosis for his future.

Nevertheless, Judy, very dedicated to her husband, visits him every day as he convalesces at his son's house because Ron's son is a little bit younger, has a little bit more strength, and can deal with the daily trials that Judy just could not handle, also being in her 80s. Nevertheless, Judy has such a love for Ron and her family. Judy still loves to take care of the funeral luncheons over at St. Patrick's; whenever a funeral luncheon takes place, she makes sure that someone takes care of Ron while she takes care of the bereaved in the parish.

I was thinking about all these mothers who have lost their children and have grieved terribly over the loss of their children. I was thinking about the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows and our Blessed Mother. The celebration commemorates even times in her life when she grieved because of terrible things had fallen about her son, whether it was losing

him at the temple at the age of twelve, (as tradition teaches us) seeing him in agony on the way of the cross and him being placed in her arms after his death, more seven times that she had to suffer.

Traditionally, the Seven Sorrows are (with some variations, using nearby episodes):

1. The Prophecy of Simeon in Luke 2, or the Circumcision of Jesus;
2. The Flight into Egypt in Matthew 2;
3. The Loss of the Child Jesus in the Temple of Jerusalem, also in Luke 2;
4. Mary meeting Jesus on the Via Dolorosa, the Fourth Station of the Cross which can be found in Luke 23:27 (See John 19:25 for context);
5. The Crucifixion of Jesus on Mount Calvary in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and especially John 19;
6. Jesus's Descent from the Cross in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19;
7. The Burial of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathea^[3] also in Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, and John 19.

So many mothers, so many fathers, so many people in life have grieved over the sufferings and losses concerning members of their respective families (and so many others). So many people have come to me with all kinds of stories about their sufferings and their pains concerning loved ones and how they have had to endure despite the

hardships of life. Especially at this mass, I was thinking about all kinds of people who have come to me with all kinds of different situations whom I am remembering at this particular Mass and a lot of people were crying about their loved ones, a lot of people were suffering, a lot of people felt lost and they were looking for God to help.

What helps me with today's scripture readings today (and maybe the reason I celebrate this particular Mass on this day even though it is not a day of obligation) is that in reflecting on the First Letter of St. John and the gospel of John (which most likely were written by the same author), is that both texts perceive a type of "joy of suffering" that Jesus was willing to endure for our sakes. The text offer a picture of our Lord "joyfully suffering" so that we would have a chance in life, that the beatitudes from the fifth chapter of Matthew's gospel come to fruition on that cross. The people who suffer in their own lives and in the lives of those they love, the people who grieve for those who are persecuted in God's name may suffer greatly on earth now but are in solidarity with Christ in heaven with all the angels and the saints.

When life on earth is over, our Lord who looks down upon those who suffer and who knows why these good people are grieving, also is in solidarity with those who suffer and very much are with them and us during this time of trial because on earth, God suffered infinitely worse on the cross than any of us can imagine.

We may not understand about why we suffer; we sometimes get angry about all the evils of the world (and there are so many evils in this world) because that is the world in which we chose to live after the Garden of Eden. We chose to live in a world filled with so much hate, so much anger, so many terrible things that have happened to us.

Yet here in this chapel, there is so much love and people choose not to see the love because people choose not to enter the world of love because they prefer the world of hate. People choose to live outside the world instead of here where God is love and God is grace.

So on behalf of all of those who suffer in this beautiful chapel with so many different images of St. Anne and our Blessed Mother adorning this wonderful room which contains the image of the Divine Mercy, the image of hope in a time of darkness, I thought it would be appropriate

at the end of this homily to offer a very simple litany of saints of those who pray for us every time we are here at mass, the living and the dead. Those who really do care for us, those who care for you, and hopefully those who will support me in the min is try I offer in God is name for all of those who suffer and all of those who are seeking God is grace during their time of trial. I dedicate this to all of you.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.
Christ have mercy. Christ have mercy.
Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us.

St. Joseph, pray for us.

St. Michael, pray for us.

Holy angels of God, pray for us.

St. John the Baptist, pray for us.

St. Peter and St. Paul, pray for us.

St. Andrew, pray for us.

St. John, pray for us.

St. Mary Magdalene, pray for us.

St. Steven, pray for us.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, pray for us.

St. Lawrence, pray for us.

St. Perpetual and St. Felicity, pray for us.

St. Agnes, pray for us.

St. Gregory, pray for us.

St. Augustine, pray for us.

St. Athanasius, pray for us.

St. Basil, pray for us.

St. Martin, pray for us.
St. Benedict, pray for us.
St. Francis and St. Dominic, pray for us.
St. Francis, Savior, patron of the Diocese of Joliet, pray for us.
St. John Vienna, pray for us.
St. Catherine of Sienna, pray for us.
St. Teresa of Jesus, pray for us.
St. Joseph and St. Anne, pray for us.
St. Patrick, St. Bridget, and St. Columba, pray for us.
All holy men and women, saints of God, pray for us.

Lord, be merciful. Lord, deliver us, we pray.
From all evil. Lord deliver us we pray.
From everlasting death. Lord deliver us we pray.
By your incarnation. Lord deliver us we pray.
By your death and resurrection. Lord deliver us we pray.
By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Lord deliver us we pray.

Be merciful to us sinners. Lord we ask you hear our prayer.
Jesus son of the living God. Lord we ask you here our prayer.
Christ hear us. Christ hear us.
Lord graciously hear our prayer. Lord graciously hear our prayer.

Almighty ever living God, be present by the mysteries of your great love. Send forth the spirit of adoption to create new peoples brought to birth for you in the f of baptism. So that what is to be carried out by our humble service may be brought to fulfillment by your mighty power through Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is our prayer.