

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday per Annum - B  
Jonah 3:1-5, 10;  
I Corinthians 7:29-31;  
Mark 1:14-20  
Little Flower - 1/24/21

My Brothers and Sisters,

When I was a student in Rome, there were certain passages of Scripture, both Old and New Testament, that were cited in many different classes. The beginning of today's Gospel was one of those passages. Over and over we were taught that the words of Jesus in Mark 1:14-15 were the core of what the historical Jesus preached when he lived and walked among us: "*This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.*"

Since COVID began, we have been very limited in our ability to provide religious education and faith development for adults. Therefore, in my homily last week, I introduced Formed. As I mentioned, we might describe Formed as Netflix for Catholics. This week's bulletin once again contains a flyer explaining how to sign up online.

In several recent homilies, I have mentioned our search for meaning and equated our search for meaning with our search for God. In fact, last Sunday I even said, "As Christians, we believe that we only find the true meaning of our lives, we only find God, if we find Jesus."

Do any of these situations or stories sound familiar?

- You get the big promotion, but it doesn't make you happy for more than a day or two.
- You buy the fancy car, but the thrill is over by the time you pull into the garage.
- Your team wins the Super Bowl, and all you have to show for it was an expensive jersey with someone else's name on it.
- The things we expect to fulfill us, the things we expect to make us happy, don't.

Centuries ago the great St. Augustine explained this phenomenon when he wrote, "My heart will never rest until it rests in you, O Lord." In other words, God created us with a desire for the infinite that no one or nothing besides God can satisfy.

The Augustine Institute has created an award-winning video-based series that is turning heads as it explores fundamental questions and mysteries like these. The series is called *The Search*, and the national reception to it has been so enthusiastic that we are bringing it here, to our parish, during Lent, for all our spiritual benefit and growth.

*The Search* is a multi-part video-based spiritual experience from the producers of the FORMED online platform to which we have recently subscribed. The production is beautiful. None of this rec room or fake library feeling to it. The well-known Catholic evangelist Chris Stefanick hosts *The Search*.

But *The Search* is not meant just to be watched, and it is certainly not meant to be watched alone. That is why we are beginning to form small groups—both in-person and virtual—to watch, discuss, and truly benefit and grow from experiencing *The Search*.

- If your faith is already solid, *The Search* will help you to deepen it. If you are feeling unsure, it is for you too. If you are worried about your children or grandchildren, it is a great series for you to share with them by bringing them along.
- *The Search* features scientists, artists, philosophers, and other people from all walks of life proclaiming how their searches for meaning in life led them to Jesus and the Gospel.
- There is nothing quite like it in the Catholic world. *The Search* proclaims the Gospel in words that modern ears are ready to hear and images that modern eyes cannot help but see and remember.

My brothers and sisters, in today's bulletin you will again find information about how to sign up for Formed. Also, we will be emailing you this week inviting you to sign up for *The Search*. Last week I invited you to sign up for Formed, which is the platform. Today I am inviting you to sign up for *The Search*, the program we will be presenting during Lent. "*This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.*"