

"I have done what is mine to do; may Christ teach you yours!" —Francis of Assisi

You may recall a presentation on St Clare that Jane gave a number of months ago. She reminded us of Clare’s way of contemplation: Gaze, Consider, Contemplate, and Imitate. I came across a really good explanation of what it means to gaze from Roch Niemier’s book:

“Gazing calls for a quiet attentiveness, simply being open to the wonderful presence of God with no words, no thoughts, just being there. The object of our gaze is the crucified Savior who stands before us as a mirror in which we see ourselves. To gaze involves desire, a response to the restless love that God has for us. To gaze is to have an openness to the Spirit of the Lord and an intent to strive for purity of heart. In Franciscan prayer this practice of gazing is critical. It is to pray long but with few words.” Page 116, In the Footsteps of Francis and Clare.

I find gazing to be a challenge with all the distracting thoughts constantly vying for my attention. Its easier to pray the office or the rosary. Sometimes, I think I lean on these more formal prayers and avoid deepening my relationship with the Lord. During Lent, we have this call to deeper conversion, to be more aware of what God is asking of us. Our meeting this month will pull us out of our usual format as we make a fraternal retreat together and consider what God is calling us to do as Secular Franciscans. May God bless our company with many bountiful graces. —Franz

This month’s Fraternity Gathering

March 15, 2020, 12:30 p.m. – Pot luck and gathering.

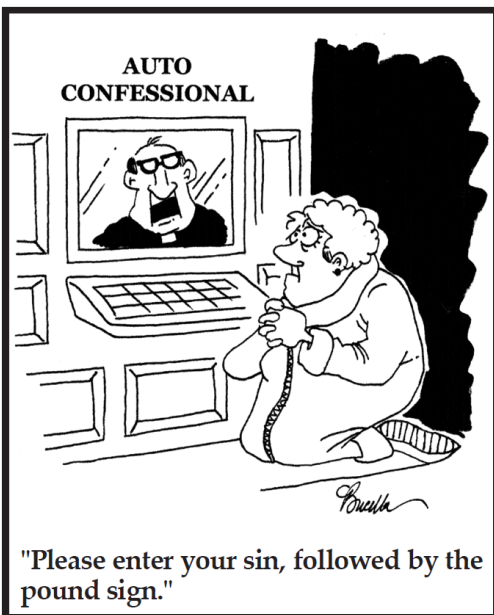
Holy Family Catholic Church, social hall
2430 West 3rd St., Duluth
Park in the parish office parking lot (west side)

Agenda: Annual Lenten Retreat

1. Opening prayer – Darlene
2. Reflection/discussion/prayer—
Facilitated by Bob
3. Discuss details of Spring Gathering
4. Business
 - a. Approve minutes, assign ministries
 - b. Treasurer reports, bills, receipts
 - c. Formation report
 - d. JPIC report
5. Vocation and closing prayers

Next month’s meeting: April 19, 2020.

Ongoing formation – Darlene: JPIC



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Wisdom from Solanus Casey

- ❖ Disregard for the claims of justice, under whatever pretext, has always been a manifestation of (to say the least) shallow thinking—or rather a betrayal of real thinking.
- ❖ Blessed be God in all His designs! It is to this little Christian greeting that I am trying to attune my soul, and to echo and resound it to all humanity.
- ❖ Frequent Communion brings peace into a family and into the soul. It also fosters faith in God and heavenly relationships with all God’s dear ones in heaven.
- ❖ Life is the vestibule to eternity.

Council Meeting

Agenda

Council meeting will immediately follow the fraternity meeting.

1. Opening Prayer
2. Approve minutes/agenda
3. Spring gathering planning
4. Other
5. Closing prayer



Gospel Reading, 6th Sunday of Ordinary Time: Jn 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?"—For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.—Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink, ' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water. "I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth."

The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything."

Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you."

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him. When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

Franciscan Saints/Blesseds of the Month

2 BL AGNES OF PRAGUE

9 ST FRANCES OF ROME

24 BL DIDACUS JOSEPH OF CADIZ

Didacus Joseph was a Capuchin friar of the late 18th century who had been such a poor student in his youth that he received the nickname of "the dunce of Cadiz." However, he later became one of the most famous Franciscan preachers, and was assigned to a team of friars who preached parish missions in isolated, rural villages throughout Spain. A collection of 3000 of his sermons have been preserved.

Didacus became a major force in promoting traditional devotions and beliefs of Catholicism as part of the identity of the Spanish nation. He was later named an official of the Inquisition. He was beatified by Pope Leo XIII in 1894.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane



"Sometimes when you hurt inside, the only medicine that'll help is a great big hug."

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Newsletter edited by Bob

Faith Matters: Reflections from your Spiritual Assistant

"We Southern Baptists don't believe in Lent. As far as I'm concerned, those Sundays are the same as every other Sunday." That comment was spoken by the chaplain who was my boss back in the days when I worked for the Army as a youth minister in Germany.

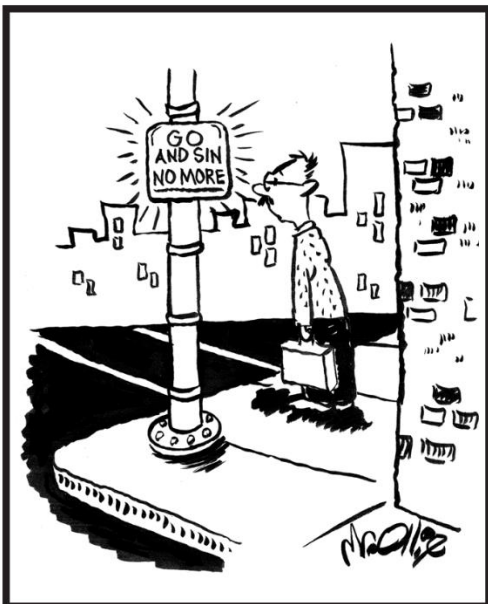
Lent is the oldest and most sacred season of the church year. Originally celebrated by Catholics and many mainline Protestants, in more recent time it is being reclaimed by increasing numbers of Christians from other denominations. Where did Lent come from?

The history of Lent is wrapped up in the history of Baptism. The scenes portrayed in scripture of people being baptized "on the spot" didn't last long after the biblical period. Early on the Church realized that those coming forward for Baptism needed some preparation. The tradition developed of having new members baptized during the "Vigil" held on Saturday before Easter. Lent started as the one-day period of prayer and fasting observed by those wanting to be baptized.

This time of preparation took on added urgency after Christianity was made the official religion of the Empire. Suddenly people were flocking to the church for Baptism, often without understanding what they were seeking, and sometimes for the wrong reasons: political ambition or to get in on the best government jobs. Gradually the period of preparation became more rigorous and grew from one day to 40 days. Other members of the community saw the value of this experience as a way to strengthen their own faith and started joining the candidates in making their pre-baptismal "retreat".

At the same time the Christian community had a major problem on its hands: what to do with members who had denied their faith during the Roman persecutions or had committed serious offenses against the teachings of the church. It was decided that they couldn't be re-baptized, so how should they be brought back into the church?

The practice developed of having these serious sinners undergo a long process of public penance—sometimes lasting three years—also leading up to the Easter Vigil. As infant Baptism became the norm, fewer and fewer adult candidates came forth for Baptism. Eventually this season we now call Lent became a time of penitence and self-denial for the whole Christian community in preparation for Easter. —Bob



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ODDS 'N' ENDS



7:30 a.m – 5:00 p.m.

Registration Deadlines (register on the diocesan web site):

- March 13 ends early bird registration (materials and lunch are not guaranteed after this date).
- March 26 on-line registration ends

Cost: \$30* includes light breakfast, lunch, snack, and materials (*\$10 late fee added after March 13, 2020)

*Pre-payment preferred



Please continue prayers for the selection of a new bishop for the Diocese of Duluth. —Bob

Images from the Lenten retreat at Marywood

