

7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

From the Pastor's Desk

Next Wednesday is "Ash Wednesday". Yes Lent is here and the time for us to do the spiritual exercises of Lent are now upon us. During the Season of Lent we are to live a penitential life. A penitential life positions our desire to growth in holiness. As I mentioned at my masses last Sunday, referencing the Beatitudes, we are to "hunger and thirst for righteousness", that is to say "to be right with God". Being right with God is to seek holiness. This path starts with humbly listening and trusting God and the Word of God: Jesus Christ.

During the Lenten Season we reflect on the loving works of God manifested in His Son: Jesus Christ. We spend time reflecting on the teachings of Jesus. As we listen to his Word we welcome the transforming effect it has on the reshaping of our minds and hearts. The Word of God becomes personal speaking in the depths of our hearts. We begin with listening to the Lord. This is most important. Recall the fall of Adam and Eve happened because they did not listen to God. They could repeat the word of God to the serpent but they did not live the word; they were not obedient. They ignored God's Word trusting their own thoughts on the issue and took matters into their own hands. This is the beginning of sin: not listening to the Word of God and trusting the self over God: doing our will over God's will.

Listening is the beginning of our faith life. St. Paul writes about coming to faith in his Letter to the Romans chapter 10:17, "...faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ". Thus our faith in Jesus Christ comes from the preaching of the Gospel. Once we believe, our faith seeks deeper understanding.

Often times we can be like King Herod who said of St. John the Baptist that he felt the attraction of his words but he was also fearful of what John had said in speaking the truth about his lifestyle. Taking the Word of God (Jesus) seriously we feel the powerful draw of his words because his word is truth. We may also experience some discomfort because of our sinfulness. The Lenten Season is the perfect time for us to let the Word of God touch and maybe even cause us some discomfort. This is good news since it also reminds us to let the truth of the Gospel transform our lives and bring us closer to God. It is the call to holiness; to be right with God.

At the conclusion of Lent we turn our minds and hearts to the Paschal Mystery: the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are to see how our sinfulness has contributed to his suffering and death. Jesus lovingly suffered and died paying the penalty for the sins of humanity. We consider that he brought our sins to the cross. Our Savior suffered and died for OUR SINS. If we are open to it, this season becomes very personal and redeeming. We are sorry for our sins and joyfully live our new life in Christ. In an ironic way the penitential life in reality is the living of this new life in Christ. We don't see it because we are blinded by sin.

There are a number of penitential practices that we engage during this holy season. It is often the practice for a Catholic to do something or to "give something up for Lent." In the practice of self-denial we set aside something that is not essential that we find that we are overly attached. Some people abstain from alcohol, tobacco, television, candy, snacking between meals, etc. If we find that we cannot live without these things, they have become overly important. It may not seem to be a big deal unless we try to put them aside. If we fail at this exercise it may tell us something

about ourselves. It may reveal a weakness in our lives about our priorities. It is in the failure of simple things that tend to be the most revelatory about ourselves. It is good to know our weaknesses. It is also important to note that it is possible for a small thing to control our lives. Our weakness reveals our need for the grace of God.

In our practices of self-denial we can also discover that over a period of time we have taken many things for granted. We may also find that we have become lazy about self-discipline. Spiritually speaking we may find that we have taken our spiritual life for granted: we lack self-discipline. Do we suffer from "spiritual sloth"? Laziness in our spiritual life is revealed in the infrequency of prayer and the practice of the faith. We do not want spiritual indifference and faithlessness. With the right focus and attitude, Lent can be a great opportunity to rekindle the flame of faith in our lives.

A positive activity to counter spiritual laziness would be to make an effort to attend daily mass when possible. This is a good practice for Lent. Daily mass is a great source of grace during this holy season. Please make an effort to join us if you are able: even if it is only one extra day during the week. This is a good especially when it reflects a desire to grow in holiness. Note well the weekly mass schedule.

With this in mind, pick up a copy of the "Word Among Us". Copies are available at the doors of the Church. The readings for the weekday and Sunday masses are in this little book along with a reflection. If you cannot get to mass, you can read the readings for the day. The readings for mass are all oriented to the penitential season leading us to the celebration of Easter. The "Word Among Us" is also perfect for prayer. In your reading and praying the daily readings for mass you are praying with the Church: a great way to be in communion with the Church.

As a parish community we have another opportunity to spend some added time in prayer. We will pray the "Stations of the Cross" on Friday evenings. This is a simple thing that is not impossible to do. Again, you are encouraged and most welcome to join us.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered more often throughout the Lenten Season. Times will vary to accommodate the needs of the parish. I will offer a variety of times on some mornings, afternoons and evenings. Please check the bulletin for details. This is also the time for those families who will have a child preparing for their First Reconciliation and First Communion. Those children making their First Reconciliation are encouraged to come during the Lenten Season. It is encouraged that the family come to the Sacrament together. This is another Lenten practice that is not impossible. This is a good practice that sets a good example for the children. It reinforces the importance of the Sacraments of the Church in our lives as well as being important for the Catholic Family. Children will follow their parents' lead when it comes to the practice of the faith. Make the Catholic faith important in your family.

It should also be noted the Church's regulations concerning Fast and Abstinence during the Lenten season. Abstinence from meat (red meat and fowl) is to be observed by all Catholics fourteen (14) years and older on Ash Wednesday and on all the Fridays of Lent. This obligation prohibits the eating of meat. Fasting means that we limit ourselves to one meal on a given fast day. Catholics who are eighteen (18) years of age but not yet fifty-nine (59) are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On fast days, two additional smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength. However, the two smaller meals

together may not equal one full meal. Moreover, eating solid foods between meals on fast days is not permitted. No snacking!

Again, Fasting and Abstinence are not impossible. Fasting and Abstinence are expressions of a sacrifice done out of love for God and a desire for God. It is a pious, devout and personal expression of sorrow for our sins, our desire to grow in our love for God and a desire to change our lives. Self-denial is a sacrifice we are willing to make as a sign of our desire for greater conversion. If someone wants to argue about these simple things then the point is lost.

The above mentioned items are traditional practices. They are effective. They assist us in our faith life. In the larger scope of things we know that we cannot make great sacrifices that our faith demands of us if we are not able to observe the smaller practices.

Have a great week.

Father Ralko

Note well: the Mass schedule for Ash Wednesday. Mass will be at 8:10 am, to accommodate both Bishop Rosecrans and Bishop Fenwick schools, and at 7:00 pm. Also I will add morning Mass on Thursdays during Lent at 8:00 am.

This week we pray Week III of the Liturgy of the hours.

Church Support

February 16, 2020

OFFERTORY	\$8,120.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$4,231.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	<u>\$(890.00)</u>
Other Income	<u>\$1,855.00</u>
Weekly deficit	\$(2,629.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN

Kevin Dooley will hold a **Protecting God's Children** class on **Monday, February 24 at 6:00 p.m.** The class will be held at the St. Nicholas Parish office, lower level. This class is mandatory for those who would like to volunteer in any capacity at Bishop Fenwick School, Bishop Rosecrans High School or St. Nicholas Parish. Please register in advance at www.virtus.org.

The Women's Spirituality Group will meet Monday, February 24 at the parish office at 3:30 p.m. If you have any questions, please call Judi Peterson at 740-453-5288.

LOOKING FOR A GIFT?! - We have a collection of beautiful handcrafted rosaries and bracelets donated to the church for the benefit of the window project. The value of the rosary's ranges from \$20.00 to more than \$300.00 (Swarovski crystals). Bracelets start at \$10.00. They will be available for purchase at the parish office. Great gifts for First Communion, Confirmation, Anniversaries, etc.

ATTENTION CONFIRMATION STUDENTS the Mini Retreat on Tuesday, February 25th at 6:00 p.m. in the Church Social Hall (Basement) **HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**

LENTEN JOURNEY FOR FAMILIES WAYS TO GROW TOGETHER PRAYER

Intention for the Day:

Commit to praying for (or with) your family during Lent by keeping a list of prayer intentions placed in a common space for all to see. Every day of Lent, choose an intention to focus on individually or as a family, and offer it to God with a simple verbal prayer, rosary, etc. Find ideas at:

www.teachingcatholickids.com/keep-a-list-of-family-prayer-intentions

FASTING

Fifteen Minute Fast:

What could happen if you dedicated just one percent of your day – 15 minutes – fasting from busyness and distraction? Set aside household tasks, silence the cell phone, disconnect from diversions such as video games, and then use that extra time to intentionally connect with God or a family member. Find ideas on how to spend family time together at: www.52sundays.com

Lenten Greeting Card Project.

A basket has been in placed in the church vestibule for card donations. Stamp or monetary donations should be placed in an envelope, identified for the Lenten Greeting Card Project and placed in the collection basket.

Anyone with questions or interested in helping with this ministry please call Rosalyn Headington at 740-454-0274. if a member of your family is homebound and the parish office has not been notified, please do so as soon as possible.

The Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference (DCYC) the official Catholic conference of the Diocese of Columbus for grades 9-12 is Sunday, March 8 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. All high school aged youth from the Diocese are strongly encouraged to participate. Catholic youth may bring their non-Catholic friends to this gathering. The gathering includes keynote speakers and workshops geared towards high school students, lunch, and Sunday Mass. \$30 per participant. **For more information, please call the parish office.**

Bosco Bash, the Diocese of Columbus' Middle School Youth Rally, for grades 6-8. Is Saturday, March 7 at Bishop Hartley. All youth from the Diocese are strongly encouraged to participate. Catholic youth may bring their non-Catholic friends to this gathering. The event includes high energy activities geared towards middle schoolers, dinner and Sunday Mass. The bus leaves from Bishop Rosecrans parking lot at 12:30 p.m. returns approximately 9:30 p.m. All students of appropriate age from all schools are invited. Register online at <https://columbuscatholic.org/bosco-bash>. \$30 per person. Parents are invited.

Stations of the Cross

Retrace the final journey of Jesus Christ to Calvary by praying the Stations of the Cross, Fridays of Lent beginning February 28th at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. This would make a great Lenten sacrifice or family devotion. All are welcome!

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:20

7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LITURGICAL MINISTERS SCHEDULE

It is your responsibility to find a substitute if needed.

March 1, 2020
1st Sunday of Lent

Saturday, February 29 @ 5:15 p.m.

Cantor: Jim Gable
Lectors: Nicole Hannahs, Nancy Susa
Servers: Logan Pratt, Libby Pratt
Eucharistic Minister – Coord: Don Susa
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Jon Calendine,
Mary Calendine
Eucharistic Ministers: Susan Pratt

Sunday, March 1 @ 8:15 a.m.

Cantor: Sandy Black
Lector: Sue Hillis, Bill Sullivan
Servers: David Eppley, Caiden Hogue
Eucharistic Minister- Coord: Jim Hillis
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Tim Hoffer, Joshua Wright
Eucharistic Ministers: Marvin Paul

Sunday, March 1 @ 10:45 a.m.

Cantor: Laura DeCoy
Lectors: Othello Repuyan, Rocky Rowe
Servers: Nicholas Bernath, Thomas Bernath
Eucharistic Minister - Coord: Gerald Tiberio
Eucharistic Ministers - Wash Vessel: Jennifer Bernett, Karen
Hardman
Eucharistic Ministers: Claire Tiberio

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

PLEASE REMEMBER ST. NICHOLAS PARISH IN YOUR WILL. CALL THE PARISH OFFICE AT 453-0597 FOR MORE DETAILS.

Praying the Rosary will resume in the St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. sometime in February. The exact date will be published in the bulletin.

Desire to spend time with Christ every day? The Church is open for private prayer and adoration of Christ in the Tabernacle; weekdays, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. until noon and Saturdays from noon until after the 5:15 p.m. Mass.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, February 24

8:00 a.m., Mass: Cecil Mary Soller, Church

TUESDAY, February 25

8:00 a.m., Mass: Thomas Keane, Birthday, Church
9:30 a.m., Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Parish Office

WEDNESDAY, February 26, Ash Wednesday

8:10 a.m., Mass: In honor of the Holy face of Jesus, Church
6:15 p.m., Rosary, Parish Chapel
7:00 p.m., Mass: Jennie Jalbrzowski, Church
7:00 p.m., R.C.I.A., Church

THURSDAY, February 27

8:00 a.m., Mass: Pastor's Intention, Church

FRIDAY, February 28

8:00 a.m., Mass: Madison Paul, Anniversary, Church
7:00 p.m., Stations of the Cross, Church

1st Sunday of Lent

SATURDAY, February 29

4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church
5:15 p.m., Mass: Irene Dillon, Birthday, Church

SUNDAY, March 1

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church
9:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m., Religious Education, Bishop Fenwick
10:45 a.m., Mass: Mary Lou Roessler, Anniversary, Church

Readings for Week of February 24

Mon.	Jas 3:13-18	Mk 9:14-29
Tues.	Jas 4:1-10	Mk 9:30-37
Wed	Jl @;12-18	Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thurs.	Dl 30:15-20	Lk 9:22-25
Fri.	Is 58:1-9a	Mt 9:14-15
Sat.	Is 58:9b-14	Lk 5:27-32
Sun	Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7	Mt 4:1-11

INCOME TAX

If you would like to have a record of your donations to the Church for tax purposes, please fill in your envelope number, name and address or email and place it in the collection basket. A statement will be sent to you.

Envelope No. _____
Name _____
Address _____ or
Email address _____