

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

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. In the past we considered the two penitential seasons of the Church: Advent and Lent. It would be good for us to recall the differences between the two seasons. It is usually agreed that the penance of Lent carries a more intense and serious tone. The penitential spiritual posture during the Season of Advent is one of joyful preparations and expectation. It is a longing of a people for the promised Savior. The penitential practices reflect an attitude of preparing our hearts to welcome the long-awaited Savior who is our Messiah: Our Lord Jesus Christ. We acknowledge and confess our sinfulness so that our hearts will be open and prepared to welcome our Savior.

On the other hand, the Season of Lent has a different penitential posture. Once the Savior is in our midst and begins his ministry some thirty years later, the reality of his mission comes to full view. As we listen to the teachings of Jesus, things start to get *personal*. The words of Jesus begin to confront the reality of sin in our world and our lives. As the season continues our focus is directed to the finale of his mission in the Paschal Mystery, the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We contemplate how our personal sinfulness has contributed to the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. We consider the debt of our sinfulness and the price paid by the Messiah by his sacrificial death on the cross. Our Savior suffered and paid the price for the sins of the world and OUR SINS. Thus, this season becomes very personal.

As the Christian community we are once again called to be attentive to this Lenten Season. We must prepare ourselves to engage in the penitential practices of Lent. The truth, we have all played a role in the suffering and death of Jesus Christ because of our sins. Our examination of conscience, considering the teachings of Jesus, directly deals with our personal and communal sinfulness. Now we must grasp the great act of Love in which our Lord and Savior suffered and died for all of us. There is something sobering about this Lenten Season. We need to make a serious effort to keep and maintain a subdued posture during this holy season.

There are a number of proposed practices that we engage during this holy season. These practices are called the penitential disciplines of Lent. It is often the practice for a Catholic to do something or to "*give something up for Lent*." In this practice of self-denial, we turn our attention toward something of which we may be overly attached and is not essential. Some people abstain from alcohol, tobacco, television, candy, snacking between meals, etc. It does not seem to be a big deal, and no one is going to be condemned if they fail at this exercise. However, a failure in this area tells us a great deal about ourselves. If we were to try something simple like giving up snacking between meals and then fail in this endeavor it probably points to a weakness in self-discipline in small matters. The failure in small things may call into question our self-discipline when we are faced with greater sacrifices. It is good to know our weaknesses. It is also important to know that it is in our failures we can find the redeeming 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 in certain matters. When we add a spiritual element to the mix it may very well tell us a great deal about our spiritual self-discipline. Do we suffer from "spiritual sloth"? Laziness in our spiritual life, the infrequency of prayer and the practice of the faith leads to the gradual decline into 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.

Looking at something that one could do, especially for those who are able, would be to make an effort to attend daily mass. This is a good positive activity to do throughout the Lenten season. Attending daily mass is a great source of grace during this holy season. Please try to join us if you are able. Even if it is only one extra day during the week, this is a good thing and reflects a desire to grow in holiness. Note well the weekly mass schedule.

With this in mind, please pick up a copy of the "*Word Among Us*". Copies are available at the doors of the Church. The readings for mass, weekday, and Sundays, are in this little book. If one cannot get to mass at least you can read the Scriptures for the day. The readings for mass are all oriented to the penitential season leading us to the celebration of Easter.

Having a copy of the "*Word Among Us*" at home and using it, is means for making extra time for prayer. Looking for something to help you with your private prayer you can always read the Scriptures of the day that are established for the Catholic Church throughout the world. This is a wonderful way to be scripturally in communion with the Church.

Again, no one will be condemned if they don't try to spend more time in prayer. We do not want to argue the point at that level: we do not want to be minimalist in these matters. Either we are serious about our spiritual life or we are not. In reality we should be asking what more we can do to grow in holiness.

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. We can do this. 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 a good 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 our 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 when it comes to the practice of the faith as well as things that are important in their lives.

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 full 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, for medical reasons and or to maintain strength. A suggested guideline on this is offered: the two smaller meals together may not equal the one full meal. Moreover, eating solid foods *between* meals on fast days is not permitted. No snacking!

Again, Fasting and Abstinence are not impossible things to do. We can do this. It almost seems silly to have to explain fasting and abstinence, but there will always be someone who

**THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15 IN OBSERVANCE OF
PRESIDENTS' DAY.**

would like to know what exactly is expected: again, the minimalist argument. An individual can get *legal* about this particular discipline. It usually is an indication that one doesn't want to fast and abstain trying to find a loophole or an excuse to get out of it. However, if it is a sacrifice, done out of love for God and a sign that one is sorry for personal sinfulness and spiritual sloth, then no explanation is necessary. It is what it is: a pious, devout, and personal expression of sorrow for our sins (penance), our desire to grow in our love of 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 things, then the point is lost.

I know that many are looking for something to do during the Lenten Season. The above-mentioned items are good suggestions. They may not seem like much. They are not burdensome. They can be effective. In the larger scope of things, we know that we cannot make great sacrifices in life if we are not able to observe the smaller practices.

Have a great week.

Father Ralko

Note well: The Mass schedule for Ash Wednesday. Morning Mass will be at 9:00 a.m. with some of our students from Bishop Fenwick. Masses will also be offered at Noon and at 7:00 p.m.

This week we pray Week II of the Liturgy of the hours. Church Support

February 7, 2021

OFFERTORY	\$8,157.00
Diocesan Tax	\$(770.00)
Fenwick Subsidy	\$(2,635.00)
Rosecrans subsidy	\$(485.00)
Available for Parish Operations	\$4,268.00
Parish Operating Expenses	\$(7,825.00)
Religious Education Expenses	\$(890.00)
Other Income	\$1,855.00
Weekly deficit	(\$2,592.00)

May God bless you for supporting your parish!

Youth Ministry News!

Catalyst Nights – Students grades 7-12 are invited to a Catalyst Night at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in the activity center on Sunday, February 28th at 6:00 p.m. The evening is led by the National Evangelization Team (NET), college age missionaries. The night includes dinner, presentations, games, skits, prayer, friends, and fun. This is a joint, St. Thomas and St. Nicholas youth event and all teens grades 7-12 regardless of affiliation are invited. Parents are welcome!

Lenten Bible Study – Join us for Fr. Mitch Pacwa's Bible study on Mercy, Mondays, beginning February 22nd at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Office. \$10.00 per person. Pre-Registration Required. To help us with our book order, please register by February 15th. Call (740) 453-0597 or e-mail pboggs@stnickparish.org.

Eucharistic Adoration: 'Of all devotions, that of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament [Jesus present in the consecrated Host] is the greatest after the sacraments, the one dearest to God and the one most helpful to us.' Saint Alphonsus Liguori. This is a great devotion for families, marrieds, singles, young and old alike. All are encouraged to participate in Eucharistic Adoration on Friday, March 5th (First Friday), and again on Friday, March 19th (In honor of St. Joseph, guardian and faithful spouse of Mary, foster father of Jesus). Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will begin immediately after the 8:00 a.m. Mass. Faithful adorers are essential and needed as Christ exposed in the Monstrance must never be left alone. No less than two people per hour are needed to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament, in prayer and devotion. Please contact the parish office to sign up for your hour of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. (740) 453-0597 ext. 14. Or pboggs@stnickparish.org.

WOMEN'S MORNING OF PRAYER & REFLECTION with the Sacred Heart of Jesus – Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at St. Paul The Apostle Catholic Church in the Klinger Activity Center. Holy Mass at 9:30 a.m. Speakers from Daughters of Holy Mary of the Heart of Jesus, Eucharistic Exposition & Benediction. **The Event is Free.** REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. *Will also be live streamed via St. Paul YouTube and Facebook pages. To register visit:* <https://stpaulcatholicchurch.weshareonline.org/ws/opportunities/WomensDayofPrayerReflection>

Council 505 is forming a Golf League on Wednesday evenings at Jaycees Golf Course. It will be a 2-man scramble format and is open to men, women, and non-members. The total numbers of teams will be 22. The league will start in the last two weeks of April and run through September. The first two weeks at the end of April will be practice rounds to establish handicaps. Actual league competition will begin May 5th. If you are interested in joining the league or would like more information, contact Mark Hill at 740-607-5477 or mapco60@gmail.com. Final details are still being worked out and should be confirmed at the next golf committee meeting on Wednesday, February 17. A follow-up email will be delivered when all details are complete. We expect the field to fill quickly, so sign your team up early.

Catholic Men's Conference: Called to Be Saints - February 27, 2021 from 9:00a.m. until 12:00 p.m. This year's Columbus Catholic Men's Conference will be both virtual/online and in-person. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this year's event will be small group gatherings at various parishes throughout the diocese along with live streaming on the Catholic Men's Ministry website, Facebook, and YouTube. Speakers include Devin Schadt, Chris Stefanick, Fr. Donald Calloway, and Bishop Robert Brennan. To register go to www.cathoallicmensministry.com.

JANUARY BOOSTER MANIA WINNERS

- \$100- Mike Butcher
- \$50- Terry Paul, Susan Michel, Carter Hogue
- \$25- Sue Durant, Tori Martin, Todd Greene, Sherry Dinan, Jason Paul, Bernice Sigrist, Anne Agin

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Bishop Rosecrans Athletic Boosters

It's time again to purchase your Booster Mania tickets for the upcoming year. \$25 each or three tickets for \$60, January 1 is the first drawing, they make a good gift. Questions: Contact Marvin Paul at 740-819-3429.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

Mt. Olive Cemetery has a part time position available. Duties would include mowing, weed eating, helping to open and close graves, help pouring footers for headstones and snow removal. If interested, please call the Parish Office at 453-0597.

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when something prevents you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office or our website: stnickparish.org.

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.

Please join us each Monday at The St. Nicholas Parish Office Chapel at 2:00 p.m. as we gather to pray the Rosary asking Our Lady's Intercession or the many needs of our nation, community, and parish.

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 _____

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, February 15

Parish Office Closed

8:00 a.m., Mass: Mary Nader, Church

TUESDAY, February 16

9:00 a.m., Mass: St. Thomas Intention, Church

WEDNESDAY, February 17, Ash Wednesday

9:00 a.m., School Mass: Mike Andrews, Church

12:00 p.m., Mass: St. Thomas Intention, Church

7:00 p.m., Mass: F. Paul Nestor, Church

THURSDAY, February 18

8:00 a.m., Mass: St. Thomas Intention, Church

7:00 p.m., Adult Children of Alcoholics Meeting, Church Basement

FRIDAY, February 19

8:00 a.m., Mass: John A. Rock, Church

7:00 p.m., Stations of the Cross, Church.

First Sunday of Lent

SATURDAY, February 20

4:15 p.m.-4:45 p.m., Confessions, Church

5:15 p.m., Mass: Langdon Thomas, Church

SUNDAY, February 21

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

9:15 a.m., Sunday School, Parish Office

10:45 a.m., Mass: Richard Brown, birthday, Church

Readings for Week of February 15

Mon.	Gn 4:1-15, 25	Mk 8:11-13
Tues.	Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10	Mk 8:14-21
Wed	Jl 2:12-18	Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
Thurs.	Dt 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 9:8-15	Mk 1:12-15

Cantor Schedule

February 20 & 21
5:15 p.m. Kevin McCarthy
8:15 a.m. Kerby Staker
10:45 a.m. Laura DeCoy