

## From the Pastor—February 23, 2020

**Adoration Schedule** Adoration this week in St. Mary's on Wednesday, February 26, 8:30 – 9:30 p.m. Adoration in St. Joseph's on Thursday, February 27, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

**Lenten Devotions** On the front side of this bulletin, you will find the Lincoln Diocesan regulations on fasting and abstinence for the holy season of Lent. As you may know, the Lenten fast in former times was much stricter. People of my parents' age (born in 1927 and 1936) oftentimes still remember better the stricter fast because that is how they were raised. In the 1960's, with the Second Vatican Council in Rome, the Church sought to make fasting more of a proposition than an imposition. I can see the wisdom of this; most of us do not enjoy being told what we have to do. But with the proposing of Lenten fasting came a sense, from what I've read and studied, of Lent becoming a liturgical season not observed much differently than others. This is NOT what the Church intended. For us as Christians, the celebration of Easter is the preeminent feast. We must prepare for this feast by fasting. It makes for a good alliterative mnemonic: we fast so that we may feast. \*\*\* I hope to spark within you this Lent, dear reader and dear people of God, a greater sense of God's love for you. To wit, this will involve my invitation to you to spend time with me as your spiritual father; and I as your spiritual father wish to accompany you toward the Resurrected Christ on our Lenten journey. The end of all our striving, of course, is Jesus Christ and unity with him. As we say at Holy Mass, we seek to offer all "through him, with him, and in him, O God almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever." This year of Our Lord Two thousand twenty seems aptly eye-catching, laser-focused, to make this Lent one of great and historic saint-making. We seek to see 20/20; we seek nothing less than saintly holiness, from ourselves and from our families. We look at the world around us and grimace. To quote Christian/Catholic artist Matt Maher's song Give Me A Clean Heart, "Woke up this morning/The whole world was yelling/I wish I was dreaming/for all that we've been through." And from the same song, "Well, everybody's looking for another fight/When trouble's on the rise no end in sight/O Savior won't you come and make the wrong things right/Let me be the place you start/Give me a clean heart." With the political landscape, with the worries of the coronavirus, with illnesses in our families, with uncertainty on our rights to life and liberty, we are faced with formidable challenges. Frankly, these things frighten me, and you probably see me frightened by them. But with 20/20 focus upon the Lord Jesus, who by dying has destroyed death and by rising has restored life, do we truly have anything...ANYTHING...to fear? Here are some ways for you and your family to grow in unity with the Lord and give greater glory to God this Lent:

**Attend Daily Mass** Receiving Holy Communion often is how to tell the Lord most intimately, "Lord, I give you my body, my blood, to commingle with your Body and your Blood." No greater personal relationship with Jesus can be achieved than devout reception of him in Holy Communion.

**Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation often** I don't know how to sugarcoat this one. Go to Confession. Often. You will see your life change.

**Pray the Rosary** Mary uses the Holy Rosary as if a weapon to conquer our hearts for her Son. Allow her to so weaponize your strand of holy beads.

**Pray, out loud, with your family** Does mom pray with the kids at bedtime, or is it both mom and dad? Pray, all

together, out loud, during Lent. It will change your home.

**Do you spend more time looking at a screen, or in silent prayer?** I think you know the answer. And the remedy is to give that time to prayer or works of charity.

**Fast from whatever you overemphasize over God**

**Fast from sinning** Be the holiest kid in your family, in your class, in your school. Be the one at work who is known for lovingly welcoming all clients. Be the spouse in your marriage that seeks to outdo the other in living your marriage vows.

**Do something good which you keep putting off**

**Be kind, kinder, kindest** Do people consider you a kind person? If so, be even kinder. Or, shoot for the moon, and be the kindest person around!

**Sunday Film Series** I have chosen a series of movies from our Formed.org subscription. They each last around 45 minutes. We will watch them in the hall at St. Mary's for both parishes. Bring your child(ren)!

**Stations of the Cross & Confessions** People since the very beginning of Christianity have walked where Jesus carried his Cross. Walk with him during our Friday night Stations, followed by Confessions.

**Weekly Holy Hour** St. Mary's Eucharistic Holy Hour and Benediction is on Wednesdays, while St. Joseph's is on Thursdays. Come to either one, or both.

**Jesus: Way, Truth, and Life Study Groups** The creators of this study series at Ascension Press are branding this as the definitive study of Jesus Christ. Come and see if you agree with their bold marketing.

**Join Legion of Mary** You can be an active member, or you can have auxiliary membership. Basically, if you like to pray the Rosary, the Legion of Mary is for you.

**Join Knights of Columbus** Men, I know of no better way for you to be the man in your family, the man you want to be in your own heart, than to become a Knight. For over 130 years, this fraternal organization has lived on its pillars of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism. And the KC's have made the wise decision to make its membership ceremonies public to wives, children, and families; if the secrecy component was ever your excuse not to join, that excuse is wiped away.

**Be Active in Altar Society** Look at your group list, your circle list, in the St. Mary's and St. Joseph's books. Look at the diocesan Facebook page for the Lincoln Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. Trust me, you will find a work of mercy which you have a passion for, and the Altar Society will provide you an outlet to do it.

**Les Mach** Wasn't the talk of Les Mach inspiring? He truly wants to help you to plan your gifts, large or small. Call him at (402) 443-6180, or e-mail him at [Les-mach@catholicgift.org](mailto:Les-mach@catholicgift.org).

**Are You Pro-Life, except for...** ...cases of rape? Let Rebecca Kiessling, who was conceived in rape, change your mind and heart. Mark your calendar for Saturday, March 14, at 2:00 p.m. to hear Rebecca's talk at the Christian Resource Center, Giltner.

**God Bless You!!!**

**Father Grell**