

TIME TO GO ON RETREAT

(Gen. 9:8-15; Psalm 25:4-9; 1Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15)

Today is the First Sunday of Lent. It's time to go on a retreat! For the past year, you may have been running around like a chicken without a head. Society is crazy with many demands! You may have spent most of your time working, trying to make ends meet, taking your child to one sporting/entertainment activity or the other. You have worked so hard that you deserve some time off. Take some time off! It's time to retreat from the business of your daily life, and to go off to where you will have a quiet moment with the Lord. Saint Francis of Assisi did it. When he was overwhelmed with the craziness and restlessness of society, he went into solitude. Lenten season is a time to help us go into solitude. It is a time, which should help you and me focus our attention on what really matters – the salvation of our souls. It's time to prepare for Easter, the feast of our redemption.

This past Ash Wednesday, the prophet Joel exhorted you and me: "Rend your hearts and not your garments." St. Paul, on the other hand, urged us, on behalf of Christ, to "be reconciled to God." This, indeed, is the message of Lent. We must humble ourselves, acknowledge our sins, take responsibility for them, and ask God for pardon and thus resolve to be faithful to our baptismal promises by rejecting Satan and all that contradicts the truth of the gospel of Christ. We must "rend our hearts and not our garments." In other words, during Lent and always, we must genuinely repent from our sinfulness. Our repentance should not just be an external show of grandeur, but it should truly be a genuine conversion of heart. True conversion should lead us to reconcile with God by renouncing Satan and by committing ourselves to promoting the values of Christ's gospel.

In today's first reading we are reminded of God's promise to be with us always and never to allow us to be destroyed by chaos or by our sinfulness. During this season of Lent the Lord tells you and me: "See, I am now establishing my covenant with you ..." He is establishing a covenant of love with us. He has sent His Son to come and die in order to take away our sins. The Lord is faithful to the covenant He has made with us, and during Lent you and I are exhorted to be faithful to the terms of that covenant of love. One way of doing this is to avoid sin. Thus, in the Gospel, Christ exhorts us: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." It is a time when we ought to be sorry for the sins we have committed – a time to resolve not to take pleasure in those things that contradict our Christian values. It is a time we commit / recommit ourselves to being faithful to the demands of the gospel – a time to pray that Christ will give us the strength to overcome the devil and all his wits as we journey through life, especially in these Forty Days of Almsgiving, Fasting and Prayer.

During this Lent you must put aside some extra time for prayer – set aside some extra resources for almsgiving – make time to fast so as to discipline and mortify your inner self and outward self; and thus, truly grow in the spirit. It is time to go on a retreat, attend a parish mission, or just be quiet and allow God to speak to you in the silence of your heart. Above all, you must reconcile with your God!

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP

PARISH NEWS

SHARING COMMUNITY MEAL: This Thursday, March 1st, we will be providing our Sharing Community Meal. Please bring your ziti or dessert to the Rectory. Doors will open at 6:45 a.m. The Sharing Community truly appreciates our efforts. Please keep up the good work! For information, please call the Rectory Office.

HOLY HOUR: This Friday, March 2nd, is First Friday. We will have our monthly Holy Hour at 1 p.m. in honor of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. On Saturday, March 3rd, the Divine Mercy Holy Hour will begin at 3 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to participate in these wonderful devotions.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS: Every Friday evening during Lent, the devotion of the Stations of the Cross is held in the Church at 7 p.m. Families are encouraged to participate together. We will also have the Stations of the Cross at 2 p.m. on Good Friday, just prior to the 3 p.m. Good Friday Service.



The members of the Rosary Altar Society will attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, March 4th.



OUR FAMILY MASS: Next Sunday, March 4th, we will celebrate our Family Mass at 10 a.m. All children and their families are encouraged to attend. Mass will be followed by "Family Breakfast" at the McManus Parish Center. All are welcome.

THE 2012 MASS BOOK IS OPEN



The Mass Book for 2013 opened last Wednesday and there are still many dates open in this year's Mass Book, as well. Consider giving a loved one or someone (living or deceased) who has a special place in your life the graces associated with having a Mass offered on their behalf. You may have a thanksgiving Mass offered for your loved ones or for yourself on such occasions as birthdays, wedding anniversaries, etc. Also, you may consider offering the altar flowers, altar bread and wine, altar candles, or sanctuary lamp for your intention. Come to the Rectory Office, **Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.** to make arrangements or to inquire about the availability of a particular date.

Next weekend you will have the opportunity to arrange for Masses after the 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday or after the 10 a.m. Mass on Sunday.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

CONGRATULATIONS TO HIS EMINENCE TIMOTHY CARDINAL DOLAN AND WELCOME HOME!



LENTEN CONSIDERATION: As we start this Lenten season, looking for some way to make it different, better, more focused than those before it, these are some suggestions to consider or might help trigger your own ideas.

PRAYER

- Say at least one decade of the rosary each day .
- Visit the church one extra time each week – for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Stations of the Cross, or private prayer.

FASTING

- Eliminate one superfluous (and not necessarily healthy) eating, drinking, smoking, etc. habit you have.
- Use this season to really embrace portion control.

ALMS GIVING

- Consider tackling the seemingly impossible feat of **tithing** for these 40 days.
- Research and choose a charity to support.

Let this Lent bring you closer to the Lord, your Church, your community and your family. May your efforts bring you peace of mind and joy.



ROSARY ALTAR SOCIETY SPONSORED FUND RAISER

SATURDAY, MARCH 3RD
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Please bring gently used items in large black bags to the McManus Parish Center. For information, please see the flyer on the Church bulletin boards or call Alice Jacob on 963-1686.

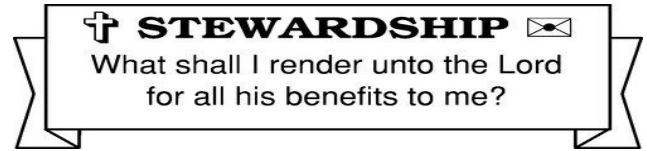
2012 ARCHDIOCESAN STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

This week marks the beginning of the *2012 Archdiocesan Stewardship Appeal* in our parish. You will be receiving a letter from Cardinal Dolan asking for your support of the vital ministries, programs and services provided through the *Appeal* each year. When you receive your letter, please fill out your pledge card and send it in. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



The first Sunday evening of each month immediately following the 5 p.m. Mass, our Youth Group meets in the McManus Parish Center. All youths age 13 and up are invited.

MIRACULOUS MEDAL NOVENA: Held after the 9 AM Mass on Mondays.



TITHING - GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

February 20, 2011

Adults' Contribution	\$7551.60
Children's Contribution	\$137.00
Last Year's Total	\$7688.60

February 19, 2012

Adults' Contribution	\$5760.60
Children's Contribution	\$153.80
This Year's Total	\$5914.40

Tithing Prayer

Lord, we thank You for Your generosity in all that you have given us: the gift of our lives, our families, all that we have and all that we are. Help us to use our gifts wisely and to share them generously recognizing that everything comes from You. Give us the grace to trust that You will always care for us and provide for our needs. Bless our community's efforts at tithing by bringing us closer to You. May the offerings of our time, talents, and material resources be made in the same spirit of sacrifice that Jesus taught us by His Life and death. Amen.

"The true purpose of tithing is to secure not the tithe, but the tither; not the gift, but the giver; not your money, but you... for God."



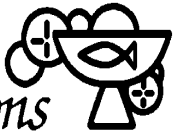
Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Alejandra Santander, Grace Raguso, Andy DeFabritis, Maryann Tolli, Maria Marte, Ed Carpenter, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Dolores Santamarena, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, John Esposito, Francis Farrell, Mark Baum, Frank Marra, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Dan Seratto, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Mary Ann Berengur, Gene DelBene, Angelina Brusco, Mary Romanchik, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petruolo, Cynthia Swiatkowitz, Rose Botcheller, Silvia Georgi, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Steve Oddo, Roseann Mercandetti, and Mary Krakowiak.

REMEMBER YOUR BELOVED PARISH

Remember, "We make a living by what we earn. We make a life by what we share." Please remember our Parish in your Will as a lasting and loving gift to your parish family. Thank you!

RECITATION OF THE ROSARY: Join your fellow parishioners in praying the Rosary after the 9 a.m. Mass on weekdays and Saturdays.

FEBRUARY 26, 2012

Mass  *for the*
Intentions *Week*

First Sunday of Lent

Saturday, February 25 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Michael Costagnozzi & Mary Ann Karpinski +

Sunday, February 26

8:30 AM Joyce Couto +

10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish

11:30 AM Charles Sullivan +

5:00 PM Monsignor Joseph F. Tracey +

Monday, February 27

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM For the Intentions of the Bishops

9:00 AM Jack Bilancia, Sr.

Tuesday, February 28

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM For the Intentions of the Bishops

Wednesday, February 29

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Gerry Maselli +

Thursday, March 1

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM William J. Mitchell +

Friday, March 2

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM John Brusco +

Saturday, March 3

Lenten Weekday

9:00 AM Giacomo Bilancia +

12 Noon Memorial for Christine Serricchio Bellino +

Saturday, March 3 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Deceased Members of Pisacreta Family +

Sunday, March 4

Second Sunday of Lent

8:30 AM Peter Klee +

10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish

11:30 AM Antonio Darretta +

5:00 PM Julio Blanco +

**ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
PARISH MISSION**



**Mon, March 12th to Wed, March 14th
After the 9 a.m. Mass or 7:30 p.m.**

Rev. Michael Connolly, OFM Cap

As a child I used to love to play "Hide and Seek," especially when I was hiding. As an adult, at times I continue the game, only with God, values, and treasures in my life - hiding and loosing them in the tumble of life and seeking to find and be found by God.

I would like to invite you to three hours of seeking and finding this Lent. I will be giving your Parish Mission, which will be a time of prayer and a time to seek and find - to seek God's help and to find anything that may be missing in our lives.

Spiritual writer, Joyce Rupp, says: "If we look closely into our hearts, we will all find that we have lost something of value. We may have lost our tempers or our respect for self or for others; we may have lost hope or our capacity to understand or accept; maybe we lost a friend or perhaps our desire to pray ... sometimes, we are not even sure what we have lost, but something tells us we need to look."

Come join me and together let us seek, find, and be loved ever more deeply by our God.

*Hope to see you,
Fr. Michael*

..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+..+

LENTEN PRAYER

God of love and forgiveness,
You give us this season of Lent to call us back
To You through repentance & acknowledgement
Of our sins and offences.
Through our prayer draw us closer to You
And help us to know the depth of Your love.
Through our fasting help us to rely on You
As we put aside our own wants and needs.
Through our almsgiving make us aware
Of the needs of our brothers and sisters
Whose only hope is often in You alone.
In Your great mercy, heal us from our sins
And wipe out our offences, so that,
Renewed in Your grace and revived by Your love,
We may rejoice in Your saving power.
Amen.



