

BE IMITATORS OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICIAL LOVE

(Jer. 31:31-34; Ps. 51:3-4, 12-15; Heb. 5:7-9; John 12:20-33)

In anticipation of His death, Jesus tried to exhort His disciples not to see death as an end but rather, as a door, through which we have to pass through in order to gain entry into eternal life. Thus, He said: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit." Suffering and pain are part and parcel of our human nature! Ultimately, death is an inevitable end! We must all go through it if you and I intend to merit eternal life.

This Sunday marks the beginning of a period of time in our liturgical calendar, known as the *Passiontide* – the two weeks before Easter. During these two weeks prior to Easter, we are called to reflect intensely on the meaning of the death of Jesus and its effects in our lives. Next Sunday is "Passion (Palm) Sunday," which marks the beginning of what is traditionally known as "Holy Week," and culminates in the Paschal Triduum when we take time to ponder the passion and death of Jesus: the shameful death of the cross versus the glory of the Resurrection.

The glory of the resurrection is what you and I will ultimately enjoy, if we are willing to die to self and live for others – the sacrifices that we make – the almsgiving of our time, talent and resources – the prayer of our intimate relationship with God – the fasting of self-giving and dependence on God alone. It is in this vein that the Letter to the Hebrews tells us, "In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, He offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the One Who was able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His reverence." Christ was obedient to God the Father, and depended entirely on His love. By doing this, He has taught you and me to always place our trust in God alone, because, "He, Who did not spare His own Son, will give us everything that is good."

The Passion and Death of Christ, therefore, marks the fulfillment of the promise the Lord made through Prophet Jeremiah: "The days are coming...when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers." In this "new covenant," God, in Christ, took our human form and died for us in order that we may have "life to the fullest." Like Christ, all Christians are called to look beyond the pain and agony of Good Friday and focus rather on the glory and joy of Easter Sunday. We ought to be willing to be transformed by being ready to die to ourselves and live for others. It is by our willingness to imitate Christ in His self-giving love that will assure us of the eternal life He has promised to His followers: "Whoever serves Me must follow Me, and where I am, there also will My servant be."

Christ intends all Christians to be where He is in His glorified body. He wants to draw everyone to Himself. Therefore, you and I must never prefer the *world* and *human glory* to God's love. We must reject the claims of the *world* and be willing to abandon ourselves and be ready to die with Christ so that we can also rise with Him Who is our resurrection and our life.

Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP



FATHER DONALD IS TRANSFERRED

Some of you may have already heard that Father Donald Eruaga, MSP is being transferred to a parish in Chicago. Members of the Parish Pastoral Council were officially informed of the transfer last Monday, March 19th, a day before Father Donald left on Tuesday, March 20th.

It is unfortunate that the majority of the parishioners did not have the opportunity to say "thank you" and "good bye" to Father Donald, as is our custom here in St. Bart's; the reason being that he decided abruptly to leave for a six-week vacation in order to prepare adequately for his new assignment, which will take effect in May, this year. Our thoughts and prayers are with Father Donald and we wish him God's blessings in all his endeavors.



OUR FAMILY MASS: Next Sunday, April 1st, we will celebrate our Family Mass at 10 a.m. All children and their families are encouraged to attend this Mass. Because it is Palm Sunday, we will **not** have our usual "Family Breakfast."

The members of the Rosary Altar Society will attend the 8:30 a.m. Mass next Sunday, April 1st.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS: This Friday evening we have the devotion of the Stations of the Cross in the Church at 7 p.m. On Good Friday, April 6th, Stations will be at 2 p.m., just prior to the 3 p.m. Good Friday Service. Families are encouraged to participate together in this Lenten tradition in preparation for Easter.

CHRISM MASS: Mass of Chrism will be celebrated this **Tuesday, April 3rd**, at 4 p.m. in St. Patrick's Cathedral. Every parishioner is encouraged to attend this beautiful ceremony, where we celebrate with the Archbishop of our Archdiocese and witness our priests renew their vow to serve God's people with the humility of a good shepherd. **Please come and support our pastor.** Due to the generosity of one of our parishioners, a motor coach will travel from our parking lot directly to St. Patrick's Cathedral at the **cost of \$10 per person**. Please arrive at the parking lot by 1:15 p.m.; we expect to be back in the lot around 6:30 p.m. 32 of the 50 seats are already taken, please call the Rectory on 965-0566, Monday to Friday, as soon as possible to reserve a seat.

THE ALTAR BREAD AND WINE for this week has been donated in loving memory of Madeline Chianese by Josephine Smith.



The **SANCTUARY LAMP** for this week will be lit in

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

A LENTEN MORNING RETREAT FOR WOMEN

Saturday, March 31st, from 9 a.m. to 12 Noon

Sponsored by the Rosary Altar Society

Mass will be followed by a light breakfast, and a talk by Reverend John Vigilanti. Suggested donation is \$10; reservation needed by **Wednesday, March 28th**. For information and reservations, please call Alice Jacob (963-1686) or the Rectory Office (965-0566).

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

"Morning after morning He opens my ear that I may hear." A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is an opportunity to take time to really listen to your spouse and enrich your marriage. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is April 27-29. For more information go to www.wwme.org or call toll free (877) 697-9963, ext. 3.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter's mission of renewal in the Church and change in the world is to assist couples and priests to live fully intimate and responsible relationships by providing them with a Catholic "experience" and ongoing community support for such a lifestyle.

Couples celebrating their **50th Wedding Anniversary** anytime during 2012 are invited to attend the **Annual Golden Wedding Jubilee Mass** with Cardinal Egan at St. Patrick Cathedral, **Sunday, April 29th**, at 2 p.m. Pre-registration is required. Please contact our Rectory Office for more information. The deadline for registrations for the Mass is Friday, April 13th. This event is sponsored by the Family Life/Respect Life Office of the Archdiocese of New York.

2012 ARCHDIOCESAN STEWARDSHIP APPEAL

As stewards and Disciples of Christ, we recognize that all the goods and riches in our life are gifts from God. Strengthened by the Eucharist, we respond to God's generosity in our lives with gratitude by using and sharing our gifts in service of others. Please share your gifts and make a gift to the *2012 Archdiocesan Stewardship Appeal*.

YOUTH MINISTRY

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 a.m. Mass on Mondays.

EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTION: Held the First Friday of every month at 1 p.m. Please join us when you are able.

DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION: Held the First Saturday of every month at 3 p.m. All are encouraged to participate.

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

STEWARDSHIP

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits to me?

Tithing -

God's Plan for Giving

March 20, 2011

Adults' Contribution	\$5917.30
Children's Contribution	\$151.25
Last Year's Total	\$6068.55

March 18, 2012

Adults' Contribution	\$7274.20
Children's Contribution	\$121.50
This Year's Total	\$7395.70

The Catholic Relief Services collection totaled \$2113.05.

Thank you to all our parishioners and friends who along with Father Michael Connolly, OFM cap. made our Parish Mission a great success. Father Michael inspired and touched us all. He and the Capuchin Friars appreciate the \$2612.00 donated.

"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 Petrulo, Cynthia Swiatkowitz, Rose Botcheller, Silvia Georgi, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Steve Oddo, and Roseann Mercandetti.

THURSDAY, APRIL 12TH

1:30 - 7:30 PM


MCMANUS PARISH CENTER



St. Bartholomew's will be conducting its **71st** Blood Drive the **Thursday** after Easter. Our parishioners and friends have made **5181** donations to date. We run drives during holiday periods when the need for blood is great and donations are usually down. If you can donate, please call Tony Sciacca (423-3592) for an appointment; and please spread the word to your family and friends, too.

Give Thanks - Give Blood !!!

MARCH 25, 2012

Mass  for the
Intentions Week

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Saturday, March 24 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Gloria Brusco Flanagan +

Sunday, March 25

8:30 AM Jeffrey Milowe +

10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish

11:30 AM Bonaventuro J. Amato +

5:00 PM Juan Rosa Vazquez & Magdaleno Vazquez +

Monday, March 26

The Annunciation of the Lord

7:00 AM Nicholas Marcello +

9:00 AM Clare McDonnell +

Tuesday, March 27

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Anthony DiPaolo +

Wednesday, March 28

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Madeline Chianese +

Thursday, March 29

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention

9:00 AM Alice Olsen +

Friday, March 30

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM Roberto & Pasqua Capuano +

9:00 AM Amadeu Amorim +

Saturday, March 31

Lenten Weekday

9:00 AM Giacomo Bilancia +

Saturday, March 31 (Anticipated Mass)

5:00 PM Richard Frischman +

Sunday, April 1

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

8:30 AM Robert Liddell +

10:00 AM Mary & Ben Bajek +

11:30 AM Anna & Anthony Faracco +

5:00 PM For All the People of Our Parish

MARCH 25, 2012

