

## THE COURAGE TO SAY NO!

*Deut. 26:4-10; Psalm 91:1-2, 10-15; Rom. 10:8-13; Luke 4:1-13*

This past Ash Wednesday, the prophet Joel exhorted you and me to "Rend your hearts and not your garments," St. Paul, on the other hand, implored us, on behalf of Christ, to "be reconciled to God." That is indeed the message of Lent - time for reconciliation with God and neighbor. We are called to humble ourselves, acknowledge our sins and take responsibility for them, and ask God for pardon as we resolve to be faithful to our baptismal promises of rejecting Satan and all that contradicts the truth of the gospel of Christ. We must reconcile with God by renouncing Satan and by committing ourselves to promoting the value of Christ's gospel.

Lent is the most appropriate season to appreciate God's love and give thanks to Him for sending His only Son, Jesus Christ, to come to suffer and die for our sins so that we may have eternal life. It is imperative for us to know that the best way to show appreciation and thanks to God during this season of Lent is by committing ourselves to be faithful to observing the **Three Pillars of Lent** – Almsgiving – Fasting – Prayer.

This Season challenges you and me to take our devotional duties more seriously; know that we are urged to practice Almsgiving during Lent and beyond. Today's first reading is a *Eucharistic Confession*, a confession of gratitude. It is taken from the ritual prescribed for the feast of the *harvest thanksgiving*. The reading recounts why Israel should be grateful. In gratitude to God Who gave the land, sent the rain and made the land fertile, they offered 10 percent of the first fruits of the harvest to God, even before they took what they needed for their upkeep. For the Jewish people, tithing is never seen as merely an obligation, but a religious duty. It is always perceived as a "thanksgiving" to God for the many things He had done for them. He is responsible for their harvest and hence He deserves to be thanked. Lent is a time to show our gratitude by Almsgiving!

In today's Gospel, we hear that after Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights, He was tempted by the devil. Firstly, He was tempted, for the sake of material necessity and sensual desires, to abuse His authority and power: "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Secondly, He was tempted with the sin of greed by the worship of a false god in material things: "...he (the devil) showed Him all the kingdoms of the world...and said, I shall give to You all this power and glory...if You worship me." Whenever you are tempted to treat your treasure and material possessions as if they were gods, you must remember that by sharing them with the less fortunate, you are, in fact, obeying the command, "You shall worship the Lord, your God, and Him alone shall you serve." Thirdly, Jesus was tempted by the sin of pride and vanity: "If you are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here...(God) will command His angels...to guard You."

The Lenten Season reminds us that, like Christ, we, His followers, are tempted to satisfy our own sensual desires and pleasures. We will have the urge to satiate our hunger for happiness with material pleasures and objects that contradict the teachings of the Gospel. Like Him, you and I must have the courage to subdue and overcome these desires, because, "One does not live on bread (material things) alone." This is the time for us to be humble and to bring our needs to God in prayer and trust that He will grant our heart desires when we hold fast and persevere.

**Rev. Anthony Ita Bassey, MSP**



# PARISH NEWS




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## PARISH MISSION



Mon, February 25<sup>th</sup> to Wed, February 27<sup>th</sup>

At the 9 a.m. Mass or 7:30 p.m.

Rev. Jack Rathschmidt, Capuchin

Next weekend, Father Jack, our 2013 Parish Mission director, will preach at all the Masses. Each day of the Mission, Monday through Wednesday, will have a different topic. All parishioners are encouraged to take advantage of this Lenten opportunity. Please plan on joining Father Jack each evening at 7:30 p.m. or after the 9 a.m. Mass. Endeavor to invite along your friends and neighbors.

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**President's Day:** This Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, is Presidents' Day, a legal holiday. The Rectory Office will be closed and there will be only one Mass at 9 a.m.




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**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:** The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) will meet this Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. in the school. All members are encouraged to attend this meeting.

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## THE 2014 MASS BOOK IS OPEN

The Mass Book for 2014 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.

You will have the added opportunity to book Masses on Saturday evening, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, following the Masses for Sunday obligation.

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**STATIONS OF THE CROSS:** This Friday and every Friday evening during Lent, we have the devotion of the Stations of the Cross in the Church at 7 p.m. (On Good Friday, Stations will be at 2 p.m. just prior to the 3 p.m. Good Friday Service). It is a Lenten tradition. Families are encouraged to participate together in preparation for Easter.




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The ALTAR CANDLES for this week will be lit in loving memory of Andrea Pisacreta.



We welcome Father Daniel Oghenerukevwe, MSP, our new Parochial Vicar, to our parish family. We all look forward to getting to know him, and hope he enjoys his time with us. Like our Pastor, Father Anthony, Father Daniel is a member in the Missionary Society of St. Paul. He was born in Nigeria and was ordained a priest on June 24, 2008.

CARDINAL'S ANNUAL APPEAL 2013

Remember, if you have not made your pledge to the Cardinal's Appeal please do so this week. Please be as generous as your means allow in your Appeal commitment. Do not forget that you can pledge your gift now and make payments in the coming months. Again, thank you to all who have made their gift.



Congratulations to our newest Christian, Elizabeth Connors, who was baptized on Saturday, February 9th. We thank her parents and godparents for presenting her for baptism, and we pray God to bless and keep this child and her parents in their journey of faith.

AN INVITATION TO OUR PARISH FAMILY FAITH FESTIVAL

We are opening our Family Faith Festival on Saturday, March 9th, from 12 - 2:30 p.m. to everyone in our parish. Regardless of whether you are a single adult, an empty nester, or a senior, you are invited to join our families for a simple meal, followed by fun-filled faith activities (some brought back by popular demand!). Reservations are a must (call 476-6676) and are on a first come basis. There is no cost to attend.

Please pray for the repose of the souls of all the faithful departed, especially Dorothy DellaCalce.



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!

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

EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTION: Held the First Friday of every month at 1 PM. Please join us for this most efficacious prayer.

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

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



TITHING - GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING

February 12, 2012

Table with 2 columns: Contribution Type, Amount. Rows: Adults' Contribution (\$6188.95), Children's Contribution (\$145.95), Last Year's Total (\$6334.90)

February 10, 2013

Table with 2 columns: Contribution Type, Amount. Rows: Adults' Contribution (\$5773.35), Children's Contribution (\$157.50), This Year's Total (\$5930.85)

The 2nd Collection for Peter's Pence totaled \$1718.30.

While snow and ice storms, such as the one we experienced last weekend, can turn our world into a winter wonderland, the financial strain caused by the understandable drop in attendance and contributions is further compounded by the hefty added expense of clearing and salting our sidewalks and parking lot. If you are unable to attend Mass due to inclement weather, please consider contributing after the fact by mail, dropping by the Rectory, or doubling up your envelopes /contributions on a subsequent weekend. Our winter weather, while picturesque, has been a real financial drain.



Therefore, next Sunday, February 24th, we will have our much needed second collection for snow removal. Please try to donate as generously as your means can afford. Thank you for your understanding and consideration.

"What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal." ~ Albert Pike



Please pray for all the sick & the homebound members of our Parish, especially Ethel Thomas, Aldina Pereira, Rebecca Conroy, Andy DeFabritis, Maria Marte, Barbara Rup, Jule Yaskovic, Rosalie Heit, Florence B. Swetz, Clare Yaskovic, Neil Caruso, Raymond Fitzpatrick, Sr., Deacon James Byrnes, Andrea Objay, Carmen Torres, Frank Marra, Deacon Patrick Troy, Josephine Apuzzo, Edith Dugan, Gary Roth, Joyann Allan, Anna Rita Morgante, Lois Burton, Mary DeStefano, Mark Cianfaglione, Shawn Colon, Margaret Maccia, Nicole Ryan Betancourt, Anthony Spinner, Audrey & Alfred Falcone, Kathleen Hayes, Marge Muraik, Stan Buoninfante, Donna Vasconez, Gene DelBene, Nicole Pisani-Frame, Louis Petrulo, Cynthia Swiatkiewicz, Jimmy Maimone, Robert Mirsky, Roseanne Mercandetti, Louis Brusco, Josephine Daniele, Jennifer Dorsey, Valerie Riccardi, Fatima Panik, Joanne Moscarello, Marian Fletcher, Anna Bonacci, Minerva Hernandez, Paula Parente, Barbara Olivieri, Carol Swetz, Bridget O'Malley, Anna Brucculeri, Peggy Clevenberg, Gerald Mazzerese, Jr., Patricia Keane, Louis Milone, Joey Bastardi, Carol Stola, Amada Ortiz, Karen Aprea, Stephen Sarich, and Neil Cawley.

FEBRUARY 17, 2013

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Mass  for the  
Intentions *Week*

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**First Sunday of Lent**

**Saturday, February 16 (Anticipated Mass)**

5:00 PM For All the People of Our Parish

**Sunday, February 17**

8:30 AM Robert Liddell +  
10:00 AM Charles & Stefana Barba +  
11:30 AM Carmine Nicholas Maccia +  
5:00 PM John Flynn +

**Monday, February 18**

Lenten Weekday - **President's Day**

9:00 AM Marcello Barcello +

**Tuesday, February 19**

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM Josephine Somma +  
9:00 AM Mary Esposito +

**Wednesday, February 20**

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM No Intention  
9:00 AM Christopher Tevlin +

**Thursday, February 21**

Lenten Weekday

7:00 AM Deceased Members of Bolduc & Savard Families  
9:00 AM Mary Resatar +

**Friday, February 22**

Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle

7:00 AM Mickey Trancynger +  
9:00 AM Salvatore Guadagno +

**Saturday, February 23**

Lenten Weekday

9:00 AM Antonio Vitullo +

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**Second Sunday of Lent**

**Saturday, February 23 (Anticipated Mass)**

5:00 PM Charles Sullivan +

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**Sunday, February 24**

8:30 AM Leonore Erb +  
10:00 AM For All the People of Our Parish  
11:30 AM Biagio & Lucia Labruzzo +  
5:00 PM Michael Castagnozzi & Mary Ann Karpinski +

**STRENGTH IN SICKNESS: PRAYING FOR THE POPE!**

Last Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the Twenty-first World Day of the Sick, declared by Pope John Paul II in 1992. In Pope Benedict XVI's 2013 message to mark the occasion, he used the words of his predecessor, John Paul II to remind us that "This day represents for the sick, for health care workers, for the faithful and for all people of goodwill 'a privileged time of prayer, of sharing, of offering one's sufferings for the good of the Church, and a call for all to recognize in the features of their suffering brothers and sisters the Holy Face of Christ, Who, by suffering, dying and rising has brought about the salvation of mankind' (John Paul II, Letter for the Institution of the World Day of the Sick, 13 May 1992). On this occasion I feel especially close to you, dear friends, who in health care centers or at home, are undergoing a time of trial due to illness and suffering. May all of you be sustained by the comforting words of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council: "You are not alone, separated, abandoned or useless. You have been called by Christ and are His living and transparent image."

Ironically, the Catholic world last Monday woke up to the shocking message by the Pope to the Cardinals, "to communicate to you a decision of great importance for the life of the Church. After having repeatedly examined my conscience before God, I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry. I am well aware that this ministry, due to its essential spiritual nature, must be carried out not only with words and deeds, but...both strength of mind and body are necessary, strength which in the last few months, has deteriorated in me to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfill the ministry entrusted to me. For this reason, and well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom I declare that I renounce the ministry of Bishop of Rome, Successor of Saint Peter, entrusted to me by the Cardinals on 19 April 2005, in such a way, that as from 28 February 2013, at 20:00 hours, the See of Rome, the See of Saint Peter, will be vacant and a Conclave to elect the new Supreme Pontiff will have to be convoked by those whose competence it is..." (Vatican, 10 February 2013, BENEDICTUS PP XVI).

Lent is a season when you and I are to identify our desires, our temptations, our pain and suffering with that of Jesus. Through His suffering, dying and resurrection, He is the only One Who has the power to take away our sicknesses and thus, restore us to good health in mind and body. As we begin this season of Lent, we, as individuals and as a Church community, pray for our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, that God will bless him and grant him good health of mind and body. We also pray for Mother Church, that as the Pope resigns due to failing health, that the Lord would not leave us orphans but in His loving kindness will continue to look after His flock and lead us to a greener pasture.

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**Catholic Lent Prayer**

***Almighty and Everlasting God,  
You have given the human race  
Jesus Christ our Savior as a model of humility.  
He fulfilled Your Will by becoming Man  
And giving His life on the Cross.  
Help us to bear witness to You  
By following His example of suffering  
And make us worthy to share in His Resurrection.  
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.***



