



# The St. John's Communicator

## January 31, 2020

### Roser's Reflection . . .

Dear Friends,

While not the name of a place, "Gesima" can certainly be described as the stage of a journey. The journey is to Christ's death and Resurrection, and Gesima is the first portion of it. Gesima is a Latin term for "days." In fact, the original name for the forty-day-period that we call Lent was "Quadragesima" (forty days or forty-some days). The journey to Easter has three phases or stages - Gesima (three Sundays beginning with the seventieth day before Easter), Lent (Quadragesima), and Holy Week (also called Passion-tide). The Scripture lessons read in worship during each phase or "leg" of the journey prepare us for the one following - until we are finally prepared to celebrate Easter in its fullness. However, for many years, we have only observed a two-stage journey to Easter.

When Lutheran churches adopted a modified version of the Roman Catholic series of readings for worship that was developed during the Second Vatican Council, Gesima (or Gesimatide, as it is called) was eliminated. I do not know what the reasoning was for eliminating Gesima (or Pre-Lent) in the new Roman Catholic series of readings (lectionary), but for the Lutherans who adopted their three-year lectionary, I am not aware of any intention other than simply "following suit." However, we may well ask, "what was lost by this change?"

Can you imagine celebrating Christmas eve without having first heard a series of readings detailing the appearance of Gabriel to Mary, the angel speaking to Zechariah, and the angel's exhortation to Joseph that he take Mary, his wife, into his own home? The arrival of the Holy Family in Bethlehem and the appearance of the angels to the shepherds would feel a bit abrupt and we wouldn't be able to appreciate all of the details that Luke is recounting for us. Christmas without Advent would feel just that - abrupt - and lacking in preparation. Without Gesima (or Pre-Lent, if you prefer), Ash Wednesday can feel just as abrupt and without pretext. This is why the historic lectionary of the Church provides three weeks of lessons that serve as a bridge between the glories of our Lord's Transfiguration and God's calling for us to repent and turn back to Him. This three-week period - Septuagesima (seventy-some days before Easter), Sexagesima (sixty-some days), and Quinquagesima (fifty-some days) bring us lessons that move our hearts and minds from the joys of Christmas and Epiphany to our sorrow over our sins. Consequently, when Ash Wednesday arrives and we receive the ashes on our foreheads, our hearts have already been prepared for the day's message by the lessons read and studied during the previous three weeks.

The festival of Easter is the most important celebration of the year, and three phases of preparation are certainly appropriate if we are to experience its liberating joys in all of their fullness! Want to have a more meaningful Lent? - observe Gesimatide.

In Christ Jesus,

*Pastor*



#### Celebrate!



Oscar and Mildred Wedel and their family would like to invite members of St. John's to a celebration of Oscar's birthday. God has blessed Oscar with a long life; he will turn 100 on February 17. There will be an "open house" with a light lunch from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm on Saturday, February 15 (snow date is February 16) in the church basement. Come help us celebrate!



If someone has a coat rack they aren't using, I would very much appreciate having one in our Church Office. Thank you.

Berta Eddy,  
Administrative Assistant

#### Who wants a gift card for Culver's?



Look for details on how you can win one in the February Messenger and in February issues of The Communicator.

## In the Event of Inclement Weather

Snowy days and other winter weather conditions can present motorists with risks that should be avoided whenever possible. To that end, we urge our members to exercise caution when choosing to attend worship and other parish activities during such conditions. Since we have no way of alerting all worshipers of cancellations, I do not cancel worship services. Of course, exceptions to this policy will be made when there is a safety concern in the building, itself. However, I do not want worshipers and worship leaders to "gamble" with their safety, and perhaps their lives, in order to attend worship when roadway conditions advise against it. This is to say, regardless of the weather, I will always be present to offer worshipers God's Word through Scripture reading and preaching, and the Lord's Supper.

This does not mean that anyone else is expected to be present when weather conditions present serious challenges to your safe arrival. In terms of other activities, we will make every possible effort to inform members of cancellations.



**LUMIN Schools**  
St. John's Lutheran

# OPEN HOUSE

Friday, February 7th, 2020  
4:00p.m.-6:00p.m.

FOR DETAILS  
(608) 713 1400  
[www.luminschools.org](http://www.luminschools.org)

Free Food Raffle and Prizes School Tour

**The new year is upon us! In preparation for that, the 2020 CD Ministry and Altar Flower sign up sheets are in the Narthex. As always, PLEASE PRINT, and be specific about how you would like your sponsorship acknowledged. Thank you.**

**DEAR LORD,**  
**TEACH ME TO TRUST IN YOU SO THAT WHEN THE**  
**UNEXPECTED STORMS OF LIFE COME,**  
**I WILL EXPECT PEACE IN THE MIDST OF THOSE STORMS,**  
**KNOWING THAT YOU ARE NEAR,**  
**YOU HEAR MY CRIES,**  
**AND YOU ARE WITH ME AND FOR ME.**

### Those serving the Lord and His people this week:

**Elder:** Jeff Vander Kooi  
**Acolyte:** Grace Griinke  
**Music:** Bill Cunningham  
**Communion:** Jeff Vander Kooi, Wally Prins  
**Altar Guild:** Kathy Carter  
**Greeters:** Wally and Kathy Prins  
**Ushers:** Mahlon Hemerley, Levi Bartz, Harold Bauling, Kevin & Richard Rindfleisch, and David Koebernick  
**Counters:** Beulah Knutson, Sandy Saunders  
**Sound Technicians:** David Koebernick, Chris Peterson, and Justin Behm

### Those serving the Lord and His people next week:

**Elder:** Lee Fassett  
**Acolyte:** Collin Gill  
**Music:** Bill Cunningham  
**Communion:** Lee Fassett, Jeff Crall  
**Altar Guild:** Debbie Niman  
**Greeters:** Jeanne Ludeman and Delores Steil  
**Ushers:** Mahlon Hemerley, Levi Bartz, Harold Bauling, Kevin & Richard Rindfleisch, and David Koebernick  
**Counters:** Beulah Knutson, Sandy Saunders  
**Sound Technicians:** David Koebernick, Chris Peterson, and Justin Behm

*Ash Wednesday*  
*February 26, 2020*  
*Worship Service 6:30 p.m.*