

*Lent Booklet
2011*

*Faith, Fasting and
Forgiveness*

Faith, Fasting and Forgiveness

This year our liturgical focus is “Faith, Fasting and Forgiveness.” These are basic Catholic “tools” that we use in observance of the Holy Lenten Season. Fasting and abstinence during Lent combined with opportunities to ask and seek Forgiveness will keep us Faith-filled over the coming weeks. Welcome Easter bliss!

Lenten Reflection

Spend an evening with Fr. Eugene Lauer

Thursday, March 31 after 7:00 pm Mass

Fr. Eugene Lauer, one of our renewal speakers this past October, is offering a Lenten Reflection for us. See bulletin and website for details.

Living Room Retreat

Come aside and rest awhile

All are invited to deepen their relationship with God by making a 6-week retreat in daily life based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. Sr. Catherine Higgins CSJ, an experienced Spiritual Director, will guide us through this experience during Lent. This form of retreat is non-traditional in that it does not require a person to go away to a retreat center. Rather, those participating are asked to spend about 20-30 minutes in quiet prayer at home each day reflecting on the Scripture passages assigned for the week, and then meeting once a week with a group to share the fruits on one's prayer in the Upper Room. The book, *Living Room Retreat*, will be available to purchase for \$5. The dates are Mondays, March 7, 21, 28; April 4, 11, 25 and May 2 from 7:30-9:00 pm after the 7:00 pm Prayer Service.

Lenten Meager Meal with Speaker Shulamit Bastacky

Monday, March 14 at 7:30 pm in Oldenski Hall

All will share a Meager Meal and be inspired by our guest speaker, Shulamit Bastacky. Our meal will be simple-soup, bread and cookies. Our speaker will be Shulamit Bastacky. As an infant and a little child, she was hidden in the basement of a convent in Lithuania during the German Occupation in WWII. Her parents, Simon and Dora, survived the

Holocaust. Shulamit will share her life story with us. Please call Bonnie at the Religious Education Office (724) 776-9177 Ext 313 in order for us to make appropriate arrangements. Last minute attendance is welcome. There is no cost. If you are able, we are asking for donations of baby or regular yarn for our God's Precious Preemies-Threads of Peace Ministry. This ministry makes clothes for preemie babies and shawls and hats for women and children in countries devastated by war, natural disasters and mistreatment.

Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are

This Lenten season we will reveal our favorite hiding places from God. God's unconditional love has the power to fill us with a surprising joy, an unbelievable sense of relief, and a healing peace. However, as Jesus spread the good news of God's love, he also told us to love others the same way. It's easy to forget that part – that we're called to follow Jesus, not just believe in him. Jesus had a knack for finding the hiding places in the lives of the people that he met. He challenged them to understand and remove the obstacles that kept them from accepting and then giving away God's love. Join us on a journey of self-discovery as we seek transformation with honesty, humor, and a hope-filled sense of purpose.

Chris Reese, attorney and founder of *Hand to Hand*, a non-profit organization, is the tour guide for this four-week Lenten series, which will take place at 7:30 pm following the 7:00 pm Mass each Tuesday from March 22 through April 12 in the upper room.

A Study of the Cloud of Unknowing starts March 22 in Centering Prayer

You are invited to a study of the 14th century anonymous masterpiece THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING for four Tuesdays starting March 22 with teacher Father William Meninger on video. We will study one of the earliest known “how to” prayer guides for contemplative prayer. Contemplative prayer is a way of seeking God by cultivating inner silence. At the root of this instructive book is the belief that God cannot be grasped by the intellect, nor can God be known or understood. God can only be loved in profound humility. Our persistent, longing love is the one thing that can pierce the cloud of unknowing that separates us from the Divine. The author so beautifully insists “We were created only to love, and everything else was created to make love possible.”

Meet us in the Education Building, Upper Room, promptly at 9:15am each Tuesday. We start with 20 minutes of silent prayer followed by the 50-minute enrichment program that ends by 11am.



Let's Make Easter Cookies

Fr. George invites you to come and make Easter cookies with him on Sunday, April 3 at 1:00 pm in the kitchen. Bring powdered sugar, rolling pin and pastry brush. The cookie dough is provided. Please call Bonnie at (724) 776-9177 Ext. 313 to let us know if you are coming so we have enough cookie dough.

Come to a Seder (Passover)

All are welcome to our annual Seder Meal which will be on Monday, April 18 at 7:00 pm in Oldenski Hall. We will celebrate the ritual of Passover and a dinner of lamb, chicken, potatoes, green beans, rolls, butter, dessert, coffee & tea. Please call (724) 776-9177 Ext. 313 by Friday, April 15 to make your reservation. The fee will be \$8.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children. Please bring or mail your payment to the Religious Education Office by Friday, April 8.

Martha & Joseph Ministry

Volunteers will be cleaning the church Monday, April 11 through Friday, April 15 to prepare the church and make it sparkling clean for Holy Week. Everyone is invited to use some *elbow grease* and lend a hand. Volunteers begin at 9:00 am after Mass and work during the day and in the evening as time and use of church permits. Give Barb a call at 724.776.1357 to *lend a hand*.

Small Faith Communities

A Small Faith Community is a group of ordinary people listening to their own story and the stories of others in light of the Scriptures in an attempt to make sense of their life, of life itself, in a small safe intimate environment. A Small Faith Community is open to all people who are at various places in their faith journey. Contact Wilma Scott, (724) 776-9177, Ext. 304 or smallcomm@stferd.org.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Each year God blesses our parish with wonderful children and adults who will become members of the Catholic faith at the Easter Vigil Mass. Please pray for the elect (those preparing for Baptism, First Communion and or Confirmation), our candidates (those preparing to make a Profession of Faith, Confirmation and First Communion) and those preparing for Confirmation. This year we have 14 adults and 3 children in the RICA and CIC programs. All are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday, April 23 as they become one with us in faith.

Scripture Study

Come and join us every Wednesday at 10:00 am in room 2. The readings for the upcoming Sunday are studied and reflected upon.



Living Stations

Sponsored by the Youth Ministry

March 13	St. Matthew Akron OH	7:00 pm
March 20	St Basil Carrick	7:30 pm
March 27	St. Ferdinand	8:00 pm
April 3	Our Lady of Victory Harwick	7:30 pm
April 10	St. Blaise Midland	7:30 pm
April 17	Good Shepherd Braddock	7:30 pm
April 22	St. Ferdinand Church Good Friday	8:00 pm

Service during Lent

Anyone from the parish is welcome to volunteer with the Missions Outreach group who help sort items at World Vision warehouse on Saturday, March 12 and April 16 from 9:00 am to noon. We sort new donated items which are boxed and sent to third world countries. No special skill is required. Children ten years old and older are allowed to help but need permission slip. If you wish to help or want more details, please contact Wilma Scott by at 724.538.3071 or willma@stferd.org.

Monday Evening Lenten Prayer Service
7:00 pm – 7:30 pm in the church

- March 14** Living Rosary
- March 21** Prayer Service
“Be Merciful just as your Father is merciful”
- March 28** Prayer Service
“A thirst is my soul for the Living God”
- April 4** Prayer Service
*“Unless you people see signs and wonders
you will not believe”*
- April 11** Living Rosary



- Eucharistic Adoration** Every Friday 9-11:30 am in the Daily Mass Chapel/Blessed Sacrament Chapel
Come and spend time in our Lord’s Eucharistic presence.
- Stations of the Cross** Every Friday after the 8:30 am & noon Mass during Lent
- Intercessory Prayer** Every Saturday 7:00- 8:00 pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel
- Centering Prayer** Tuesdays 9:15 am in the Upper Room
The Prayer of Quiet
- Charismatic Prayer Group** Thursdays 7:45 pm in the Daily Mass Chapel
- Rosary & Miraculous Novena** Every Thursday 6:15 pm in the Daily Mass Chapel

The Rosary is also prayed every morning before the 8:30 am Mass.



Distribution of Ashes

Ash Wednesday – March 9, 2011

8:30 am & 12:00 pm Service
5:00 pm & 7:00 pm Masses

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated every Saturday at 10:00 am and after the 6:00 pm Mass; also in Holy Week on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:30 pm.

Lenten Mass Schedule

Mondays	6:30 am	8:30 am	12:00 pm*
Tuesdays	8:30 am	12:00 pm	7:00 pm
Wednesdays	8:30 am	12:00 pm	7:00 pm
Thursdays	8:30 am	12:00 pm	7:00 pm
Fridays	6:30 am	8:30 am	12:00 pm
Saturdays	8:30 am	4:00 pm	6:00 pm
Sundays	8:00 am	10:00 am	12:00 pm 6:00 pm

***Note the addition of the noon day Mass.**

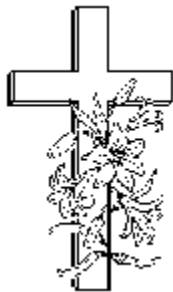
Holy Week Schedule

- Holy Thursday**
April 21
(No morning Mass)
10:30 am Chrism Mass at St. Paul Cathedral
7:00 pm Mass of the Lord’s Supper at St. Ferdinand
Seven Church Walk following Holy Thursday Mass
- Good Friday**
April 22
(No Masses)
12:00 noon Stations of the Cross
1:30 pm Good Friday Service
Living Stations 8:00 pm
- Holy Saturday**
April 23
12 noon blessing of Easter Food & baskets
Easter Vigil 7:30 pm
(No 4:00 or 6:00 pm Masses)
- Easter Sunday**
April 24
8:00 am, 10:00 am & 12 pm in church & hall
(NO 6:00 pm Mass on Easter)



Upcoming Easter Events

- Tuesday, April 26 Luncheon with Fr. Scott Seethaler
sponsored by Royal Court
Noon in Oldenski Hall
- Sunday, May 1 Afternoon Tea
sponsored by Women Gathered
1:00-3:00 pm in Oldenski Hall
- Sunday, May 15 Sunday Breakfast
9 am – noon in Oldenski Hall



Fasting- A Form of Love?

When we fast, we have the freedom to “let go” of our concern over “what shall we eat?” We shall eat nothing-nothing of our favorite food or drink, nothing between meals, or perhaps, nothing at any given meal time.

Religious fasting-lovingly “doing without food temporarily”, in order to center our concern on our relationship with God and others-is always motivated by a desire to fill the hungry space inside us with a genuine conversion of heart.

Allied with prayer, almsgiving and works of love, fasting fills us with freedom and serves as a sharp reminder that there are more important gifts in our life than food.

If we listen to our “hunger” we may sense our need and hunger for God. If we listen to our temporary hunger we may reach out in a practical way to those whose hunger is permanent.

Fasting is a form of body love which whets our appetite for God’s presence in the world about us. We do not fast to impress others. We do not fast to diet. We do not fast to prove we can! We do not fast for ourselves alone.

Fasting is not an end in itself, nor is it a spiritual achievement. Fasting without love is useless; it is better to eat than to forget the poor.

Fasting should be an occasion of joy as we turn our desire for conversion into body-prayer. Fasting is one small way to acknowledge our sinfulness and willingness to accept God’s mercy.

When the time comes to end our fasting, we should remember the lessons learnt in hunger. The conversion of heart desired at the beginning of the fast, is not a conversion we want to lose as soon as we resume eating.

“This . . . is the fasting that I wish:
releasing those bound unjustly,
untying the thongs of the yoke;
Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke;
Sharing your bread with the hungry,
sheltering the oppressed and the homeless;
Clothing the naked when you see them.” (Isaiah 58: 6-7)

Prayer – A Lenten Suggestion

Prayer is talking to-communicating with God-lifting up heart and mind to God. It is voluntary. All of these are attributes and/or ways of describing prayer. Prayer can also be personal (private, individual) or public (liturgy). But most of all it is a response to my awareness of God's presence, even to the extent of realizing that God is the number one priority of life. Realization of God's greatness and my total dependence upon Him is Adoration; gratitude for his benefits to self or others would be Thanksgiving; sorrow for sins and a request for forgiveness, Penance; a statement of needs, Petition.

Prayer can consist of a formula of someone else's words. It can be my own words, spoken from the heart, or it can be done with no words at all. It can be a thought or thoughts of the awesome awareness of this absolutely magnificent initiator of it all, even myself. Sometimes we are in need of someone else's words to get us started, but there is also a need to progress to that state where we can appreciate God for just being God, no words needed, mine or anyone else's.

From a homily by St. John Chrysostom: "Prayer and converse with God is a supreme good: it is partnership with God. As the eyes of the body are enlightened when they see light, so our spirit, when it is intent on God, is illumined by His infinite light. I do not mean the prayer of outward observance but prayer from the heart, not confined to fixed times or periods but continuous throughout the day and night."

Haven't prayed for a while? Re-introduce yourself to your God-a most wonderful person to get to know. It is good to keep the lines of communication open all the time, so that when the need arises, there is a solid connection!

Almsgiving-What's That?

Webster says almsgiving is the giving of anything gratuitously to relieve the poor. The usual thought that may come to mind, is dropping a few coins into the paper cup of a street beggar. Both sort of miss the mark and fall short of what is suggested as almsgiving for Lent. It is not necessarily what or how much is given. It is an awareness that there is poverty in the world and then attempt to do something about it.

For Lent almsgiving is one of the forms of penance that the Church recommends, since fast and abstinence are minimal during the season. As a form of penance or self-denial, a few coins would not seem appropriate unless that is all you have. Like the widow of the gospel who gave all she had, while the well-to-do gave from their surplus. Hers was an act of self-denial and penance. The others took care of themselves first and then gave away the left-overs. (Luke 21:1-4).

The derivation of the word alms comes from a word meaning pity. Perhaps that should be changed to compassion, a feeling with someone, standing in his shoes, rather than feeling for someone, standing far away and shaking the head in disbelief.

Charity is another word connected with almsgiving and is a much better word, perhaps, because it means love. It is doing something because you care and are concerned for another. That is quite a difference in motivation!

"In so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." (Matthew 24: 40)

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