

Isn't It Grand!

Lent 2016



Fr. Walsh's Article.... **LENT**

The key to understanding the meaning of Lent is simple: **Baptism**. Preparation for Baptism and for renewing baptismal commitment lies at the heart of the season. Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has reemphasized the baptismal character of Lent, especially through the restoration of the Catechumenate and its Lenten rituals. Our challenge today is to renew our understanding of this important season of the Church year and to see how we can integrate our personal practices into this renewed perspective.

Why is Baptism so important in our Lenten understanding? Lent as a 40-day season developed in the fourth century from three merging sources. The first was the ancient paschal fast that began as a two-day observance before Easter but was gradually lengthened to 40 days. The second was the catechumenate as a process of preparation for Baptism, including an intense period of preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation to be celebrated at Easter. The third was the Order of Penitents, which was modeled on the catechumenate and sought a second conversion for those who had fallen back into serious sin after Baptism. As the catechumens (candidates for Baptism) entered their final period of preparation for Baptism, the penitents and the rest of the community accompanied them on their journey and prepared to renew their baptismal vows at Easter.

Lent, then, is radically baptismal. In this Update we'll consider some of the familiar customs of Lent and show how we can renew some of our Lenten customs to bring forth the baptismal theme.

Ashes

Ash Wednesday liturgies are some of the best attended in the entire year. Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance (sackcloth and ashes). They also remind us of our mortality ("*remember that you are dust*") and thus of the day when we will stand before God and be judged. This can be linked easily to the death and resurrection motif of Baptism. To prepare well for the day we die, we must die now to sin and rise to new life in Christ. Being marked with ashes at the beginning of Lent indicates our recognition of the need for deeper conversion of our lives during this season of renewal.

Giving something up

For most older Catholics, the first thought that Lent brings to mind is giving something up. In my childhood, the standard was to give up candy, a discipline that found suitable reward in the baskets of sugary treats we received on Easter. Some of us even added to the Easter surplus by saving candy all through Lent, stockpiling what we would have eaten had we not promised to give it up. That response indicates that this boy had only partly understood the purpose of Lenten "giving up." Lent is about conversion, turning our lives more completely over to Christ and his way of life. That always involves giving up sin in some form. The goal is not just to abstain from sin for the duration of Lent but to root sin out of our lives forever. Conversion means leaving behind an old way of living and acting in order to embrace new life in Christ. For catechumens, Lent is a period intended to bring their initial conversion to completion. (*continued on p. 2*)

WHAT WONDERFUL GENEROSITY!

We are very grateful to parishioners of Holy Rosary and St. John's for their work at *The First & Second Thrift Store* in Grand Marais this past year. By working there, the parishioners earned over \$10.00 per hour, but with the proviso that they then give all that they earned to some charity or non-profit organization. Nine parishioners from our two parishes earned \$4,328.00, and following the directives of the Thrift Store, they gave \$492.00 to Holy Rosary and \$3,836.00 to St. John's. We want to thank these parishioners for their generosity: Patty Robinson, Mary Petz, Dee Phillips, Trudy Hahn, Shirley Trovall, Gwen Lenz, Audrey and Fred Cain, and Theresa Vetsch and Phyllis Ryden.

May God bless you richly for your generosity.

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Prayer, fasting and almsgiving

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The key to renewed appropriation of these practices is to see their link to baptismal renewal.

Prayer: More time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. We might pray especially for the grace to live out our baptismal promises more fully. We might pray for the elect who will be baptized at Easter and support their conversion journey by our prayer. We might pray for all those who will celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation with us during Lent that they will be truly renewed in their baptismal commitment.

Fasting: Fasting is one of the most ancient practices linked to Lent. In fact, the paschal fast predates Lent as we know it. The early Church fasted intensely for two days before the celebration of the Easter Vigil. This fast was later extended and became a 40-day period of fasting leading up to Easter. Vatican II called us to renew the observance of the ancient paschal fast: *"let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be celebrated everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection may be attained with uplifted and clear mind"*(Liturgy, # 110).

Fasting is more than a means of developing self-control. It is often an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God. The first reading on the Friday after Ash Wednesday points out another important dimension of fasting. The prophet Isaiah insists that fasting without changing our behavior is not pleasing to God. *This, rather, 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, and not turning your back on your own'*(Is 58:6-7). Fasting should be linked to our concern for those who are forced to fast by their poverty, those who suffer from the injustices of our economic and political structures, those who are in need for any reason. Thus fasting, too, is linked to living out our baptismal promises. By our Baptism, we are charged with the responsibility of showing Christ's love to the world, especially to those in need. Fasting can help us realize the suffering that so many people in our world experience every day, and it should lead us to greater efforts to alleviate that suffering.

Abstaining from meat traditionally also linked us to the poor, who could seldom afford meat for their meals. It can do the same today if we remember the purpose of abstinence and embrace it as a spiritual link to those whose diets are sparse and simple. That should be the goal we set for ourselves—a sparse and simple meal.

Avoiding meat while eating lobster misses the whole point!

Almsgiving: It should be obvious at this point that almsgiving, the third traditional pillar, is linked to our baptismal commitment in the same way. It is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given to us. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptized.

Stations of the Cross

This devotion certainly has a place in Lent. Vatican II strongly endorsed the use of devotions as part of Catholic spirituality, but it also called for their renewal, to harmonize them with the sacred liturgy (see Liturgy #13).

The liturgy of Lent focuses on the passion and death of the Lord only near the end of the season, especially with the proclamation of the Passion on Palm (Passion) Sunday and again on Good Friday. The weekday readings between the Fifth Sunday of Lent and Palm Sunday also point toward the coming Passion, are a particularly appropriate time to pray the Stations. The earlier weeks of Lent, however, focus much more on Baptism and covenant than on the Passion.

When we do pray the Stations of the Cross, we can also connect them with the baptismal character of Lent if we place the stations themselves in the context of the whole paschal mystery. In Baptism we are plunged into the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, and our baptismal commitment includes a willingness to give our life for others as Jesus did. Recalling his passion and death can remind us that we, too, may be called to suffer in order to be faithful to the call of God. Some contemporary forms of the Stations also make clear the link between the sufferings of Christ in the first century and the sufferings of Christ's body in the world today. Such an approach can help us to recognize and admit the ways that we have failed to live up to our baptismal mission to spread the gospel and manifest the love of Christ to those in need. (continued on p. 3)

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Blessed palms

As we near the end of Lent, we celebrate Passion (Palm) Sunday. At the beginning of the liturgy, we receive palms in memory of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. As a symbol of triumph, the palms point us toward Christ's resurrection and might remind us of the saints in heaven "*wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands*" (Rev 7:9). The white robes remind us of baptismal garments, and the palms suggest their triumph over sin and death through the waters of Baptism.

MAKING OUR CHURCH MORE HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

In the Advent parish newsletter I wrote: "OUR PARISH IS GROWING OLDER. And with advancing years come very definite problems. Stairs become harder to navigate and the downstairs bathrooms have become impossible for some to use, and they aren't handicapped accessible. In addition, the doors to our church at St. John's have heavy springs, and thus are hard for the elderly to pull open."

Well, since then a most remarkable thing has happened. Parishioners and visitors to our parish stepped forward with a most extraordinary generosity. When I wrote this article before Christmas we had \$14,000.00 in the Elevator Fund. Since then a further \$55,350.00 has been contributed, for a total now of \$69,350.00. In addition, we have promises of a further \$17,000.00 later in 2016.

In that newsletter I also wrote: "*We won't start any of these projects – especially the elevator and downstairs bathrooms until we have a substantial part of the costs in hand.*" At our Parish Council meeting on January 27th we talked about all of these things, and the Council advised me that with the great interest already shown we should go ahead with an architect and bids this spring, and build the elevator this summer. A year and a half ago the bid for the elevator was about \$100,000.00. We hope that cost hasn't increased.

I would dearly love if we could do all we hoped to make St. John's handicapped accessible at the same time as we were putting in the elevator. That means making the downstairs bathrooms handicapped accessible, and a new bathroom of the floor level of the parish hall. We will get estimates on these two projects also. But we as of right now we can only afford to build the elevator.

I want to thank our parishioners and visitors for their wonderful generosity. If you would like to help the whole project be completed, the whole parish would be deeply grateful, and the needs of the senior citizens – and that's more and more of us – would be helped immensely.

The following is a list of donors to date:

Anonymous	\$1,000
Skip Joynes	\$10,000
Anonymous	\$10,000
Anonymous	\$2,150
Catholic Community Foundation, St. Paul	\$15,000
Anonymous	\$200
A. Paul & Carol Schaap	\$25,000
David Piotter	\$3,500
Patrick & Renee Daulton	\$2,500.

WOMEN OF FAITH: Everyday Faith with Timeless Saints will be held on Saturday, Feb. 27, 2016 at Marshall School in Duluth starting at 7:30 am and ending in a Vigil Mass at 4:00pm. The powerful speaker Colleen Carroll Campbell who is a national speaker, former presidential speech writer and author of the inspiring spiritual memoir, "My Sisters the Saints" will be presenting on this topic. Before Mass the women will enjoy a brief comedy performance by a Chicago comedy troop called Bible Bingo. The Vigil Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Sirba and families are encouraged to join in. You can register her at www.dioceseduluth.org or call 218-724-9111 or e-mail duluthcwc@gmail.com for any questions.

Ash Wednesday, February 10th—St. John's Mass with ashes at 8:15 a.m.
and 5:30 p.m. followed by soup supper.
Holy Rosary, Mass with ashes at 11:00 a.m.



February



February 1	Harold Bramstedt
February 3	Dan Baumann
	Steve Homa
February 6	David Rozek
February 7	Robert Block
	Millie Spry
February 9	Harvey Sobieck Matthew Anderson
February 10	Giles Lenzmeier
	Dave Palmer
February 11	Mark Lawler
	Ben Petz
February 12	Gary Peterson
February 13	Elsie Foley
	Jeannine Swearingen
February 15	Mike O'Phelan Elinor Heitzman
February 19	Rob Robinson
February 20	Donna Gestel
February 24	Roman Schnobrich
February 25	Betty Hoffman
February 26	Charles Futterer
	Jane Ranum
February 27	Margo Furcht

March



March 1	Melissa Gagnon Peterson Madonna King
March 3	Alyssa Spry
	Gayle Magee
March 7	Trudy Hahn
March 10	Ellen Olson
March 12	Patricia Schroeder
March 13	Judy Peterson
March 18	Helena Blake
March 21	Samantha LaBoda
	John Peterson
March 23	Colleen Brennan
	Bob Kangas
March 24	Samantha Jacobsen
	Lucas Phillips
March 28	Ron Gervais
	Dene Taylor

**Please contact the parish office
if a birth date is missing or incorrect.
We will correct the information
in our office computer. We can only correct
those we know about!**



United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota.
In re Diocese of Duluth; Case No. 15-50792

Diocese of Duluth

BANKRUPTCY

If you were sexually abused by any person connected with the Diocese, a parish in the Diocese, a school in the Diocese, or have any claim against the Diocese, you must file a claim by **May 25, 2016**.

CLAIMS MUST BE FILED BY MAY 25, 2016

- For more information, visit dioceseduluth.org
- For U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Minnesota information, visit mnb.uscourts.gov
- For the Official Committee of Unsecured Creditors, call 612.335.1407
- For advice about your rights, contact an attorney

St. John's Catholic Church
Parish Council Minutes
January 27, 2016, 6:00 p.m.

Present: Father Seamus Walsh, Deacon Peter Mueller, Judy Peterson, Justin Mueller, and Cindi Crawford.

Absent: Maggie Waldrop, Julie Rannetsberger, Sheila Wieben, John Franz, Kathy LaVigne, and Randy Schnobrich.

Father called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and opened with a prayer.

Parishioner, Harris Mills offered a presentation on *Laudato Si*, the encyclical letter of Pope Francis on the *Care for our Common Home*. Harris provided background information on his childhood and work experience. He encouraged council member to engage their faith and work to protect life in all forms. He provided a video opportunity to summarize the Pope's plea for environmental protections; *Listening to the Cry of the Earth and of the Poor*. He provided each member with a copy of the Encyclical. Cindi made a motion to accept the minutes of our last meeting, Justin seconded the motion.

Father presented a financial picture of the funds to be used for construction of an elevator and automatic door opener. To date \$66,850.00 has been donated for an elevator. But much more will be needed if we are to make the downstairs bathrooms handicapped accessible and build another bathroom on the same level as the parish hall. He would like planning and bidding this spring, and construction of the elevator to begin this summer, and asked the council's approval for this. Judy made a motion that was seconded by Justin to begin the elevator project.

Father presented a picture of the funds available for the poor. Since last July \$2,230.00 has been added to the fund; donations to the poor have been \$2,492.00 since last July. The balance remaining in the fund is \$9,826.00. The mission in Chiapas Mexico is in need of repairs to their water system. The council suggested our *Sharing and Caring Women's* group take on the fund raising for this project. It is expected funding would be provided to the Mission in 2017. Judy will contact Charlotte and discuss the group talking on this project.

Judy discussed the *Year of Mercy*, asking the parish to follow the Pope and move out into the world with works of mercy. More enthusiasm from the parish faithful in actionable works of mercy is desired. Deacon Peter will develop a projects incorporating the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy for Lent.

Justin asked Father to consider using electronic automatic withdrawal for parishioner's to contribute to St. Johns. Father will speak with Pastor Mark at Bethlehem to see how this contribution system works for that church.

Justin encouraged the parish work actively to provide BWCA trips for our youth. A number of men are interested in leading. The Council supports his plan and asked that Justin coordinate and speak with DRE, Sharon Dorr.

Judy discussed the progress of the parish directory. She will continue to encourage participation while addressing software and privacy concerns.

Soup Suppers will continue this Lent on Wednesday evenings. Stations of the Cross will begin at 5:30p.m on Wednesdays during Lent. Mass (instead of stations) will be on March 2 at 5:30p.m. Soup suppers will follow stations and Mass.

St. Patrick's Day dinner and social time will be on March 19, 2016 after the 5:00 p.m. Mass.

The parish financial picture was provided by Father. The six month, three year comparison was provided. The trend for adult envelopes and plate (visitor) collections is flat.

Father will be attending the Clergy retreat this next week.

Further training will begin for our Extraordinary Ministers of Communion. *Morning Prayer* will take the place of Communion Services during Father's absence, following diocesan directives.

Welcoming of new parishioners will take place this spring.

Judy Peterson and Cindi Crawford, having served two consecutive terms each, will leave the Council in May. New members will be sought to replace them.

Deacon Peter and Judy Peterson will call a planning group for Father's 50th anniversary.

Our next council meeting is April 6, 2015 at 6:00Pm in the Church hall.

Deacon Peter ended the meeting with prayer at 7:35Pm.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ash Wednesday (February 10th): Kids in the afternoon class will have their own special service with Father during class time. Kids in the evening class are expected to attend Mass with their families at 5:30pm. After Mass there will be Soup Supper followed by Class.

Reconciliation: Religious education students in grades 3-10 will have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent as part of their class time. Our 2nd graders will make their 1st Reconciliation on February 28th. Please keep them in your prayers.

Stations of the Cross: Students in grades 5-10 will lead Stations of the Cross for the parish on Wednesday, March 2nd at 5:30pm. Students are strongly encouraged to attend Stations of the Cross with their parents and teachers throughout the entire season of Lent. Stations of the Cross are every Wednesday at 5:30pm. We need student volunteers to carry the cross and candles during Stations each week.

Sled Dog Rides: All Religious Education students in grades 1-10 are invited for an afternoon of winter fun featuring sled dog rides, winter games, hotdogs and s'mores. We will meet for Mass at St. John's at 9am on Sunday, March 6th before heading out to Tofte for some winter fun. Signed permission forms are required for this activity. A big thank-you to Rita & Bill Wehler of Stoney Creek Kennels for hosting this event. More information will be sent home with the kids in a couple weeks.

Holy Thursday Youth & Family Mass: We need youth and family involvement for Mass on Holy Thursday (March 24th). We will be asking our youth to act as altar servers, ushers, lectors, choir members and gift bearers. We also need volunteers from the parents of our religious education students to have their feet washed as part of the Holy Thursday service.

Fasting and Abstinence During Lent:

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of *fast and abstinence*, that is, we may have only one full meal and two smaller ones on those days for people who are 14 years old to 60 years old. (No snacking). No meat may be eaten or used on those two days.
- All the Fridays of Lent are days of *abstinence*, that is no meat is to be eaten or used on those days.
- A conscious effort during all the days of Lent to eat and drink less.

Isn't It Grand

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and Holy Rosary Church
of Grand Portage

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