



Dear Parishioners,

This coming Wednesday, February 13, we begin the holy season of Lent as we celebrate Ash Wednesday. I hope that as many who are able will come for Mass that day. The Church provides us with the season of Lent for the purpose of being spiritually ready to celebrate the joy of Easter. It is a time for those who will be baptized at Easter, known as catechumens, and for those who are already baptized in another denomination who desire to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church to undergo final spiritual preparations to receive the sacraments of initiation. As the Church readies these persons for the reception of these sacraments, all Catholics are challenged to renew themselves spiritually as well. On Easter Sunday we will renew our baptismal promises to turn away from Satan and sin and to state that we believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and all that we profess in the Creed. To this end it is a season of increased prayer, more intentional penances and sacrifices, and concentrating on the doing of works of charity, especially towards the poor. All Catholics have the serious obligation to do, at least, the minimum that the Church obliges us to do: first, those 18 to 60 years old are to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, eating only one regular-sized meal with the other two meals being much smaller and not adding up to a regular-sized one while not eating anything in between meals, and, second, those 14 years and older are to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent. From Ash Wednesday until Pentecost Sunday we are also obliged to receive the Holy Eucharist at least once, and, in order to worthily do so, if we are conscious of having committed any mortal sins, then to go to Confession. Of course, it is to be hoped, that all of us will seek to do more than just this minimum that we are required to do, wholeheartedly choosing what we can do in terms of increased prayer, other penances and sacrifices, and works of charity. The most important thing is that we seize the opportunity of Lent to grow into a deeper love for God and our neighbor and seek to live the gift of our Catholic faith more fervently for that is the goal of all of our Lenten

practices. Please see the insert in this weekend's bulletin that lists the extra Mass times and Confession times as well as other Lenten events such as the Stations of the Cross. As regards receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation remember that the whole Archdiocese will be participating in the "The Light Is On" campaign that encourages all of us to go to Confession during Lent. Hence, as I said last week, on five Thursdays of Lent (February 21, 28; March 7, 14, 21) all parishes in the Archdiocese, including St. Joseph, will have a scheduled Confession time from 5:30 to 7:00 P.M. Hence you have an ample opportunity to go to Confession at any parish in the Archdiocese. Of course, parishes will have their regularly scheduled times as well, such as here at St. Joseph from 4:00 to 4:45 P.M. on Saturdays. Also, during Holy Week I have scheduled extra Confession times as well. Due to the extra opportunity for Confessions throughout Lent that the "The Light Is On" campaign, we will not have a parish penance service this year.

Again I make you aware that starting this Tuesday, February 12, and continuing to March 19, on six Tuesdays evenings here at church from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M., I am offering a series on making the Total Consecration to Our Blessed Mother that St. Louis de Montfort encouraged persons to make. You are welcome to come this Tuesday to find out what doing this consecration consists of and how to prepare for making it. It is a great choice to make as that extra spiritual practice that you can do during Lent. Instead of giving up something during Lent, you can make this your Lenten penance and prayer as the additional thing to do beyond the days of fast and abstinence that all must do during Lent. Sign-up sheets are available in the entry area of church, but, as I said, if you want just to come the first week to find out more before signing up, you are welcome to do so.

Have a wonderful and grace-filled week.

God bless,

Fr. Gutowski



MASS INTENTIONS

FEBRUARY 11 THRU FEB. 17

Monday		Priest's Intention
Tuesday		David Beck
Wednesday	8 a.m.	Ann Boro
Wednesday	6 p.m.	Priest's Intention
Thursday		Priest's Intention
Friday		Bud Burchard
Saturday		David Beck
Sunday		People of St. Joseph

BOWLING WITH THE KNIGHTS

Come bowl with the Knights of Columbus on Saturday, Feb. 16 at the Papio Bowl in Papillion. We will bowl from 7:00 p.m. until 9:30. This is a K of C sponsored event for the whole Parish and any of their friends and family. Come join the fun. Look for more info and sign-up sheets next week at church.

Be a Blood Donor

The Springfield Community Blood Drive will be held on Sunday, Feb. 10th from 8:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. at the Springfield Fire Dept. The Springfield Community is always great about taking time out to donate to this worthy cause and it is greatly appreciated. Hope to see you all there again on Feb. 10. Thanks. *The Springfield Knights of Columbus - Sponsors, The Red Cross and Ralph Meister Cord.*

RICE BOWLS

There are rice bowls on the table in the foyer if you are interested in participating in the Lenten Rice Bowl program and do not have a child in RE who brought one home.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

The Ladies' Guild and Knights of Columbus offer scholarships on a competitive basis to members of the parish who will be graduating from high school this spring and plan to continue their education.

Applications are in the KOC mailbox; they must be returned by April 1, 2013. Contact Tim Ihry or Dorothy Foged, if you have questions.

NEBRASKA AGRI-WOMEN SCHOLARSHIP

Any student planning to receive an Agricultural related degree from a College or Technical Trade School in Nebraska may apply for a \$250 scholarship from the Nebraska Agri-Women. The scholarship will go to the top student who responds and qualifies. The form (found on the wall display holder) must be returned to the church mailbox marked Secretary by April 1.

Praying

Lent is the time to start new patterns of prayer. Perhaps I haven't been praying at all. This is a great time to choose to begin. It is important to begin realistically. I can start by simply pausing when I get up and taking a slow, deep breath, and recalling what I have to do this day, and asking for grace to do it as a child of God. I may want to go to bed a half an hour earlier, and get up a half an hour earlier and give myself some time alone to read the readings for the day, the Daily Reflection, or the PRAYING LENT page for the day. I may choose to go to Mass each day during Lent. I may choose to get to church on Sunday, just 15 minutes earlier, so I can reflect a bit. Lent may be a time I would want to choose to start to journal the day to day reflections that are coming, the desires I'm naming and asking for, the graces I am being given.