



Dear Parishioners,

As we have begun this Season of Lent, first be aware of some additional prayer opportunities during Lent:

- On Wednesday evenings there will be a 6:00 PM Mass
- On Fridays at 6:00 PM there will be Stations of the Cross
- On Sundays (except for March 11) there will be the opportunity for Confession from 8:15-8:45 AM
- The First Saturday Mass on March 3rd at **8:00 AM** with Rosary and Eucharistic Adoration Following (There will not be a First Saturday Mass in April since this will be Holy Saturday and the only Mass allowed on that day is the evening Easter Vigil Mass)

Of course, those who can attend Mass at 8:00 AM on the weekdays, Monday through Friday, are encouraged to do so.

Pope Benedict in his Wednesday audience on Ash Wednesday reminded Catholics that Lent is the time of conversion:

“In this Catechesis I would like to dwell briefly on the season of Lent, which begins today with the Liturgy of Ash Wednesday. It is a journey of forty days that will lead us to the Paschal Triduum, memorial of the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord, the heart of the mystery of our salvation.

In the early centuries of the Church this was the time when those who had heard and accepted the message of Christ began, step by step, their journey of faith and conversion to receive the sacrament of baptism. It was a drawing close to the living God and an initiation

of the faith to be gradually accomplished, through an inner change in the catechumens, that is, those who wished to become Christians and thus be incorporated into Christ and the Church.

Subsequently, penitents, and then all the faithful were invited to experience this journey of spiritual renewal, to conform themselves and their lives to that of Christ. The participation of the whole community in the different steps of the Lenten path emphasizes an important dimension of Christian spirituality: redemption is not available to only a few, but to all, through the death and resurrection of Christ.

Therefore, those who follow a journey of faith as catechumens to receive baptism, those who had strayed from God and the community of faith and seek reconciliation and those who lived their faith in full communion with the Church, together knew that the period before Easter is a period of metanoia, that is, of inner change, of repentance, the period that identifies our human life and our entire history as a process of conversion that is set in motion now in order to meet the Lord at the end of time.”

So, we are challenged to examine ourselves and to recognize where we need conversion in our lives. Conversion is a life-long journey and the journey of Lent each year reminds us of the need to beseech Christ for the grace to know and admit our sins and to undergo conversion constantly. We all have our sins, big or small, mortal or venial, of which we need to repent. I hope that all in the parish will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent, whether here in the parish or at another parish because conversion does not truly and fully happen unless we confess our sins in this sacrament of the Lord's great mercy.

By the way, for those who utilize Twitter, Pope Benedict will be twitting during Lent. He will

send out a tweet each day of Lent for reflection. The Twitter site is www.twitter.com/Pope2YouVatican. There's also a **Pope2You** website with an iPad, iPhone and Facebook application.

Finally, please see the insert from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in the bulletin regarding contacting Congress to preserve conscience rights in regards to health care. We should be proud that our Nebraska senators and representatives in Congress are sponsoring The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act that has been introduced in Congress. Write, email, or call them and thank them for this. Also, contact other members of Congress to support this. As I have made clear in the bulletin the last two weeks, the Obama administration, no matter what "compromise" it has offered thus far, still is requiring our Catholic institutions that employ and serve non-Catholics to pay for contraceptives and sterilizations for its employees as well as anyone who operates a business. As I have said, even an individual who owns and operates a company that is not religious is required to pay for such, which in good conscience he or she may not do. This is an issue therefore that we all need to be seriously concerned about and cannot think that it is just going to go away. If Congress does not enact such a law, which will also probably involve having to override a presidential veto, then we will have to pray and hope that the Health and Human Services mandate will be challenged in court and ultimately be thrown out by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional and/or pray for the election of a president who will not trample upon the rights of conscience and religious liberty. As we offer up our prayers and penances during Lent, let one of the intentions for which we do these be that the federal government respect the rights of conscience.

Have a blessed and grace-filled week.

God bless,

Fr. Gutowski



MASS INTENTIONS

FEB. 27 THRU MARCH 4

Monday	Priest's Intention
Tuesday	Parishioner's Spec. Int.
Wednesday 8 a.m.	Priest's Intention
Wednesday 6 p.m.	Priest's Intention
Thursday	William Roth
Friday	Joe Fibich
Saturday	Jerry Doyle
Sunday	People of St. Joseph

OPERATION RICE BOWL

In today's first reading, we hear about God's covenant with Noah, with his descendants and with all living creatures. During Lent, we are called to deepen and strengthen our baptismal and covenantal relationship with God, which includes our responsibility to care for God's creation. This week through Operation Rice Bowl, we **learn** about subsistence farmers in Madagascar. We **pray** for all who struggle to feed their families on depleted lands, and we **fast** in solidarity with those who hunger. We **give** so that CRS can help farmers improve their growing methods and act as good steward of God's creation.



There is Mass for grades 2-4 on February 29. The children will go to the Lenten Mass at 6:00 and then stay in the church to listen to Father. Everyone is welcome to attend both the Mass and instructional session.

We are having practice for new and old servers on March 7 at 7:10 in the church. With the changes to the church, we feel it is important for all current servers, except those in 8th grade, to attend the training session to learn how things are now being done.

There is No RE classes on March 14, due to District 46 spring break.



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, 2012. Contact Tim Ihry or Dorothy Foged, if you have questions.

NEBRASKA AGRI-WOMEN ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Nebraska Agri-Women are offering a \$250 scholarship award to any student planning on receiving an Agricultural related degree from either a College or a Technical Trade School in **Nebraska** only. This includes any Agricultural related studies such as diesel mechanics, etc. at a trade school. He or she must also complete the first semester of schooling and have at least a "C" average to receive the Scholarship money. One Scholarship will be given to the top student who responds and qualifies. The form must be completed and returned by April 1, 2012. Forms are on the table in the Social Hall. Please put completed forms in Sharon VanTassell's church mail box. If you have questions, call Mary Ann Jansen at 402-332-4827.

BIBLE STUDY

Q: What kind of man was Boaz before he married?

A: Ruthless

PLEASE NOTE

If you need to reach Sharon VanTassell, the church secretary, she no longer has a land line but can be reached at 402-203-4708 or 402-689-1708. If you need to reach Richard VanTassell regarding church maintenance matters, he can be reached at 402-206-4302. If you feel you will need these numbers, please make note of them.

VFW BREAKFAST

This Sunday the Springfield VFW Post 9558 extends an invitation to join them for the monthly community breakfast. Held at the Legion Hall in Springfield, breakfast is served from 8:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$6.50 (\$5 for breakfast and a donation of \$1.50) for adults and kids aged 5 to 12 eat for \$3.00. The breakfast includes pancakes, French toast, scrambled eggs, hash browns, ham and sausage (links and patties). Also included is coffee, orange juice and milk.

LADIES' GUILD SOUP SUPPER

Thank you to all who supported our Soup Supper and raffle. Many people donated talent, time, food, and items for the raffle. All was greatly appreciated along with those who came to enjoy the food and fellowship.

FOUND

We have found a very nice camera that was left here after the dedication ceremony. Someone did call and report losing one but it hadn't been found yet and we haven't his name. If you know who lost the camera please call Sharon VanTassell at 402-689-1708.

YOUR HELP NEEDED

If at all possible, please do not bring food and drink into the church. And please NO gum! If you child must have Cherrios, etc., please go to the cry room. It has also been brought to our attention that all the studs on jean pockets can really scratch the pews. We certainly will not tell you what to wear but it is something to think about.