

Adult Faith Formation

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To deepen our understanding
of our Faith and increase our
Love for God

March 2017

March Focus



Dead of winter go away, let the spring come and stay. As winter closes we enter the month with even more hope of the newness of life, for the earth and for our spiritual life. In the newsletter there is an article that will help explain what changes you will notice in church and at Mass, a couple of suggestions for materials or ideas that can help with your spiritual journey this Lent, and an article and prayer regarding the Annunciation, a solemnity within the Lenten season.

*"Shall not we your sorrow share, and from worldly joys abstain,
Fasting with unceasing prayer, strong with you to suffer pain?"*

Song Text—"Forty Days and Forty Nights"- verse 2

Upcoming Events

- > **Fridays during Lent—7pm Stations of the Cross in Church**
- > **Saturday, March 11th—CCW Salad luncheon - 12 noon at the Parish Center. See bulletins for more info.**
- > **Friday, April 7th—Parishes Youth Fish Fry - 4:30pm-7pm at the Parish Center. See bulletins for more info.**

What's Happening

*An explanation about Lent from
"Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year"*

by Msgr. Peter J. Elliott



88. The distinctive English word "Lent" is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word for "spring", which appropriately coincides with the great forty-day fast, common to both East and West at least since the fourth century. Notwithstanding the fact that autumn occurs at this same time in the Southern Hemisphere, the English word has the advantage over the Latin words based on "quadraginta" or "forty" because it calls to mind the new life, growth, hope and change that should characterize this time of prayer, penance and conversion, this season of initiation into the grace life of the Church.

89. In these forty days, Mother Church vests herself simply in violet. Her sacred halls are bare, and much of her gracious music is muted. Flowers at her altars and shrines are set aside, and, at the end of the season, the lamps will be extinguished, the bells will fall silent and her altars will be stripped. But this is her true spring-time, when her children grow in grace, in ways often imperceptible, subtle and varied. Lent thus reminds us that the great graces are given by God, not when our senses perceive them or when our hearts are full of consolations, but in the silence and the stillness of "the night".

90. A certain austerity should thus characterize the setting of the Lenten liturgy. Simpler candlesticks may well be placed on or around the altar. Flowers are not used to adorn the altar from Ash Wednesday until the Gloria at the Easter Vigil, except for Laetare Sunday (3rd Sunday of Lent), solemnities, and feast days. It would be best to exclude them entirely from the church even at popular shrines, during the whole penitential season. The organ and other instruments are to be used only to sustain singing. The Te Deum and the Gloria are sung or said on solemnities or feast, but not on the Sundays of Lent.

"Alleluia" is never sung or said on any day until the Easter Vigil, and hymns that include the praise should be excluded.

That's why the Lenten Gospel Acclamation is "Glory and Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ", or "Praise and Honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ".

Write a Crooked Path: Tips for the Journey

"Giving up chocolate is for babies." This was heard on Relevant Radio in reference to giving something up for Lent. If you find yourself giving up the same old thing as previous years maybe this is the year to dig deeper and find a more challenging act of penance.

As mentioned during the radio program, the one who was challenged with doing more began going to daily Mass that year—and eventually became a priest!

Only God knows how an offering to Him will change your life!

Pope Francis March Prayer Intentions

Support for Persecuted Christians

That persecuted Christians may be supported by the prayers and material help of the whole Church.

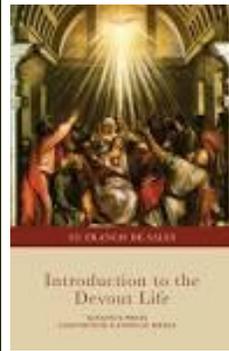
Lenten Lessons

Are you unable to go to daily Mass during Lent but want to read the daily scriptural readings for the season and learn different things about the Mass?

Relevant Radio has resources for you to read the daily readings and receive a short daily Lenten lesson on the Mass via email. Check it out by going to their webpage at:
www.relevantradio.com.



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N *Give More*
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Growing in Holiness

Are you looking for a book to help in your Lenten spiritual growth?

Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis de Sales may help. It was written over 400 years ago and is still one of the most popular books for those pursuing holiness. The saint explains how to turn a desire for sanctity into resolutions that yield grace-filled results. Purchase the book at a Catholic bookstore or go on line.

The Annunciation—March 25th

The Solemnity of the Annunciation celebrates the coming of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary to announce to her the special mission God had chosen for her in being the mother of His only son.

The story of the Annunciation is recounted in Luke's gospel. At the Annunciation, the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would conceive a Son, and his name would be Jesus, meaning "The Lord saves." The angel's greeting, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you" has echoed down through the ages in many prayers, and is known as the "Hail Mary."

Mary was initially confused as to how she would bear God's Son, since she was a virgin. The angel explained that the Holy Spirit would come upon her. This is why when we recite the Nicene creed we say "by the power of the Holy Spirit, [Jesus] was born of the Virgin Mary and became man." The Apostles Creed likewise affirms that Jesus was "conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Mary's response to the angel, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word," is a statement of humble faith, and a model for how we are to respond when God calls us to do what seems impossible. This response is called Mary's fiat, from the Latin word meaning "let it be done." The Catechism of the Catholic

Church addresses the significance of Mary's fiat in relation to her role as Christ's mother:

By pronouncing her "fiat" at the Annunciation and giving her consent to the Incarnation, Mary was already collaborating with the whole work her Son was to accomplish. She is mother wherever he is Savior and head of the Mystical Body (973).

The solemnity of the Annunciation began to be celebrated on this day during the fourth and fifth centuries, soon after the date for celebrating Christmas was universalized throughout the Church.

If the solemnity date is on a Sunday during Lent it is moved to the Monday following. If it is during Holy Week it is celebrated on Easter Monday.

We are continually reminded of the importance of this feast to our salvation in various devotional prayers. Two examples that highlight the importance of this feast are the joyous mysteries of the Rosary and the Angelus.

source—www.catholicnewsagency.com and
www.churchyear.net



The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary by Augustine Pichot

Prayer to Our Lady of Mercy

by St. Augustine of Hippo

Blessed Virgin Mary, who can worthily repay you with praise and thanks for having rescued a fallen world by your generous consent!

Receive our gratitude, and by your prayers obtain the pardon of our sins.

Take our prayers into the sanctuary of heaven and enable them to make our peace with God.

Holy Mary, help the miserable, strengthen the discouraged, comfort the sorrowful, pray for your people, plead for the clergy, intercede for all women consecrated to God.

May all who venerate you feel now your help and protection.

Be ready to help us when we pray, and bring back to us the answers to our prayers.

Make it your continual concern to pray for the people of God, for you were blessed by God and were made worthy to bear the Redeemer of the world, who lives and reigns forever.

Amen.