

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

18 MARCH 2018

Readings for Sunday, March 18: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 5:7-9; John 12:20-33.

The grain of wheat must die to produce fruit. Such dying must be cultivated by obedience and by our covenant with God, rooted in love and forgiveness.

Readings for Sunday, March 25: Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15:47.

St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish Special Day of Prayer is Monday.
Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament: Monday after 9:00 A.M. Mass to 4:00 PM in the Chapel.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

<u>Date</u>		<u>Intention</u>	<u>Requested By</u>
19 Mar.	MON. 9:00 AM	Joseph LaFera	Janet Keim
21 Mar.	WED. 9:00 AM	John J. Zissa, Sr. Family	Francis J. Czeiner Family
22 Mar.	THU. 9:00 AM	Steven M. Slaby	Mom & Dad
23 Mar.	FRI. 9:00 AM	Robert Norris	Ronnie & Theresa Yost
24 Mar.	SAT. 4:00 PM	People of St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Mother Parish	
25 Mar.	SUN. 9:00 AM	James Hegedus	Ursula Frain



ETERNAL REST grant unto them, O Lord. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace.

PRAY FOR THE SICK AND SUFFERING of the parish especially those in homes and hospitals.

REMEMBER OUR TROOPS: Pray that God will bless and protect our young men and women in the military.

HELP WANTED!! Women's Society needs individual(s) with basic carpentry skills to assemble room dividers. All materials will be supplied. Please call Lori LaRosa (610-326-6030) if you can help.

SENIOR CITIZENS BUS TRIP to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse on April 17 to see *Steel Magnolias*. Cost is \$83.00 - all inclusive (bus, luncheon served, show and all taxes and gratuity). Leave from church at 9:00 AM and return about 5:30 PM. Any questions, call Shirley (610-326-1128).

THE ROSARY PRAYER GROUP leads the recitation of the Rosary every Sunday before the 9:00 AM Mass. They also pray the Rosary before the 9:00 AM weekday Masses. All are welcome to join in these special Marian devotions.

"CONSIDER REMEMBERING YOUR PARISH IN YOUR WILL!" For further information, call the parish office.

MINISTRY SCHEDULE - March 24/25:

4:00 PM Mass

Lector -John Nester and Tony Vitacco

Extraordinary Ministers - Frank Durante, Sherry Durante, Nikki Gambino, Shelly Stockmal

Altar Servers - Michael Holmes

Greeters - Patty Wade and Monica Bauer

9:00 AM Mass

Lector - Rocco D'Emilio and Jack Bucciaglia

Extraordinary Ministers - Denise Bucciaglia, Jim Bucciaglia, Lori Carr

Altar Server - Tommy Miller and Madelyn Miller

Greeter - Sylvia and Tom Marcheskie

REFLECTIONS FROM THE DESK OF FR. GREGORY J. HICKEY

Engaging Lent by Annemarie Scobey, a contributing editor at U.S. Catholic

Lent is like committing to a long run. We know it will make us healthier and stronger; we know it is good for our heart. We believe that at the finish line—Easter— we will feel satisfied, and maybe even triumphant. In the beginning of the run, we feel light and determined, like anything is possible. In the middle, our breathing becomes labored, our resolve fades, and we wonder why we thought we could accomplish something so difficult. We were tempted to walk, to renege on our Lenten promise. But if we persevere – keep running, keep “lenting”— we will end our 40 days with the deep joy offered by the Resurrection. Here are some ideas for how to keep yourselves engaged this Lent.

The wise tenet of Alcoholics Anonymous is applicable to Lent. Don’t look at all 40 days at once. Instead, look only at the day in front of you, and focus on the promise for that day only. “I have a crazy busy schedule, especially in spring,” says John, father of three, who works in the tax division of his company. “But I decided for Lent that I need to start my day with 15 minutes of prayer. I downloaded an app on my phone, and first thing in the morning I press it. I always need to tell myself that it’s only 15 minutes, that it is okay to sit down and do this today.” A “just for today” philosophy also allows space for you to inadvertently fail at your Lenten promise for a day (or a week or two weeks) and recognize a new day is an opportunity to be true to the promise.

If your attendance at Sunday Mass had been spotty before Lent, commit to the remaining Sundays leading to Easter. Mass offers an opportunity to recharge. When you are at Mass, be present in such a way that you are open to what God may need you to hear during that Mass.

Enter into the songs, and allow them to move you. Listen attentively to the scripture and to the homily, and pull your mind back from the to-do list. “I used to dread going to Mass because it took a precious hour from my packed weekend”, says Kara, who admits to often being exhausted by the work of parenting a special needs child. “But then I started looking at it differently; all I need to do is show up, and for someone else has made all the decisions for me – decisions that hopefully will leave me with some inspiration or grace. I adjusted my view of the Mass. When else during my week, can I sit down and listen to beautiful music, have someone read me meaningful scripture, and (if it’s a really good week) hear something in the homily I can hold on to? Spas are all the rage right now, but I am starting to think of Mass as a spa for my soul.”

Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the three traditional pieces to Lent, but connected to giving alms is service to the poor and marginalized. A Lent without a service component – whether it is participating as a family in a local meal program, or doing something individually like tutoring students in need – can make your other aspects of Lent more accessible. Service can focus our prayer outside of our own needs, helping us to see our struggles within the context of the larger society. In terms of almsgiving, service with a particular organization can inspire us to make a greater financial commitment, because we now better understand the impact of the organization. Service work can pull us out of our sense of entitlement to an understanding of what true need looks like.

“I gave out mashed potatoes the last time our family went to serve at St. Ben’s,” says Jack, a senior in high school. “Almost every single person said ‘thank you.’ As I was putting the potatoes on their plates, I was thinking about what a small thing I was doing compared to all the food in our family’s fridge and cabinets, and yet these people were thanking me. It puts things in perspective. I noticed I didn’t complain about stuff as much for the week after that.”

There’s a reason you often see runners in pairs. It’s harder to run alone. Share your Lenten journey with another person. It can be amazing how spiritually hungry people are. Making a commitment to share a week or two of Lenten focus with another person can be a gift to both of you. “I emailed the parents in my daughter’s class to see if anyone wanted to come over to my house for an informal prayer group during Lent,” says Shannon, mother of two. “Three moms took me up on it; we met once a week to read the day’s scripture and talk about what was going on in our lives. It was so good to go deeper than the conversations we have along the sidelines of our kids’ games.”

If your fasting isn’t going so well, stop and consider why you are fasting. Does it have more to do with your spiritual growth than with a desire to reduce your waistline? While fitness can be a welcome byproduct of fasting, the spirit of your decision to fast should be to bring you into a greater solidarity with the suffering of Jesus. Choosing to abstain from certain foods or activities can be another way to help you remove things from your life that separate you from God. If eating between meals is keeping you from fitting into your favorite jeans, but isn’t really keeping you from God, consider looking more deeply into your heart for what you may have to give up to make more room for Christ.

Enjoy the remaining weeks of Lent and make the services of Holy Week a priority in your schedules. The article was reprinted with permission. Have a good week!
Fr. Hickey

Parish Support

WEEKLY BUDGET.....	\$5,000
DEPOSIT FOR MARCH 11, 2018.....	\$3,775
Regular Sunday Collection -	\$3,635
Parish Giving -	\$140
WEEKLY DEFICIT.....	(\$1,225)
Year to Date Budget.....	\$185,000
Year to Date Collections.....	\$163,159
Average per week Collection.....	\$4,410
Year to Date Deficit.....	(\$21,841)
Average per week Deficit.....	(\$590)
MARCH 12, 2017	
Deposit.....	\$3,709
2016-2017 Deficit to Date.....	(\$23,330)
Difference from previous year.....	\$1,489

MASS ATTENDANCE for March 10/11:

4:00 PM Mass - 257
9:00 AM Mass - 149
Total Attendance - 406
Mass Attendance for March 11/12, 2017 - 380

WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS

March 23 - Pizza & Game Night in the social after the 5:00 PM Stations of the Cross. Pizza \$1.00/slice; soda 50 cents. Bring your board games, cards, etc. or use ours. Sign up after Mass until March 18 so we have enough pizza.

March 27 - Visit Padre Pio Center for Stations of the Cross and Rosary. Meet in church parking lot at 10:30 AM. All parishioners invited.

April 7 - Parish "Yard Sale" in social hall. Tables \$5.00. Doors open 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Set up 7:00 AM. Will offer various unused items from church for sale (oak chairs, organ, bingo equipment, kitchen items, etc.) PLUS will offer 8 ft. tables and chairs for FREE. Payment to church office by April 6 to reserve tables.

April 29 - Ladies Springtime Tea at 1:00 PM in the social hall. Tickets \$10.00 - on sale beginning April 7 after Masses. Must have ticket to attend. Ticket sales continue until April 22.



Raffle Drawing

PARISH LOTTERY RAFFLE TICKET based on the PA Pick 3 Evening Number. Winning ticket number must be the exact number drawn for the PA Pick 3 Evening Number. Tickets are \$5.00 each and are sold on a monthly basis. The prize for the winning ticket is \$50.00 on weekdays and \$100.00 on Sundays and one specially-designated weekday. Tickets are available after the Masses on weekends and at the parish office on weekdays. **This is our major fund raiser for the parish. We encourage each family to purchase at least one ticket each month. Your support is greatly appreciated.**

LOTTERY CALENDAR RAFFLE TICKET WINNERS

- March 5 - #942 - unsold
- March 6 - #306 - Phyllis Villano - \$50.00
- March 7 - #383 - St. Gabriel Church - \$50.00
- March 8 - #674 - unsold
- March 9 - #036 - unsold
- March 10 - #402 - Shirley Mohn - \$50.00
- March 11 - #851 - unsold

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The **Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa** was founded on the basic principles of Saint John Paul II's call to action in *Ecclesia in Africa* and the adoption of the statement *A Call to Solidarity with Africa* from the Bishops of the United States.

Africa faces the economic and social hurdles of enormous debt, epidemics, severe poverty, and political unrest. In spite of these challenges, Catholicism is flourishing amid these harsh circumstances.

Your support of the **Solidarity Fund for the Church in Africa** assists in the delivery of basic pastoral care which includes religious education, seminary formation and youth ministry. It also supports important projects such as pastoral care of the sick.

On behalf of our brothers and sisters in Africa, I am grateful for your continued generosity.

Gratefully and with best wishes in Jesus Christ,
Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Philadelphia

The collection for the Church in Africa will be conducted in our parish on March 24 and 25.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS during Lent on Friday, March 23 at 5:00 PM and Wednesday, March 28 at 1:30 PM.

FAST & ABSTINENCE DURING LENT - All persons who are 14 years of age and older are bound to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday, on all the Fridays of Lent and Good Friday. All persons 18 years of age and older, up to and including their 59th birthday, are bound to fast by limiting themselves to a single full meal on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, while the other two meals on those days are to be light.

ACTS OF PENANCE FOR LENT - All the faithful are encouraged, when possible, to participate at Mass and to receive the Holy Eucharist daily, to celebrate frequently the Sacrament of Penance, to undertake spiritual reading, especially the study of the Sacred Scriptures, and to participate in parish Lenten devotions as well as Lenten education programs. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is especially recommended.

OPERATION RICE BOWL - All are encouraged to participate in Operation Rice Bowl which has aided countless hungry persons here in the Archdiocese as well as throughout our nation and our world. Rice Bowls are available at the entrances of church.

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 25 - Saturday Vigil Mass at 4:00 PM; Sunday Mass - Procession starting at Marian Shrine at 9:00 AM. Palms distributed at both Masses.

“ADVERTISER OF THE WEEK”

ON THE THIRD DAY - THE MASTER’S MERCANTILE
610-705-0130

LENTEN DINNERS at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Stowe on Fridays during Lent from 5:00-8:00 PM. Various seafood offered (crab cakes every week). Cost is \$20.00. All are welcome!

FR. BALLY COUNCIL #1192 ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT on Saturday, March 24 at Council Home - gather in the Upstairs Hall at 11:00 AM - Rain or shine. Open to any child, grandchild, niece or nephew of a Fr. Bally Council, Ladies Aux., Archbishop Fulton Sheen Assembly, or Casey Club member.

ST. ALOYSIUS PARISH SCHOOL Grades PreK3 thru 8th Grade Registration now open to new families. To schedule a guided tour call the school main office (610-326-6167). For more information about St. Aloysius Parish School visit www.saintaloyuschool.com. Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

PRE-K3 & PRE-K4 OPEN HOUSE at St. Aloysius Parish School on Tuesday, March 20 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Meet our faculty and staff and see our classrooms. Reservations requested. Contact the school office at 610-326-6167 to RSVP.

BUS TRIP to Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC on Saturday, April 14 - sponsored by St. Philip Neri Family Life Center. Cost is \$57 - includes ticket and transportation. Call 215-679-2237 for details or registration.

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY, APRIL 8 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Our Lady’s Missionaries of the Eucharist, Birdsboro. Conference Presenter is Sr. Joan Noreen; Celebrant and Homilist for Mass is Most Rev. Alfred A. Schlert. For more details call 610-582-3333 or email olme@olme.org.

PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET on Sunday, March 25 from 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM at St. Basil the Great Church, Kimberton. For tickets call Bill Jennings (484-716-1889).

ANNUAL ARCHDIOCESAN MASS honoring the gifts of persons with disabilities, the deaf community, family, friends and care givers on Saturday, March 24 at 10:30 AM at the Cathedral Basilica of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia. Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. will be the principal celebrant and homilist. Reception following Mass. RSVP at www.opdarchphilly.org or call 215-587-3530.

FLAME OF LOVE LENTEN RETREAT on Saturday, March 24 at Annunciation BVM Parish, Havertown. Speaker/Homilist is Monsignor John Esseff. Times: 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Bring your own lunch. Free of charge. Visit www.flameoflove.us.

METANOIA YOUNG ADULTS is an active community of Catholic young adults in western Montgomery County in their 20s and 30s who are looking to deepen their faith and meet fellow Catholics in the area. March 20 - Theology on Tap at Appalachian Brewing Co., Collegeville - Doors open at 7:00 PM, Talk starts at 7:30 PM; March 27 - Holy Hour at Mary, Mother of the Redeemer Parish, North Wales at 7:30 PM. For more information visit metanoiayoungadults@gmail.com.