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My dear parishioners:

As we near the half-way mark of our journey through Lent, it is good for us to be reminded of the value and centrality of prayer, fasting and almsgiving during this penitential season. The purpose of Lent is to bring about an interior conversion in our lives; a turning away from the rhythm or habit of sin and lethargy and a return to a full and active living with the Lord. This intense period of internal conversion and external fidelity prepares us to celebrate joyfully the Easter mysteries and prepares us for our eternal judgment. The works of prayer, fasting and almsgiving both prepare our hearts for conversion and externalize the conversion taking place.

Our prayer during Lent draws us to a more active listening to the Word of God. To reflect on the daily scriptures used at Mass is of great value for these readings have been specially chosen by the Church to attune our hearts and minds to God's call to conversion and reconciliation. This is a wonderful season to attend daily Mass, pray the Liturgy of the Hours and to experience Lectio Divina which draws us into meditation prayer.

Lenten prayer needs to be nurtured by fasting and almsgiving. There is a risk with using the word "almsgiving" as for some it connotes the giving of our excess to those who are in need. A more accurate word may be "sharing", as scriptural almsgiving is a true sharing of self with others. The reason this is important is because there must be an intimate connection between fasting and sharing. Too often we separate these two disciplines so that there is no identifiable connection between our fasting (depriving ourselves) and sharing (serving others). In the beginning of Christianity these two disciplines were understood as distinct elements of the same act. Around 130 AD the author of the *Apology of Aristides* wrote: "When there are poor persons among them needing assistance, Christians fast for two or three days and customarily send them the food that they had prepared for themselves." This is a true sharing, to give to others what you had sought for yourself.

St. Peter Chrysologus (died c. 450) in his "Sermon 43" wrote thus about the intimate connection between fasting and sharing (mercy): "Fasting bears no fruit unless it is watered by mercy. Fasting dries up when mercy dries up. Mercy is to fasting as rain is to the earth. However much you may cultivate your heart, clear the soil of your nature, root out vices, show virtues, if you do not release the springs of mercy, your fasting will bear no fruit. ... When you fast, if your mercy is thin your harvest will be thin; when you fast, what you pour out in mercy overflows in your barn. Therefore, do not lose by saving, but gather in by scattering. Give to the poor, and you give to yourself. You will not be allowed to keep what you have refused to give to others."

Back in the Middle Ages the entire forty days of Lent was a time of intense fasting. With this long period of intentional fasting, the faithful had the opportunity to find multiple means by which to unite their fasting and sharing. Since the Second Vatican Council there are now only two "official" days of fast in Lent, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Unless we hold ourselves accountable for more intense fasting than the two required days, it will be difficult to see how our fasting is united with our sharing. In these remaining weeks of Lent it would do us well to find ways to intentionally deprive ourselves of certain things so that we can share those things and that time with others.

**March 24, 2019 - March 31, 2019**  
**Readings and Mass Intentions**

**Sunday, March 24** 9:00am—Mass  
 Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 11 [8a]/  
 1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12/Lk 13:1-9  
*Mass intention for the People of the Parish*

**Monday, March 25** 4:30pm—Mass  
 : Is 7:10-14; 8:10/Ps 40:7-8, 8b-9, 10, 11 [8a, 9a]/Heb 10:4-10/  
 Lk 1:26-38

**Tuesday, March 26** No Mass  
 Dn 3:25, 34-43/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9 [6a]/Mt 18:21-35

**Wednesday, March 27** 4:30pm—Mass  
 Dt 4:1, 5-9/Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20 [12a]/Mt 5:17-19

**Thursday, March 28** 8:30am—Mass  
 Jer 7:23-28/Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9 [8]/Lk 11:14-23

**Friday, March 29** 9:30am—Communion Service  
 Hos 14:2-10/Ps 81:6c-8a, 8bc-9, 10-11ab, 14 and 17  
 [cf. 11 and 9a]/Mk 12:28-34

**Saturday, March 30** 4:30pm—Mass  
 6:30pm—Spanish Mass  
 Hos 6:1-6/Ps 51:3-4, 18-19, 20-21ab [cf. Hos 6:6]/Lk 18:9-14

**Sunday, March 31** 9:00am—Mass  
 Jos 5:9a, 10-12/Ps 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7 [9a]/2 Cor 5:17-21/  
 Lk 15:1-3, 11-32  
*Mass intention for the People of the Parish*

**The Lord is kind and merciful. (Ps 103)**

**Weekly Stewardship**

<b>March 16 &amp; 17 Weekly Offering</b>	<b>\$ 3,963.63</b>
<b>Average Weekly Cost</b>	<b>\$ 3,152.00</b>
<b>Excess/Deficit</b>	<b>\$ 811.63</b>

*Thank you for your generosity.*

If you would like to give electronically, visit our website, [www.ourladyofthepinescatholicchurch.com](http://www.ourladyofthepinescatholicchurch.com) and click on **Donation**.



As an important component of your Lenten discipline this year, please consider your full participation in our Lenten Parish Mission, which will be led by Fr. Ricardo Pineda, Jr., CPM. It will begin next Sunday evening, March 31 and go through Thursday evening, April 4. Adoration, with the availability of the sacrament of reconciliation, will be each evening from 6-7 pm. The mission talk will be from 7-8 pm. Please do not miss this opportunity to grow in faith during this holy season of Lent.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Frank H. Rossi*

Msgr. Frank H. Rossi  
 Pastor

Sun. Mar 24 <i>Third Sunday of Lent</i>	Mon. Mar 25	Tues. Mar 26	Wed. Mar 27	Thurs. Mar 28	Fri. Mar 29	Sat. Mar 30
9:00am—Mass	4:30 pm—Mass	6:30pm—RCIA	4:00pm—Rosary 4:30pm—Mass 5:00pm—Choir 6:00pm—CCE	8:30am—Mass 9:00am—Divine Mercy Chaplet	9:30am—Communion Service  5:30pm—Stations of the Cross	3:45-4:15pm—Confessions 4:30pm—Mass 6:30pm—Spanish Mass
Sun. Mar 31 <i>Fourth Sunday of Lent</i>	Mon. April 1	Tues. April 2	Wed. April 3	Thurs. April 4	Fri. April 5	Sat. April 6
9:00am—Mass  6:00pm—Adoration/Confessions 7:00pm—Mission	4:30 pm—Mass 6:00pm—Adoration/Confessions 7:00pm—Mission	6:00pm—Adoration/Confessions 7:00pm—Mission	4:00pm—Rosary 4:30pm—Mass 6:00pm—CCE 6:00pm—Adoration/Confessions 7:00pm—Mission	8:30am—Mass 9:00am—Divine Mercy Chaplet 6:00pm—Adoration/Confessions 7:00pm—Mission	9:30am—Communion Service 5:30pm—Stations of the Cross	3:45-4:15pm—Confessions 4:30pm—Mass 6:30pm—Spanish Mass

**Parish Lenten Mission**

**"IF YOU KNEW THE GIFT OF GOD . . ."**  
 ~JOHN 4:10

**Sunday, March 31 – Thursday, April 4, 2019**

6:00pm—Confessions/Adoration  
 6:45pm—Divine Mercy Chaplet  
 7:00pm—Mission Talk; this hour begins with Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament, followed by the Mission Conference, and ending with Benediction; **Mass on Thursday**

Topics will include:

- ♦ Baptism: Power to Become Children of God
- ♦ Confession: Unconditional Love and Healing
- ♦ The Church: That They may Be One
- ♦ The Eucharist: Heaven on Earth
- ♦ Mary, Mother of God, and Our Mother

Mission presentation by Fr. Ricardo Pineda, CPM

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

*Please pray for:* Bobbie Broussard, Bennie Mahaffey, Don Watt, Annie Jacobs, Linda Dipuccio, Shirley Anderson; Carol Richoux, Michael Cavaretta, Sam Brocato, Mary Waugh, Rachel Gore Straley, Jan Johnson, Beth Vining, Don Moore, Diane Emfinger, Jay West, Lois Cuccia, Cecil Schriver; Pat Roy, Angela Brown, Frances Martin, Joseph Crawford, Carol Moore, RoseMary Urban, Cardinal DiNardo

*Repose of the soul:* Buddy Barber, Crystal Petty; Merrick Wyble, Tom Broussard

Names will remain on the prayer list for two weeks. You may list names in the Prayer book in the vestibule of the Church and your intention will be offered at daily Mass.

**Two Feet of Love: Faith in Action**  
**Conference on Catholic Social Teaching**

Friday, March 29: 5:30 pm—8:00 pm  
 Saturday March 30: 8:30 pm—4:30 pm,  
 5:00 pm—Mass

**St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic Church**  
**Beaumont, TX**

Keynote presenter: Sr. Patricia Chappelle, Executive Director of Pax Christi USA

For more information on the schedule of events and registration, use this website:  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/two-feet-of-love-faith-in-action-tickets-56579275135>

**Religious Articles**

Come and see new items for sale.

Browse on Saturday after Mass or while having coffee on Sunday mornings.

**Upcoming Events**

March 26: Women's Day of Prayer, St. Elizabeth Parish, Port Neches, TX

March 26: Texas Catholic Advocacy Day, State Capitol, Austin, TX

March 29-30: Two Feet of Love: Faith in Action, St. Jude, Beaumont, TX

**March 31-April 4: PARISH MISSION, Woodville, TX**

April 6: Encounter Catholic at The Dogwood Festival, Woodville, TX