

THE WORKER

LENT 2021

FROM THE PASTOR

Fr. Jim Goerend

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Chocolate. That's what my older sister has been giving up for Lent the past 30 years. Now, don't get me wrong, I like chocolate too. After all, one does not get a finely tuned physique such as mine from eating rice cakes. I've asked her in the past if she's ever thought of adding something for Lent, like volunteering once a week at the food pantry. She replied that giving up chocolate every year worked for her, and that was the end of the conversation.

For many of us, when growing up, we would be strongly encouraged to give something up for Lent, and that was, and still is, a good practice of self-denial. But is the whole point of Lent simply to give something up just to return to it when Easter arrives? No, not really. The season of Lent is more than that. It is a time to prepare ourselves spiritually for the Paschal Mystery: the suffering, death, and Resurrection of

our Lord. Lent is a time for us to renew and strengthen our relationship with God, and Jesus tells us in the Gospel reading for Ash Wednesday how we are to go about this.

Prayer. In addition to reciting prayers such as the Our Father and Hail Mary during the day, give other types of prayer a try. These other types can be Lectio Divina, Ignatian prayer, or joining a prayer group. It can be as little as taking six minutes during the day and using The Little Black Books that were distributed at Mass this past weekend to guide our meditation.

Fasting. There are now, in most places, only two official days of fasting in the whole of Lent. We might think that fasting is too hard or something that only monks do. When we think about it, there are many diets that are more stringent than fasting. Fasting can consist of doing without something we do not really need, even if we are over the age for fasting: pop, nicotine, or snacks. Fasting can also be more than simply giving something up for Lent. Pope Francis, when he was Archbishop of Buenos Aires, urged the faithful to fast as "God desires," that is, "giving bread to the hungry, shelter to

the homeless, clothing to the naked, and not turning our backs on our neighbor."

Almsgiving. Let's not forget to share something of what we have with those who are in need. Consider taking the money that would have been spent on something that you decided to forego and give it to those who do not know where their next meal is coming from.

Ash Wednesday's Gospel emphasizes the importance of doing all these things quietly and without ostentation. No one should even know that we are praying more, sharing more or doing without something. When we draw attention to ourselves for doing these things, they have lost their real purpose which is to bring us closer to God and His ways.

Praying that your Lent will be spiritually renewing,

Fr. Jim



HOPE IN THE DESERT

In these difficult and uncertain times, it can feel like we're lost in the middle of a desert. But we're not alone, and the desert offers us an opportunity to grow.

Every Lent, we walk with Jesus on a journey through the desert. We take time to cut out distractions and to renew our faith in God and love for each other. And on the other side of the desert is the joy of Easter and the hope of better days.

So join us this Lent as we look at what we can learn from the desert experiences in our lives. Together, with Jesus as our guide, we can find "Hope in the Desert."

We'd love to reconnect in person or, if you're unable to gather with us in church, join us online for 8:30am Sunday Mass live on our YouTube channel.

Learn more at theworker.org/lent



SPIRITUAL WELLNESS: GRASP THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND

Alice Noethe

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Shhhhhh! Please do not tell my Mother when I was a kid I would often tag along with my brothers. In order to keep up with them I would do whatever they would do. Living on the edge of town, a vast cornfield was located beyond our backyard with a creek on the other side. Over the creek there was a large railroad bridge. On occasion my brothers would perch themselves on the cement ledge right underneath the railroad ties to fish or to jump off on a hot summer day.

Through the scrapes and bruises, I always made it up safely to the cement perch with the help of the outstretched grasp of my brother's hand. However, getting down was another story. You guessed it! Yes, following in the footsteps of my brothers I would creep to the edge jump off and by the grace of God ALWAYS landed safely on the big pile of sand below. Though, I often wondered how many holy angels it took to lower me to the ground? My eyes blinded, my mouth dry, I was in dire need of a drink of water, due to the residue of sand splashed up from the jump. Squinting, as I looked up between the railroad ties through the open slots, veiled by the glow of the sun piercing through the immense cross beams, I could feel the light warmly flutter across my face.



Recently, I have often found myself humming the refrain to one of my all-time favorites, "Lift High The Cross," taken from the words of St. Paul found in his Letter 1 Corinthians 1:18 "Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim till all the world adore His sacred name." The shrill sound of the melody and the innovative boldness behind the lyrics jolts my attention to a down to earth and majestic presence lifting my spirits instilling inside of me a peaceful, heartfelt feeling of homage for the divinity of Jesus Christ deeply loved by millions for centuries. Attributing this personal connection to the meaning behind the lyrics, the rhythm and melodic inflection of the sound thus reflecting upon this dry spell of adjusting to different situations we are all knee deep in at this time, questioning, "How does one lift high the cross?" Wandering back in our minds to the oasis of our childhoods, soothed by the unconditional trust with those we deeply love in union, we also grasp the outstretched hand of Jesus for comfort. Jesus is the Bridge to God providing a way for all of us to be prayerfully connected, soulfully linked in communion, bridged unitedly in God's light.

Finding ways to lift up our spirits is something we intentionally do for ourselves for the upkeep of our well-being. With an outstretched grasp filled with compassion, may we find concrete ways to be the bridge for others in need lifting high the cross of Christ in their desert. When someone lifts up our spirits we might experience a heartfelt homage warmly embracing us like Jesus. Infused with one another. May we lift high the cross of the risen Christ, our true hope for all in the desert. In our hearts together in prayer let us grasp the outstretched hand of Jesus.

FAITH FORMATION

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PFA Jars

For families with school age children, be sure to pick up a PFA jar on Ash Wednesday or the first weekend of Lent. PFA stands for **P**ray, **F**asting, and **A**lmsgiving, the three Lenten practices. Each jar contains 40 ideas of how to do these things with your family. For example, one idea is to have a special meal on March 19, the feast of St. Joseph. Other ideas are making time for family prayer, donating to a food pantry, or cleaning out closets and donating things you don't need. Whatever slip you draw for the day doesn't have to be done on that day if time does not allow; simply put the idea on your calendar for a day that works for your family. Enjoy the ideas that will help your family to pray, fast, and give alms.



Hope in the Cross

Lenten Mission

Once again this Lent we will offer a Mission, Hope in the Cross. Each Sunday, we'll gather in the church at 4:00pm for Stations of the Cross followed by a presentation on the different themes of the Stations. There will be time for discussion, or if you prefer, you can also use the time for journaling. We'll finish no later than 5:30 and send you home with some dessert. Each week will have a different speaker and different leaders of the Stations. We hope you will be able to join us for our parish Mission. If you are not comfortable attending in person, we'll also live stream each week's session on YouTube. We'll share the links on our website and Facebook page.

SISTER PARISH NEWS

Deacon Bill Biver

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Fr. Paul Dorlean, pastor of our sister parish in Gonaives, Haiti, continues to express deep and most humble gratitude for our monthly support of his parish, St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

He recently shared that the water treatment center, for which we at St. Joseph the Worker and several SW Wisconsin Rotary Clubs contributed \$23,457, was completed and has been in operation for about three weeks now. Photos are posted on the St. Joseph the Worker website.

If you have been able to attend Mass in person, you are aware that the Haiti Connection Team set up a Sister Parish Giving Tree starting last Advent. This took the place of our traditional Advent Giving Tree that, for many years, has enabled us to provide some 300 gifts to children in the greater Dubuque community. The Covid-19 pandemic did not permit such a gift distribution this year. In lieu of this, parish Social Justice funds, in the total amount of \$3,000, were given to the Dubuque Boys and Girls Club and Resources Unite, to supplement their Christmas gift-giving to children.

The Haiti Tree has generated \$13,000 for our sister parish in these last two months. It has enabled many more of our parishioners to contribute and the generosity has been most outstanding. Thank you to all who have contributed. We will continue with the presence of the Haiti tree in church as we now move toward the Lenten season. Contributions can be dropped off in the Sunday collection or at the parish office.

As we approach Lent, the Haiti Team invites everyone to participate in even fuller solidarity with our brothers and sisters at our sister parish. We have developed a Lenten calendar which

CELEBRATING LENT & EASTER

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 17
Mass Times: Noon & 6:30pm

Stations of the Cross

Tuesdays, February 23 - March 30
After the 5:30pm Mass

Wednesdays, February 24 - March 31
After the Noon Mass

Hope in the Cross Mission

Sundays, February 21 - March 21
4:00-5:30pm in the church
Sessions will include the Stations of the Cross followed by a speaker and discussion. We'll also live stream the Mission on our YouTube Channel.

Reconciliation

Thursdays: 8:30am-9:00am
Fridays: 11:15am-11:45am
Saturdays: 4:00pm-4:30pm
Or call 563-588-1433 to make an appointment

Palm Sunday

Saturday, March 27
Mass Time: 5:00pm
Sunday, March 28
Mass Times: 8:30am & 11:00am

Holy Thursday

Thursday, April 1
Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7:00pm
Adoration in Martin Hall until 10:00pm

Good Friday

Friday, April 2
Passion Service: 12:00 noon

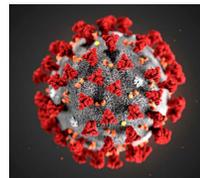
Holy Saturday

Saturday, April 3
Morning Prayer: 8:00am
Easter Vigil Mass: 8:00pm

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 4
Mass Times: 8:30am & 11:00am

PANDEMIC UPDATE



We want to take a moment to thank everyone for your cooperation and patience as we do what we can to stay

safe during the pandemic. We also have a few updates to share.

First, we no longer ask that people sign up to attend Mass in person. Thank you for all of you who have cooperated and helped us out by signing up. Going forward, we may have to have sign-ups for individual

Masses for which we expect high attendance, but we'll make sure to tell you in advance if that happens.

On the first weekend of each month, we will now broadcast a Mass with full contemporary music. This will be just like the online Mass we did for Christmas. We'll share the link with you on our website and Facebook page. Note that all in-person Masses including the 8:30 live stream still have limited music.

Please know that face coverings are still required in the church. Thank you!

invites various means of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to be reflectively considered during these 40 days of our parish's Lenten "Hope in the Desert" theme. Calendars are available in this newsletter, in church, in mailed Sunday bulletins, or can be printed from the parish website.

As always, please continue to lift up our Haitian brothers and sisters in your prayer. They are very vulnerable,

many are afraid and hopeless, and they need us to help sustain their hope for a "new normal", one simply free from the misery and poverty they face every single day. Thank you for your continued spiritual and financial support. We thank our Father in heaven for their prayers for each one of us at St. Joseph the Worker.

THE WORKER

LENT 2021

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Year of St. Joseph 2021

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A friend of mine does woodworking in his spare time and he's had me help him with a few of his projects. I've helped him with a dresser for one of his daughters, a step-stool for another daughter so she could reach the sink, and bunk beds for his youngest two daughters. Yes, my friend and his wife have four girls. When I would help my friend in his woodshop I sometimes thought about St. Joseph in his shop working on projects that supported his family. I wonder what he thought about.

As proclaimed by Pope Francis on Dec. 8, 2020, we are celebrating the year of St. Joseph, the Patron of the Universal Church. In his Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris corde*, Pope Francis writes about Joseph: his character, his courage, his obedience,

his love for Mary and Jesus and his faith in God. Francis writes, "Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture."

Just as the Blessed Virgin gave her *fiat* to God's request, Joseph gave a similar *fiat* in taking the pregnant Mary into his house and adopting the infant child Jesus, raising him as his own. Joseph does what is necessary to protect his family. He heeds the warning of the angel and takes Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Joseph guides the Holy Family through the dangers of the desert, protecting them as they travel that sandy road to safety. Our theme for Lent is "Hope in the Desert." How fitting that this year, a year of confusion, turmoil and anxiety, we also

celebrate a year for St. Joseph, who brought the hope of the world, Jesus, safely through the desert.

At the end of his letter, Francis provides us with a prayer to use during this Year of St. Joseph:

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted his only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy and
courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.

If you would like to read Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter please go to our website. Also, in April we will be sharing some reflections on St. Joseph from Mundelein Seminary which will also be found on our website.

St. Joseph, Patron of the Church...
pray for us!