

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

February 10, 2008

40/3/50
THE PASCHAL SEASON

Matthew 4:1-4

I too have known times of temptation when I felt on my own except for irrational forces that were messing up my life. Lord you felt the influence of evil, and were tested. You were purified as you came through a difficult time. When I was in the middle of such a time, it did not feel like God's hand, but like desolation and despair.

When I look back, I can see how God was shaping me.



MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 11TH

Wednesday 9:00 a.m. Marcel Vezina by Linda Coligado
Friday 9:00 a.m. Sylvia Anne by Jean Paul & Family
7:00 p.m. **STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

Saturday 7:00 p.m. Coleman McConnell by Rita & Francis
John Hull by Gladys & Family
Sunday 9:00 a.m. June Williams by Anthony & Family
11:00 a.m. Helen McCrank by Leona Stranger

LAST WEEKEND'S COLLECTIONS: \$2,341.40 Thank you!

LENT: WE CLIMB THE HOLY MOUNTAIN OF EASTER = 40/3/50

We have begun the 90-day period that is crucial for us Christians. We spend 40 days (**Lent**) in preparation for the Three Great Days of Christ's Death and Resurrection (**Easter Triduum**) after which, for 50 days, we celebrate Christ's victory over darkness, sin and death (**Easter Season** closing at *Pentecost*). That explains the **40/3/50** which will mark our Sunday bulletins until May 11.

This 90-day period has everything to do with the shaping of our identity as Christians. We want to make it count! "Becoming more Christ-like" and "having Christ come to perfection in us", that is what we are about. Only God's grace can accomplish that in us.

Imagine if we dared to say of *Lent* that it was the season in which *Jesus Christ grows on us* – instead of saying that *Lent* is about *giving up something!*

CHURCH BANNERS DURING LENT:

Finding appropriate images to capture the *Lenten spirit* is a bit of a challenge, but the ones currently seen hanging above the church altar may serve the purpose. For instance, the banner on the left depicts a pilgrim; a mountain climber guided by the *Spirit*. That is US, as WE make our way to Easter. And, the banner on the right depicts the luggage WE bring with US: the three traditional *Lenten* practices of *praying, fasting and alms-giving...*

PRAYER: The Sunday liturgies provide the basic orientation for *Lent*. That is why it makes a lot of sense to take a "**Living with Christ**" **Sunday Missal** home, instead of letting it collect dust in the church. Bringing the *Missal* home gives us the opportunity (during the week) to check either last Sunday's or next Sunday's Scripture readings.

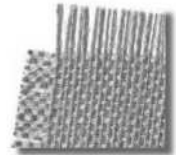
FASTING: During Lent we could refrain from some food, from a drink, from a party, from

a video - as a gesture of solidarity with those who have no choice in these matters for the simple reason that they do not have them. This sort of fasting can also be done to show that we can distance ourselves from so much of what our consumer society says that we need.

ALMS: This flows naturally from the previous two practices. Alms-giving says that we care for others, even to the point of depriving ourselves from something. How about if we put the money that we save this way aside and make it into our contribution to the special **Development and Peace** collection that will be held later on during *Lent* ?

BURLAP FOR OUR HOMES:

The piece of burlap you receive today is meant to find a noticeable place in our homes during this 40-day *Lenten* period. It may remind us DAILY of the season we are in, as *Christians*. It may also point to the rough edges in ourselves that we need to attend to in this 'grace-filled' period of *Lent*. Once *Lent* is over, on *Holy Thursday*, we can remove it as a sign that we are ready to celebrate (with renewed heart) the *Easter* mystery. You may then want to bring the burlap back to church on *Holy Thursday*.



ASHES AND SAND - WE AWAIT THE LIFE-GIVING WATER OF EASTER:



As part of the "*Lenten décor*", the baptism font at the entrance to the church has been replaced by a pot filled with sand and ashes. Why? The Israelites spent forty years in the desert/wilderness on their way to God-given freedom. Jesus spent forty days in the desert/wilderness to sort out where he stood in relation to the battle

between the *Reign of God* and the reign of darkness. As disciples of Jesus, we have entered the 40-day *Lenten* period on the way to *Easter* to sort out to what degree the *Risen Life of Jesus* is really ours. That is what the "ashes and sand" evoke: OUR DESERT/WILDERNESS!

Once we have made that 40-day *Lenten* journey, the life-giving water of baptism will come over us again at *Easter* to deepen and strengthen the *Risen Life of Jesus* in us individually and in our parish community.

LENT - A PRIVILEGED SEASON TO RECLAIM OUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY:

Once again the season of *Lent* is upon us. Will it make a difference? I came upon a delightful tale that I may want to keep before me in the next forty (40) days:

A Cherokee elder, telling his grandchild about a fight going on inside himself, said it is between two wolves. One wolf is evil. It is filled with anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other wolf is good. It is filled with joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. The grandchild thought about it for a minute and then asked the aged grandfather, "Which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee replied simply, "The one I feed."

Which *wolf* do I feed? Surely, my belonging to *Jesus Christ*, based on my having been baptized in his name, has something to say about that!

MEETINGS:

Confirmation: 4th Reflection Sunday, February 10 - from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

PPC: Tuesday, February 12 – at 7:00 p.m.

First Communion: Saturday, February 16 – from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

THINK FAST 2008 coming up: February 22-23

Plans are well underway for our **Think Fast 2008**. It is part of **Development and Peace's** effort to raise our awareness of what developing countries have to cope with. It is nice to see that a few of our parishioners, who have first-hand experience of spending some time in developing countries, are part of the organizing committee.



Participants spend 24 hours together with a sleep-over in the basement of the church. They fast, they wrestle with development issues, they pray, they have many activities, watch movies, and in the process they have lots of fun. It is part of the preparation program for our Confirmation candidates, but others are welcome to participate as well. For more information or to register, please call Bob Rutter at 819 685-1968 or Chris Santillan at 819 684- 6374.

The event begins **Friday, February 22 at 6:00 p.m.** and **concludes** with a shared meal **after 7:00 p.m. Mass on Saturday February 23rd.**

PASSION NARRATIVES: **Thursday, February 21st – from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m.** -- Fr. Bill Marvee and Pauline Leduc will help us take a closer look at the Passion narratives in the four different gospels. There are significant differences in these four accounts. Come and discover them! See which one corresponds to your own prayer style, to help you meditate on Jesus' Passion during the time of *Lent*. It will be a very informal evening with opportunity to interact. Bring your Bible. Meet in the church at St.Aloysius (300 Abbé-Murray St. in Gatineau) and from there we will decide where we will go for the session.

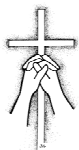
ATTENTION: MINISTERS OF COMMUNION AND COMMUNICANTS!

This has to do with the bread we use for our Sunday Eucharist. That bread is *baked by some of our own parishioners* and it is preferred over the manufactured hosts (which we use as well). The use of this bread is encouraged when we read the so-called ***General Instruction of the Roman Missal*** (which is the official document that regulates these matters): “The meaning of the sign demands that the material for the Eucharistic celebration truly have the appearance of food. Its use also makes more sense of the way the Eucharistic celebration used to be described as ***The Breaking of the Bread.***

The only disadvantage is the crumbs that occasionally result from the breaking and that inadvertently may fall on the ground. If you see this happen – please - do not let them lie there; whatever has fallen, pick it up, consume it or otherwise put it back on the altar. Of course, that bread (and its pieces) must be handled with the greatest of care. After all, we profess it to be ***The Body of Christ.***

FOR INCOME TAX RECEIPTS:

It is that time of year again! If you would like to obtain a receipt for your contributions to St. Marks' church during the past year, please drop a stamped self-addressed envelope into the collection basket and, before long, you will receive your receipt. For those who do not use church envelopes, this may be an opportune time to consider getting into the habit. It is the principal source of income for the church.



PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

Kindly remember Wandaw Bobrowski, Hilda Preslawski and their families in your prayers.

ARE YOU NEW TO OUR PARISH?

Welcome to all who want to make their faith home here! You may have come from other places. You may have been “away for a while”. Be assured that we love to have you among us. We would appreciate it very much if you identified yourself at Mass. It would also help if you would take the time to fill out a registration form. The next time you are with us, you may leave it in the collection basket or give it to one of the ushers or to the priest.



WELCOME!

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