

December 5, 2003

Dear Pastors, Parish Directors and Stewardship Coordinators:

Although it is the Season of Christmas and each of you are working on the Advent liturgies, I am writing to you today about Lent, 2004. We have promised to get the Stewardship Packets to you in a timely manner, to allow your committees time to read, reflect and decide on the direction you want to take.

We have focused this Stewardship of Prayer Packet on **Family Prayer**. We are seeking to foster an increase in the opportunities for families to use this season of Lent as a means to gather around the table in prayer, be it the table of the Lord for Eucharist or the family dining table. We know that when prayer is supported in the family unit with growing children, there is an increased chance an active prayer life will be continued into adulthood.

We have included information from the Diocese of Saginaw for those parishes wanting to purchase the **Little Books**. I didn't say "Little Black Books" as they are commonly known, as Bishop Untener has written Little White Books for Easter, Little Purple Books for Children's Lenten Prayer and Little Blue Books for Advent -Christmas. Information on ordering, volume pricing is enclosed.

One of the items enclosed is a taste of the past. We have included six weeks of **Prayer Tents** for Families to share. We have one for each week of Lent with bible passages from the weeks' readings, a reflection and an activity for the family. Prayer Tents had been previously used during Renew.

Other items included are a Prayer Resource written by Betty Dorn of New Holstein for the Gathering. She has graciously agreed to have it included and has offered to field any inquiries you have on getting started with new prayer groups.

Your Stewardship committees may want to invite families with strong Prayer Traditions to share and witness to this. Examples of preparing families for witness talks were included in our Sharing packet. Copies are available by contacting Pastoral Services.

In Christ's Peace,



Thomas M. Donovan
Stewardship Consultant, Ext. 8286

STEWARDSHIP PRAYERS WE TURN TO

Thank you prayer for volunteers

Thank you, Lord
For all who give
For all who do.

Thank you, Lord
For the difference they make
And the time they take.

Thank you, Lord
For volunteers
Big and small
Some recognized
Others not at all.



Thank you, Lord
For the community of volunteers
You have blessed us with.

Contributed by Crystal Delwiche

*Grant that I may love you always, then do with me
what you will.*

*O Jesus, shine through me and be so in me that
all my life may be a radiance of you.*

Contributed Anonymously

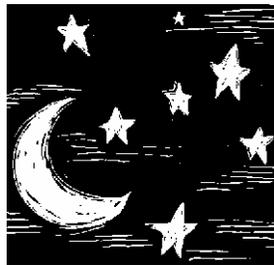


A Night Prayer:

Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit, go back into my memory as I sleep. Every hurt that has ever been done to me - heal that hurt. Every hurt that I have ever caused to another person - heal that hurt. All the relationships that have been damaged in my whole life that I am not aware of - heal those relationships.

But Lord, if there is anything that I need to do – if I need to go to a person because he/she is still suffering from my hand, bring to my awareness that person.

I choose to forgive, and I ask to be forgiven. Remove whatever bitterness may be in my heart, and fill the empty spaces with your love. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.



Contributed by Dianne Dewane

A slightly modified Prayer:

Lord, please
grant me the
courage to
change what
must or should
be changed, the
serenity to accept
that which I
shouldn't or can't
change,
And the wisdom
to know the
difference.

Contributed by
Mike Swiontek





A Desk top Prayer:

May All I do and Say Today, Honor Christ in Every Way.”

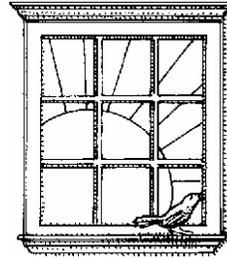
Contributed by Carol Kittell

Prayers taken from Bishop Morneau's book, Paths of Prayer

*Lord who hast formed me out of mud
Hast redeemed me thru thy blood
And sanctified me to do good.*

*Purge all my sins done heretofore
For I confess my heavy score
And I will strive to sin no more.*

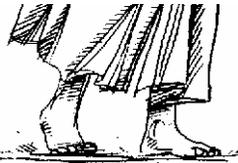
*Enrich my heart, my mouth, my hands
In me with faith – with hope – with charity
That I may rise and rest in thee.*



Copied with approval – St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1998

*Thanks be to thee, Lord Jesus Christ,
For all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you bore for me.*

*O Most merciful friend, redeemer and brother,
May I see thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly and
follow thee more nearly.*



Contributed by Judy Hein

These Prayers were contributed by Stewardship Committee Parish Contact persons and/or members from the committees. This was the result of my request last spring to share the Prayers you turn to. Many more contributions were received then these however. We will use some in future mailings. Many were from published sources for which we would need copyright approval. We also received many of our established but oh so very comfortable payers we are all so familiar with, such as St. Francis' prayer: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace..."

For our sake Christ was obedient,
accepting even death, death on a cross.
Therefore, God raised him on high
and gave him the name above all other names.

BLESSING OF EASTER FOODS

After the fasting of Lent, and the Easter Fast from Thursday night until the Vigil, the foods of Easter have a special place. The following blessing prayer may be used with the table prayer for Easter before the meal that breaks the Easter Fast.

God of Glory,
the eyes of all turn to you
as we celebrate Christ's victory over sin and
death.

Bless + us and this food of our first Easter meal.
May we who gather at the Lord's table,
continue to celebrate the joy of his resurrection
and be admitted finally to his heavenly banquet.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

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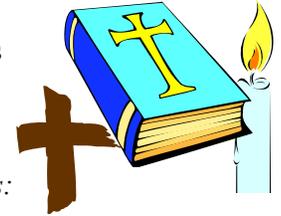


Developed from copyrighted materials with approval by Pastoral Services, November 2003.



BLESSING OF THE SEASON AND OF A PLACE OF PRAYER

From Ash Wednesday to Pentecost, a place in the home is set aside for prayer. The family's Bible is placed there with a cross and a candle, which is lighted when all have gathered.



All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins:

The Lord calls us to days of penance and mercy. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All respond:

Now and for ever.

The leader may use these or similar words to introduce the blessing:

Remember that we are but dust and ashes, yet by God's grace we have died in baptism and have put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Each year we keep these Forty days with prayer and penance and the practice of charity so that we may come to the Easter festival ready to renew once more the life-giving commitment of our baptism. Through this Lent we shall gather here to read the Scriptures and ponder them and to intercede with God for the needs of the world.

Then the Scripture is read:

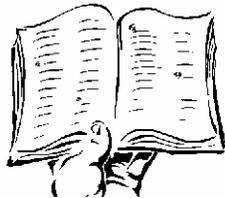
Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

Is this the manner of fasting I wish,
of keeping a day of penance:
That a man bow his head like a reed,
and lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Do you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?
This, rather, is the fasting that I wish:
releasing those bound unjustly,
untying the thongs of the yoke;
Setting free the oppressed,
breaking every yoke;
Sharing your bread with the hungry,
sheltering the oppressed and the homeless;
Clothing the naked when you see them,
and not turning your back on your own.

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your wound shall quickly be healed;
Your vindication shall go before you,
and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
then you shall call, and the LORD will answer,
you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am!
If you remove from your midst oppression,
false accusation and malicious speech;
If you bestow your bread on the hungry
and satisfy the afflicted;
Then light shall rise for you in the darkness,
and the gloom shall become for you like midday.
Isaiah 58:5-10

*(The family's Bible may be used for an alternate reading such as
Deuteronomy 30:15-20.)*



The reader concludes:

This is the Word of the Lord.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Then the leader prays:

We thank you, O Lord,
who give us this food to eat.
We pray that you may also provide food
for those who are hungry
and gather us all together
at the table of your heavenly kingdom.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

AFTER THE MEAL

The leader says:

No one lives on bread alone.

All respond:

But on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

AT TABLE DURING THE EASTER TRIDUUM



From Holy Thursday evening until the great Vigil in the night between Holy Saturday and Easter, the catechumens and the baptized fast and pray and await the celebration of baptism. Any meals are very simple. "Let the paschal fast be kept sacred. Let it be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible, prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, as a way of coming to the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection with uplifted and welcoming heart" (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 110). The same prayer is used before and after meals.

OR:

B Listen to the words of the prophet Isaiah:

Wash yourselves clean!
Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes;
 cease doing evil; learn to do good.
Make justice your aim: redress the wronged,
 hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow.

OR:

C Listen to the words of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians:

[God says:]

“In an acceptable time I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you.”

Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. . . . In everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, through much endurance, in afflictions, hardships, constraints, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, vigils, fasts. . . . We are treated as deceivers and yet are truthful; as unrecognized and yet acknowledged; as dying and behold we live; as chastised and yet not put to death; as sorrowful yet always rejoicing; as poor yet enriching many; as having nothing and yet possessing all things.

2 Corinthians 6:2, 4-5, 8-10

The reader concludes:

This is the Word of the Lord.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

The leader invites:

Lift up your hearts.

All respond.

*After a time of silence, members of the household offer prayers of intercession for the world, the Church and its catechumen, and themselves.
The leader then invites:*

Let us kneel and ask God's blessing on us and on this holy season.

After a short silence, the leader continues.

Merciful God,
you called us forth from the dust of the earth;
you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism.
Look upon us as we enter these Forty Days bearing the mark of ashes,
and bless our journey through the desert of Lent to the font of rebirth.
May our fasting be hunger for justice;
our alms, a making of peace;
our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.
all that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus,
for his cross you proclaim your love
for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

Each person then kisses the cross.

All then stand, and the leader concludes:

All through these days let us be quiet and prayerful, pondering the mysteries told in the Scriptures. In the cross, we have been claimed for Christ. In Christ, we make the prayer that fills these days of mercy:

Our Father. . .

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.
Amen.

The leader says:

Let us bless the Lord.

All respond, making the sign of the cross:

Thanks be to God.

*The blessing may conclude with an appropriate song.
The following may be sung to a tune such as "The Old
Hundreth" (Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow)
or "Erhalt Uns Herr" (The Glory of These Forty Days.)*



Again we keep this solemn fast,
A gift of faith from ages past,
This Lent which binds us lovingly
To faith and hope and charity.

More sparing therefore, let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,
Our sleep, our laughter, ev'ry sense;
Learn peach through holy penitence.
Gregory the Great

**AT TABLE
DURING THE
WEEKDAYS OF
LENT**

*Begin after a short silence.
The leader alternates with the others who are present.*

V. I was hungry.
R. And you gave me food.

V. I was thirsty.
R. And you gave me drink.

V. I was a stranger.
R. And you welcomed me.

V. I was naked.
R. And you clothed me.

V. I was ill.
R. And you comforted me.

V. I was in jail.
R. And you came to see me.

The leader prays:



Lord Jesus Christ,
may our lenten fasting turn us
toward all our brothers and sisters who are in need.
Bless this table, our good food, and ourselves.
Send us through Lent with good cheer,
and bring us to the fullness of your passover.
R. Amen.

Another form of lenten prayer begins with the sign of the cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Someone at the table reads one of the following scriptures
or the text assigned to the liturgy of the day.*

A Listen to the words of the apostle Paul to the Romans:

I urge you, therefore, brothers [and sisters], by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

Have We Got Books!



Here is a list of books for **Family Prayer**... how to pray, family rituals, prayers for morning, noon and night, prayers for all sorts of families. And this is just a small sample of what you can find at the local bookstore or online.

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	WEB SITE	SUBJECT
Parry, Alan & Linda	<i>Prayers for Sleepyheads</i>	Liguori Publications, 2003	www.liguori.org	Bedtime Prayers
Staub, Leslie	<i>Bless This House</i>	Harcourt Religion, 2000	www.harcourt.com	Bedtime Prayers
Wilkes, Paul	<i>My Book of Bedtime Prayers</i>	Augsburg Press, 1992	www.augsburgfortress.org	Bedtime Prayers
Leplar, Anna, Illustrator	<i>Every Day Bible Stories</i>	Our Sunday Visitor, 2002	www.osv.com	Bible Stories
Barnhill, Carla	<i>Blessings for Every Day</i>	Our Sunday Visitor, 2001	www.osv.com	Daily Devotions
Broslavick, Chris and Pichler, Tony	<i>Totally Lent! A Teen's Journey to Easter 2004</i>	Pflaum Publishing, 2003	www.Pflaum.com	Daily Devotions
	<i>Every Day of Lent or Every Day of Advent</i>	Liguori Publications, yearly publication	www.catholicbooksonline.com	Daily Devotions
Anderson, Christopher, ed.	<i>A Prayer Book for Catholic Families</i>	Loyola Press, 1998	www.loyolabooks.org	Family Prayers
Attenborough, Liz	<i>The Children's Book of Poems, Prayers and Meditations</i>	Element Children's Books, 1998	www.achildsbook.com	Family Prayers
Boyer, Mark G.	<i>Lent and Easter Prayer at Home</i>	Ave Maria Press, 2002	www.avemariapress.com	Family Prayers
Chesto, Kathleen	<i>Family Prayer for Family Times</i>	Twenty-Third Publications, 1995	www.twentythirdpublications.com	Family Prayers
Guntzelman, Joan	<i>124 Prayers for Caregivers</i>	St. Mary's Press, 1995	www.smp.org	Family Prayers
Rock, Lois	<i>Best-Loved Prayers</i>	Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1996	www.thomasnelson.com	Family Prayers
Simsic, Wayne	<i>Garden Prayers</i>	St. Mary's Press, 1995	www.smp.org	Family Prayers
Zalben, Jane Breskin	<i>Let There Be Light: Poems and Prayers for Repairing the World</i>	Dutton Books, 2002	www.penguinputnam.com	Family Prayers
Cox, Meg	<i>The Book of New Family Traditions</i>	Running Press, 2003	www.runningpress.com	Family Rituals
Fosarelli, Patricia	<i>Praying With Your Children: A Guide for Families</i>	Resource Publications, 2003	www.rpinet.com	How to Pray
Gallery, Philip	<i>Can You Find the Saints?</i>	St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2003	www.americancatholic.org	Stories about Saints
Foley, Leonard, ed.	<i>Saint of the Day: Lives, Lessons and Feasts</i>	St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2003	www.americancatholic.org	Stories about Saints
Canfield, Jack, et.al	<i>Chicken Soup for the Christian Family Soul</i>	Health Communications, Inc., 2000	www.hci-online.com	Stories for Families

Resources for Parish/Personal Prayer

Personal Prayer

Six-Minutes Reflection Each Day

- 1). Lent – The Little Black Book – Sunday before Ash Wednesday thru Easter Sunday
- 2). Easter Season – The Little White Book - Monday, First Week of Easter thru Pentecost
- 3). Ordinary Time – (New) The Little Burgundy Book – 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time thru 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time. Begins October 12, 2003 thru November 9, 2003

*These six-minute reflections are on “**Stewardship** in the Light of the Daily Gospels”.*

Web site for these books is: www.dioceseofsaginaw.org

Address: Diocese of Saginaw
5800 Weiss
Saginaw, MI 486003
(989) 797-6653

The Word Among Us – Daily Approach to Prayer & Scripture

Web site: www.wordfamily.org

Address: the WORD among us
9639 Doctor Perry Road 126N
Ijamsville, MD 21754-9900
1-800-775-Word (9673)

MY DAILY VISITOR – Readings and Reflections for Every Day

Web site: www.MYDAILYVISITOR.com

Address: My Daily Visitor, Circulation Dept
200 Noll Plaza
Huntington, IN 46750
1-800-348-2440

Shorter Christian Prayer - Liturgy of the Hours – A shorter version of the Divine Hours

A selection of material for Morning and Evening Prayer in a format that is easier for lay persons than the complete four-volume Liturgy of the Hours. It contains the complete Four-Week Psalter, material for the Proper of Seasons and the Proper of Saints; Night Prayer; Office of the Dead; Memorial of the Blessed Virgin; and a series of hymns.

Purchase at most Christian Book Stores

Barnes & Noble Book Store (I purchased from their web site):

www.barnes&nobles.com

Resources for Adult Education **For group study or private study**

A Catholic Guide to the Bible

By Father Oscar Lukefahr, C.M.

A study of the origin of each book of the Bible – a better understanding of the Bible.

Text book and workbook – twelve chapters

The Privilege of Being Catholic

By Father Oscar Lukefahr, C.M.

Renewal course of our Catholic Faith –for a better understanding of our Catholic Church

Text book and workbook – sixteen chapters

WE BELIEVE... A Survey of the Catholic Faith

By Father Oscar Lukefahr, C.M.

Each chapter touches on contemporary Catholic teaching – faithful to Scripture and Tradition – and discusses such topics as:

- The Bible as a Faith History
- How Catholic Interpret the Bible
- The Life and Teachings of Jesus
- The Christian Life
- Heaven, Hell and Purgatory
- Church History/Tradition
- Salvation
- Prayer
- Mary and the Saints
- The Sacraments

Text book and workbook – fifteen chapters

The Catechism Handbook

By Father Oscar Lukefahr, C.M.

A “user-friendly” guide to the Catechism.

Previews and reviews each section of the Catechism.

Explains difficult issues and draws attention to areas of special importance.

Text book and workbook – twelve chapters.

The above books are available at Catholic Home Study Service – K of C Religious Information Bureau – P.O. Box 363 – Perryville, MO 63775-0306 – Phone: 573-547-4084

For more information on these courses: www.amm.org/chss.htm

The courses may be taken privately and the materials are free.

For a group study there is a small fee.

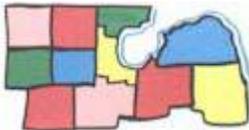
If you have any questions, I would be happy to help, call 898-5496 or e-mail: bdorn@tcei.com

Developed by Betty Dorn for the Gathering. Shared with parishes with approval



The Little Books of the Diocese of Saginaw

5800 Weiss, Saginaw, MI 48603-2799

<p><u>Little Blue Book (Advent/Christmas)</u> <u>Little Black Book (Lent)</u> <u>Little White Book (Easter)</u> <u>Children's Lent Book (purple)</u></p>		<p><u>Librito Azul</u> <u>Librito Negro</u> <u>Librito Blanco</u></p>
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Important Information:

- Booklets are available on a limited time basis and may be ordered while supplies last.
- Shipping will begin 4 weeks prior to the beginning date of reflections in each book.
- All sales are final.

Thank you for your interest in the Little Books. Orders can be placed by phone by calling (989)799-7910, **ONLINE** at <https://secure.cnchost.com/saginaw.org/> or if you prefer, orders can be faxed to the Diocese of Saginaw at: (989) 797-6606. The **ONLINE** order will take you to a SECURE SOCKETS LAYER (SSL) for your protection. **Make checks payable to the Diocese of Saginaw.**

Price List	
Total Quantity	Price / book
1 - 49	\$3/ book
50 - 99	\$1 / book
100 - 499	\$0.85 / book
500 - 999	\$0.75 / book
1000 - over	\$0.65 / book

Shipping and Handling Costs	
1 - 10 books / \$1.00 per book	501 - 750 books \$60 total
11 - 25 books \$10.00 total	751 - 1000 books \$75 total
26 - 100 books \$15.00 total	1001 - 2000 books \$100 total
101 - 250 books \$20 total	2001 - 3000 books \$150 total
251 - 500 books \$45 total	over 300 books at \$0.05 / book

The Little Books should be ordered directly from the Diocese of Saginaw for those parishes using this prayer resource.



Sample page from the Lent Little Black Book

March 24, 2003

Malcolm Muggeridge

British journalist Malcolm Muggeridge was born on this date 100 years ago.

Muggeridge introduced Mother Teresa to the world in his 1968 TV documentary, "Something Beautiful For God." And it was Mother Teresa who introduced Muggeridge (and his wife) to Catholicism.

While working as a producer for the BBC, he had heard about Mother Teresa. He began doing research on her and interviewing her. Gradually he became fascinated with the work of this tiny woman who was dedicating her life to the sick and dying in India.

A self-described "religious maniac without a religion," his work on the Mother Teresa documentary ignited an interest in Catholicism. In 1982, at the age of 79, he became Catholic, as did his wife.

"I have never experienced so perfect a sense of human equality as with Mother Teresa among her poor. Her love for them, reflecting God's love, makes them equal... however widely they differ in intellectual and other attainments, in physical beauty and grace. "

— Malcolm Muggeridge

Monday - Third Week of Lent

So Pilate went back into the praetorium and summoned Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you say this on your own or have others told you about me?" Pilate answered, "I am not Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. What have you done?" (Jn 18:33-35)

We've talked about how Pilate will vacillate between light and darkness, truth and falsehood. This is dramatized in John by Pilate shuttling back and forth, going outside the praetorium to the crowd, and inside the praetorium to Jesus. Having just been outside with the leaders, Pilate now comes inside to Jesus.

His first question has to do with whether Jesus is a king. When Jesus wants to know why he is asking this, Pilate gets a bit testy, as a Roman governor might when dealing with a "peasant" from Galilee.

Things are off to as bad a start inside as they were outside. Remember, it is Pilate who is on trial. Will he choose light or darkness?

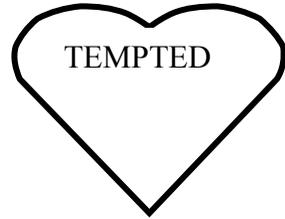
To accept a truth that changes our perspective requires certain humility. Getting a new insight is not just adding something to a list. It affects the other truths we hold, just as the birth of a new child affects the whole family.

That's why we sometimes close our minds. We fear the chain reaction a new insight might have on everything else.

But a closed mind is a prison. Jesus said, "The truth will set you free."

Okay, Lord. Here I am. Open my mind to truths I've been avoiding. Spend some quiet time with the Lord

February 29, 2004
First Sunday of Lent



Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Psalm 91
Romans 10:8-13
Luke 4:1-13

“Not by bread alone shall one live.”

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over he was hungry.

The devil said to him, “If you are the son of God, command this stone to become bread.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live on bread alone.’”

Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, “I shall give to you all this power and glory, for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship me.” Jesus said to him in reply, “It is written: ‘You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.’”



Reflection

Think about the temptations in your life this week. How can you overcome such temptations? Maybe a new Lenten resolution is in order.

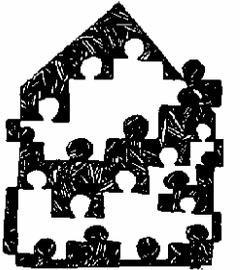
1.
2.
3.



Activity

Describe your family:

Company slogans used in advertising are meant to stop you in your tracks and make you think and think again. Have each family member pick one of the following slogans to describe your family. When done share your choices and the reasons they fit your family.



- Just do it! (*Nike*)
- Be All You Can Be (*Army*)
- Quality is Job #1 (*Ford*)
- We Bring Good Things to Life (*General Electric*)
- Expand Your Orbit (*Wall Street Journal*)
- You're in Good Hands With Allstate (*Allstate*)
- We try harder (*Avis*)
- It pays to Discover (*Discover card*)
- When you care enough to send the very best (*Hallmark*)
- Reach for what's out there (*Miller*)
- Leggo My Eggo (*Eggo Waffles*)
- Your Lifetime Bank (*Security*)
- We're the guys in the Little Red Trucks (*Auto Glass*)
- other...



Week One



GOD BLESS OUR HOUSE!

GOD BLESS OUR HOUSE!

GOD BLESS OUR HOUSE!



O God,
make the door of this house wide enough
to receive all who need human love;
narrow enough
to shut out all envy, pride & strife.

O God,
make the door of this house wide enough
to receive all who need human love;
narrow enough
to shut out all envy, pride & strife.

O God,
make the door of this house wide enough
to receive all who need human love;
narrow enough
to shut out all envy, pride & strife.



Make its threshold smooth enough
to be no stumbling-block to children,
nor to straying feet;
but rugged and strong enough
to turn back the tempter's power.

Make its threshold smooth enough
to be no stumbling-block to children,
nor to straying feet;
but rugged and strong enough
to turn back the tempter's power.

Make its threshold smooth enough
to be no stumbling-block to children,
nor to straying feet;
but rugged and strong enough
to turn back the tempter's power.



God, make the door of this house
a gateway to your
eternal kingdom.

God, make the door of this house
a gateway to your
eternal kingdom.

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Amen+

Amen+

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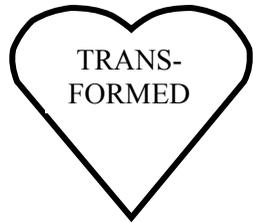
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March 7, 2004
Second Sunday of Lent



Genesis 15:5-18
Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17-4:1
Luke 9:28-36



*While he was praying, his face
changed, and his clothes
became shining white.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Jesus took Peter, John and James and went up to pray. While he was praying, his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white.

And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.

Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

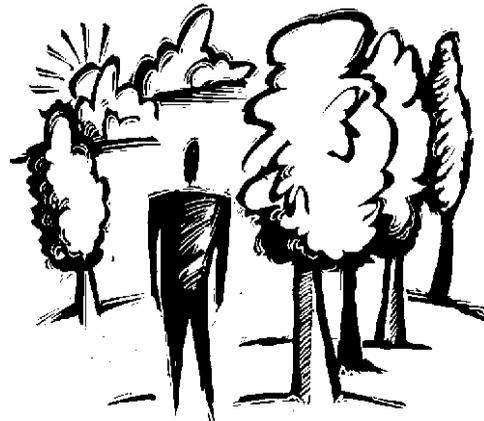
As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.

They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

Reflection

Plan a time of transformation for your neighborhood or city.

1. As a family, select a street or highway to clean up.
2. Help to construct a trail or to maintain a trail.
3. Plant flowers shrubs or trees.
4. Compost leaves and yard debris.



Activity

Going Hungry for Lent



A traditional Lenten practice is giving alms. Try this. Each Wednesday in Lent (or you can choose whatever night works best for your home) decide to hold a simple meal. At this meal keep the food sparse. Provide for example only soup and crackers or just a salad.

Definitely, no dessert! And, no snacks afterward!

At the beginning of the meal remind everyone that the purpose of having a simple meal is to remind ourselves, through our stomach that there are many people this night who will go hungry. Together, say the prayer on the other side of this card. After the prayer, place an agreed upon dollar amount in a special container (perhaps someone in the family can decorate it).

When Lent is over, gather the family to count the money put aside in the container. Decide to whom you will send the money so it can help feed the poor. You may decide to send it to an agency in your own city, or you may decide to give it to the missions (i.e. Maryknoll). A good way to help you make this decision is to save up all the letters you get during Lent requesting money and consider which to support.

God Bless Our Gathering

God made us a family: We need one another, we love one another, we forgive one another, we work together. At this table, we read God's word, we grow in Christ, we learn to love all people, we learn to serve our God, we hope for heaven. These are our hopes and dreams. Help us reach them, O Lord, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

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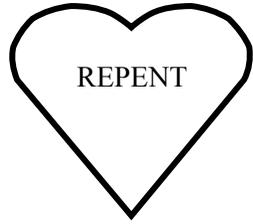
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March 14, 2004
Third Sunday of Lent



Exodus 3:1-15
Psalm 103
1 Corinthians 10:1-12
Luke 13:1-9



*Unless you repent you will all
likewise perish.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Some people told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the blood of their sacrifices.

Jesus said to them in reply, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I will tell you, if you do not repent you will all perish as they did! Or those eighteen people who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them – do you think they were more guilty than everyone else who lived in Jerusalem! By no means! But I will tell you, if you do not repent you will all perish as they did!”

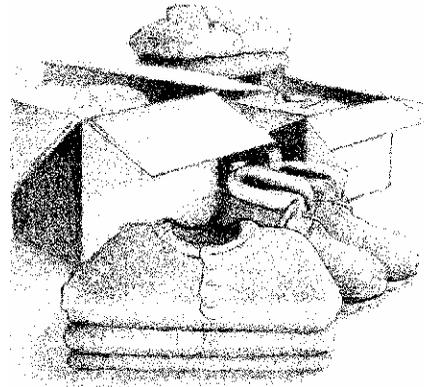
And he told them this parable: “There once was a person that had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it but found none, he said to the gardener, ‘For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down. Why should it exhaust the soil?’

“He said him in reply, ‘Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.’”

Reflection

1. Donate some non-perishable food items to a local food shelf or soup kitchen this week.
2. Collect clothes for residents of a shelter.
3. Deliver “brown bag” lunches to the homeless.
4. Donate books, toys, and games to family shelters.
5. Or, take a cue from this site:
www.operationshoebox.org

*Clothes for
those in need*



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Activity

March 17 Feast of St. Patrick

Do you have dreams, wishes or hopes for the future? As a teenager, Patrick was captured and taken to Ireland and its people and dreamed about helping them to learn about Jesus and his church.



March 19 Feast of St. Joseph

Husband of Mary. Foster Father of Jesus. Carpenter. Provider. Not much is known about his life, except that when he was needed, Joseph was there. Be there for others (grace them with your presence)



God Bless Our Family

*May all who live in this house,
Live as children of God.*

*We believe the children of God are:
loved and loving,
forgiven and forgiving
respected and respectful
protected and gentle,
cherished and humble,
treated with mercy and merciful,
receiving of justice and just toward all,
accepting of Godly discipline,
prayed for, prayed with, and pray-ers
themselves.*

*Grant the we may ever seek,
To live as children of God.*

Amen

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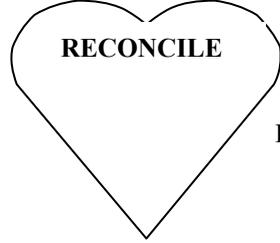
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March 21, 2004
Fourth Sunday of Lent



Joshua 5:9-12
 Psalm 34
 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
 Luke 15:1-3, 11-32



“For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So to them Jesus addressed this parable: “A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them.

After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.’

So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.

His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But his father ordered his servants, ‘Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.’ Then the celebration began.

Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, ‘Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, ‘Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.’

He said to him, ‘My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’”

Reflection

Who do you need to reconcile within your family this week? Write that person a letter asking for forgiveness.

Dear . . .

Will you forgive me?

_____ *Name*



Activity



Have each member try this activity. Think about the persons in your family. Put their name next to the action that they find hardest to deal with (that tests them or that they get ‘testy’ about).

- | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| _____ | chores |
| _____ | people who come late |
| _____ | a slow driver in a fast lane |
| _____ | toothpaste tube mashed in the middle |
| _____ | being lied to |
| _____ | a surprise quiz in class |
| _____ | burning dinner |
| _____ | being stood up for a date |
| _____ | waiting in a line |
| _____ | other . . . |

May We Be a Lente Blessing

*I was hungry,
And you gave me food.*

*I was thirsty,
And you gave me drink.*

*I was a stranger,
And you welcomed me.*

*I was naked,
And you clothed me.*

*I was sick,
And you comforted me*

*I was in jail
And you came to visit me.*

May our Lenten actions build a generous heart that moves us toward our brothers and sisters who are in need. We graciously accept your blessings this day: food, shelter, the gifts of each other. May we be Lenten blessings and grace for others.

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March 28, 2004
Fifth Sunday of Lent



Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:8-14
John 8:1-11

*"Remember not the events of the past;
see I am doing something new!"*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them.

Then the Scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him.

Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again he bent down and wrote on the ground.

And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him.

Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more."

Reflection

Discuss at supper who has the most freedom – parents or children. How are freedom and responsibility connected?

Pray the Prayer of St. Francis.

Prayer of St. Francis
Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is error, truth;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light; and
Where there is sadness, joy.
O, Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to
eternal life.
Amen.

Activity

TAKE A BITE OUT OF LENT!

The pretzel has an important spiritual meaning during Lent. In the old Roman Empire Christians observed Lent by fasting very strictly. They ate no milk, butter, eggs, cheese or meat. As a reminder that Lent was a time for prayer, they shaped dough into small pieces in the form of arms crossed in prayer. The Romans called these "little arms" or *bracellae*; later in German the word became "pretzel".

Lenten Pretzels

2 packages yeast	7-8 cups flour
1 cup lukewarm water	1 egg, slightly beaten
2 cups scalded milk	coarse kosher salt
2 tablespoons sugar	1 tablespoon baking soda
2 teaspoons salt	

First add the yeast to the water in a cup, stir well, and let sit. Add sugar and salt to the scalded milk while it is still warm, then cool to lukewarm. When the milk mixture has cooled, put it in the large mixing bowl, then add the yeast mixture and enough of the flour to make soft dough (about 6-7 cups). Knead the dough for about 10 minutes.

Let the dough rise in a greased covered container until doubled in bulk (about one and a half hours), then punch down, divide into two equal parts and let rest for about 10 minutes.

With a rolling pin, roll out one of the halves of the dough into a rectangle approximately 10 by 12 inches. With a sharp knife cut the rectangle into ten 12 inch strips. Roll each strip into a "rope" about 20 inches long. Prepare a lightly floured surface and shape each rope into a pretzel. Let rise, uncovered, for about 30 minutes. Repeat with the second half of the dough.

Meanwhile prepare a six-quart pot of boiling water. Add the baking soda, and boil the pretzels, two at a time, for one minute each. Remove with a slotted spoon and let drain.

Place on a greased cookie sheet, brush with a mixture of beaten egg and 1 teaspoon of water, then sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake at 400 degrees until golden (about 20 minutes). Should make 20 good sized pretzels.

God Bless Those in Need

*O God,
we find it difficult
to understand and act upon
your Gospel message
to feed the hungry
and work for peace,
in this our divided world,
where every side lays claim to the truth
and nothing but the truth.
So help us God to hear, to interpret,
to understand, to be moved,
changed, converted, to act.*

*Help us to live more simply
so that more may simply live.*

*Create in us a listening heart,
a disarmed heart,
that may hear your word, who is Christ,
and keep it actively moved by your Spirit.*

Amen

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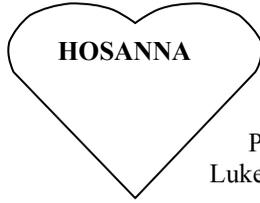
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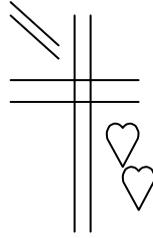
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April 4, 2004 Passion (Palm) Sunday



Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22
Philippians 2:6-11
Luke 23:1-49



“Your attitude must be Christ’s...he emptied himself and took the form of a slave.”

The elders of the people, chief priests and scribes, arose and brought Jesus before Pilate. They brought charges against him, saying, “We found this man misleading our people; he opposes the payment of taxes to Caesar and maintains that he is the Christ, a king.” Pilate asked him, “Are you the king of the Jews?” He said to him in reply, “You say so.” Pilate then addressed the chief priests and the crowds, “I find this man not guilty.” But they were adamant and said, “He is inciting the people with his teaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee where he began even to here.”

On hearing this Pilate asked if the man was a Galilean; and upon learning that he was under Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod who was in Jerusalem at that time. Herod was very glad to see Jesus; he had been waiting to see him for a long time, for he had heard about him and had been hoping to see him perform some sign. He questioned him at length, but he gave him no answer. The chief priests and scribes, meanwhile, stood by accusing him harshly. Herod and his soldiers treated him contemptuously and mocked him, and after clothing him in resplendent garb, he sent him back to Pilate. Herod and Pilate became friends that very day, even though they had been enemies formerly. Pilate then summoned the chief priests, the rulers, and the people and said to them, “You brought this man to me and accused him of inciting the people to revolt. I have conducted my investigation in your presence and have not found this man guilty of the charges you have brought against him, nor did Herod, for he sent him back to us. So no capital crime has been committed by him. Therefore I shall have him flogged and then release him.”

But all together they shouted out, “Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us.” Now Barabbas had been imprisoned for a rebellion that had taken place in the city and for murder. Again Pilate addressed them, still wishing to release Jesus, but they continued their shouting, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Pilate addressed them a third time, “What evil has this man done? I found him guilty of no capital crime. Therefore I shall

have him flogged and then release him.” With loud shouts, however, they persisted in calling for his crucifixion, and their voices prevailed. The verdict of Pilate was that their demand should be granted. So he released the man who had been imprisoned for rebellion and murder, for whom they asked, and he handed Jesus over to them to deal with as they wished.

As they led him away they took hold of a certain Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming in from the country; and after laying the cross on him, they made him carry it behind Jesus. A large crowd of people followed Jesus, including many women who mourned and lamented him. Jesus turned to them and said, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep instead for yourselves and for your children, for indeed, the days are coming when people will say, ‘Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed.’ At that time people will say to the mountains, ‘Fall upon us!’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us!’ for if these things are done when the wood is green what will happen when it is dry?” Now two others, both criminals, were led away with him to be executed.

When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left. Then Jesus said, “Father forgive them, they know not what they do.” They divided his garments by casting lots. The people stood by and watched; the rulers, meanwhile, sneered at him and said, “He saved others, let him save himself if he is the chosen one, the Christ of God.” Even the soldiers jeered at him. As they approached to offer him wine they called out, “If you are King of the Jews, save yourself.” Above him there was an inscription that read, “This is the King of the Jews.”

Now one of the criminals hanging there reviled Jesus, saying, “Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us.” The other, however, rebuking him, said in reply, “Have you no fear of God, for you are subject to the same condemnation? And indeed, we have been condemned justly, for the sentence we received corresponds to our crimes, but this man has done nothing criminal.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” He replied to him, “Amen, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise.”

It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon because of an eclipse of the sun. Then the veil of the temple was torn down the middle. Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit”; and when he had said this he breathed his last. [Here all kneel and pause for a short time.] The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, “This man was innocent beyond doubt.” When all the people who had gathered for his spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts; but all his acquaintances stood at a distance, including the women who had followed him from Galilee and saw these events.

Reflection

- ◆ *Have you ever lost and felt good about losing?*
- ◆ *Discuss the Special Olympics athletes’ pledge: “Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.”*

Activity

A Family Easter Candle

Each year at the Easter Vigil Service, the priest blesses a large new candle for use throughout the year. Each family can do the same at home.



Begin with the purchase of a simple white pillar candle that has smooth sides. It should have, at least, a 3” base and be about 9” tall. You will also need multicolored acrylic paints and small artist paintbrushes.

Gather at a prearranged time during Holy Week. (You’ll need anywhere from a half-hour to 45 minutes.) To begin, someone paints a cross on the candle with the numbers of the current year. Each person is asked to think of a symbol of new life. As family members are ready, they take turns painting their symbols on the candle. When all are completed, each person takes a turn to explain how what they painted symbolizes new life for them.

Finally, the candle is lit. Repeat three times: “Light of Christ, Light up our Lives!”

This family candle can be brought out and rekindled throughout the year, each time a member of your family is asked to pray for someone, or someone is taking a test, or you are celebrating a birthday or anniversary.

For All Those Who Work

*Loving God,
continue your work of creation in us.*

*In the work of our hands,
may beauty be shaped,
spirits restored,
feasts be shared.*

*In the work of our minds,
may stories be created,
ideas developed,
memories retold.*

*In the work of our words,
may praise be sung,
prayers be offered,
counsel be given.*

*In the hours of the day,
may our efforts bring gladness to our hearts
and hope to others.*

*Holy God,
continue your work of creation in us
and through us.
Amen+*

adapted from a prayer by Larry Peacock

Fold this paper in thirds so it can sit on your table as a prayer card.
Then the prayer can be easily read from many different directions.
Inside this table-tent you will find a variety of family ideas and
activities that you and your family can do together.

For All Those Who Work

*Loving God,
continue your work of creation in us.*

*In the work of our hands,
may beauty be shaped,
spirits restored,
feasts be shared.*

*In the work of our minds,
may stories be created,
ideas developed,
memories retold.*

*In the work of our words,
may praise be sung,
prayers be offered,
counsel be given.*

*In the hours of the day,
may our efforts bring gladness to our hearts
and hope to others.*

*Holy God,
continue your work of creation in us
and through us.
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