

ST. MARY PARISH

518 South 2nd Street; PO Box 847; Guttenberg, Iowa 52052

Newsletter: Feb 23, 2023 ~ Rectory: 563-252-1247 ~ Fr.'s Cell: 563-258-3958 ~ www.maryicjoseph.org

LIVE THE LITURGY: The Hardness of Holiness

~ Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman, ©LPi

Want to know the words I find hardest to say? “Lord, give me the strength.”

The world tells us to push ourselves outside of our comfort zone if we’re training for a marathon or applying for a job — but if we’re talking about God, everything is supposed to be easy. If it comes “naturally” or without struggle it’s supposed to be right.

Only God is perfect, the world tells us. What’s the use of trying so hard?

I’m really good at finding excuses for myself, especially when it comes to holiness. Holiness, often (not always, but often), is about choosing the hard, but right, thing. The invitation to holiness is whispered in the hardest moments of my day when I am the most hopelessly human. After the kids’ bedtime, when I really just want to watch *Dateline* and eat too much ice cream instead of saying the Rosary. When I’ve committed to helping someone, but it suddenly becomes incredibly inconvenient. When I see a social media post that’s just begging for a snarky reply. When the conversation becomes gossip and I’m dying to make myself feel superior to someone.

The reason it’s so difficult for me to mutter these five simple words is because I know that if I say them and I mean them, they form a prayer that God will always answer in the affirmative. He will give me the strength I ask for, and then I will have no excuse.

Church Exterior Door Replacement

Project: The door frames of the church's exterior doors are rusting out and are in need of replacement along with the doors. The Knights of Columbus will be coordinating this project. They are in the process of obtaining bids to determine the cost and the proceeds of their monthly breakfasts will go to the Door Replacement fund. They are accepting donations for this project. To make a donation, please place an envelope in the collection basket marked KC Door Fund with your check made out to the **Knights of Columbus**.

Preschool, Kindergarten and 1st graders join us for **Sunday School** in the SMIC Faith Formation building on Sundays from 9:45am -10:45am. March 5, 12, & 19.

REGULATIONS FOR LENT

1.) **Fasting** means that we eat only one full meal on the fast day. Ash Wednesday & Good Friday are days when we are obliged to fast. Two other light meals are permitted, but eating between meals is not permitted. You are obliged to observe the fast days from the day after your eighteenth birthday until the day after your fifty-ninth birthday. Pregnant women and people who are sick are not obliged to fast.

2.) **Abstinence** means we do **not** eat **meat**. Ash Wednesday & all the Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence. The obligation to abstain begins the day after your fourteenth birthday.

It’s not unlike my kids claiming they’re too tired to clean up the playroom. If they would just ask me for help, it would all be so doable. But where would that leave them?

With a job to do, that’s where.

“Be holy, for I, the LORD, your God, am holy.” — Leviticus 19:2

Mass Schedule: February 27 – March 5, 2023

Mon., Feb 27: [No Mass Scheduled]

Tues., Feb 28: [No Mass Scheduled]

Wed., Mar 1: 8:30 A.M.—St. Mary, Guttenberg

James Bries

Thur., Mar 2: 10:00 A.M. - Guttenberg Care Center

People of the Parish

Fri., Mar 3: 4:30 P.M.—St. Joseph, Garnavillo,

Way of the Cross & Mass, *Jane (Matt) Siebrecht & Angie Berns*

Sat., Mar 4: Vigil of Second Sunday of Lent

3:40 P.M.—St. Joseph, Garnavillo, Way of the Cross

4:00 P.M.—St. Joseph, Garnavillo, Mass

Loren Mohning

5:10 P.M.—St. Mary, Guttenberg, Way of the Cross

5:30 P.M.—St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass

Francis & Dorothy Johnson

Sun., Mar 5: Second Sunday of Lent

8:10 A.M. – IC, N. Buena Vista, Way of the Cross

8:30 A.M. – Immaculate Conception, N. Buena Vista

9:40 A.M.— St. Mary, Guttenberg, Way of the Cross

10:00 A.M. – St. Mary, Guttenberg, Mass. *Live Streamed*

Jim & Lou Kuempel

Joint St. Mary Finance & Parish Council Meeting: Monday, March 6, 6:30pm in Brinkmann Hall

GOSPEL REFLECTION:**Forty Days = Your Entire Life**

~source: mycatholic.life

“Forty” is a significant number. In Scripture, it is used more than 145 different times. For example, the rain during the Great Flood lasted forty days and forty nights. Each time Moses went up Mount Sinai, he remained there for forty days and nights. The Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days before ascending into Heaven. And there are many other uses of “forty” throughout the Bible. Interestingly, forty is even significant within human nature, in that we develop within our mother’s womb for forty weeks before being born.

The “forty” that we commemorate today is the forty days and forty nights that our Lord spent in the desert being tempted by the devil while He fasted and prayed. Forty is used to symbolize a time of testing, purification, trial or probation. For that reason, it should also be seen as a symbol of your entire life here on earth. In Saint Matthew’s version of Jesus’ temptation in the desert, He specifically uses the wording “forty days *and* forty nights.” Saint Bede, in commenting upon this, points out that this period of time not only symbolizes our entire lives, but the “days” represent the many graces and blessings we receive, while the “nights” represent the crosses we endure.

As we begin our Lenten journey, it is important to once again apply the lessons of Jesus’ time in the desert to our entire lives. Let’s consider two lessons we can take from the passage quoted above. First, we see that Jesus was “led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.” This teaches us that Jesus not only endured temptation, He confronted it. He was not afraid of the devil and did not fear his attacks. Instead, He willingly faced those temptations, being led by the Spirit, so as to not only overcome them in His life but also to enable us to confront, in our lives, every temptation by the power and initiative of the Holy Spirit. We must never be afraid to confront temptations directly and confidently when the Holy Spirit is in the lead.

A second important lesson is that Jesus voluntarily fasted during this time in the desert. This illustrates the importance of the virtue of temperance in life. If we see this period of forty as a symbol of our whole lives, then we will understand that temperance must always be part of our lives. When we experience the joys and blessings of life (the forty days), we must certainly celebrate them. But we must always do so with a certain self-denial, in that we must never allow the passing things of this world to become the primary satisfaction we seek. Saint John of the Cross teaches that we can even become overly attached to spiritual consolations. Conversely, when we experience the crosses of life (the forty nights), we must also practice a certain self-denial, in that we must not allow the difficulties we endure to discourage us or to distract us from seeking out and fulfilling the will of God. Fasting, meaning our acquisition of the virtue of temperance, must lead us always through the ups and downs of life, helping us to keep our eyes on the truths God has revealed to us and rejecting the lies of the devil.

Reflect, today, upon the importance of embracing the virtue of temperance with courage throughout life. Throughout life’s many ups and downs, joys and sorrows, blessings and crosses, we must allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, confronting every circumstance with courage and self-control. Reflect upon any ways that you struggle with the crosses you endure or excessively cling to the consolations of life. Seek to embrace the road of virtue this Lent in imitation of Jesus’ forty days and nights in the desert.

My temperate and courageous Lord, You confronted all temptation with courage and strength. You fasted throughout the forty days and forty nights so as to teach us how to navigate the ups and downs of life. Please give me the virtues of temperance and courage, and bestow the Holy Spirit upon me so that I may follow You into the desert of my own life. Jesus, I trust in You.

Serving the Poor...God’s Work is Here: Did you know that your donation to Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Dubuque stays in the 30 counties of the Archdiocese of Dubuque and serves the most poor and vulnerable in our local communities? Your gift directly impacts families in Northeast Iowa. Please consider partnering with Catholic Charities & make your contribution to the Annual Appeal today. Learn more at <http://www.CatholicCharitiesDubuque.org/annualappeal>.

St. Joseph’s Lenten Fish Fry, March 3, 10 & 17; 5-8pm;
\$15 adults; \$10 ages 5-12 and under 5 free

A Stewardship Moment

What temptations lure us from the path of discipleship? Possessions? Pride? Power? Oh Lord, create for us a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit within us!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS will start at 5:10pm on Saturdays and 9:40am on Sundays, throughout the Lenten season in place of the Rosary. For your participation, booklets are available at church entrances.

Upcoming Parish Events

Feb 23: Scripture Study, 6:30pm
Feb 28: Scripture Study, 8:30 am
Mar 2: Scripture Study, 6:30pm
Mar 6: Finance & Parish Council, 6:30pm, Brinkmann
Mar 7: Scripture Study, 8:30 am
St. Anne’s Mtg, Noon in Monona
KC Mtg, 7:30pm
Mar 8: Faith Formation/Youth Ministry, 6 and 6:15pm
Mar 9: Scripture Study, 6:30pm
Mar 11: Keystone Acapella Choir will sing at 5:30pm
June 4: Celebration of Fr. Bries’ 50th Jubilee of Priesthood Ordination