



CHURCH OF SAINT MARY

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Dear Parish Family,

April 3, 2011

Lenten Soup Suppers continue this Wednesday, April 6 at 6:00 pm at St. Mary. This week's talk is on Secrets of the Mass beginning at 6:30 pm. Stations of the Cross continue on Fridays at 7:00 pm at Mt. St. Joseph. Come and walk in the footsteps of Our Lord along the road to Calvary in this beautiful prayer.

LENTEN FAST AND ABSTINENCE GUIDELINES

FASTING is required of those between the ages of 18 and 59 on **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**. On days of fasting, one full meal and two smaller meals are permitted with **NO** eating between meals.

ABSTINENCE is required of all those 14 years and older on **ALL Fridays of Lent**, as well as on **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**. Abstinence means refraining from eating food items made of or from red meat (beef and pork), animal fat, or poultry.

This Tuesday is our re-scheduled First Reconciliation. Congratulations to those who will make this milestone in their faith. Let us keep praying for our young people who, through the sacraments, are growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ. They are an example to all of us of how the Divine Life of the Trinity works through sacramental grace.

Tuesday evening daily Mass continues at St. Mary at 8:00 pm followed by Adoration and Compline; ending right around 9:00 pm. This is an excellent opportunity to enhance your prayer life during Lent.

This week Thursday, April 7 at 7:00 pm at Mt. St. Joseph will be a Lenten Penance Service. There will be several priests on hand to hear confessions.

As we move deeper into Lent, please continue to pray for each other and for our parishes. "Prayer moves mountains" - so pray! God bless you!

Fr. David

The Faith Explained

What are the Scrutinies?

These very special rites are celebrated on the last three Sundays of Lent, at liturgies where the Elect are present. The Elect are those in our midst who are preparing for Baptism. Part of their journey to the font is that they have been received among us in the Rite of Acceptance, where they have been enrolled in the Book of the Elect.

These are ancient rites and they are profoundly rooted in our human experience. We all need to scrutinize areas of our lives where we are tempted, how we sin - in what we do and what we fail to do. All of us need the healing and strength that comes from grace and the support of our sisters and brothers.

Invitation to Silent Prayer: One of the most powerful moments of the Scrutinies is how they begin. After the homily, the Elect are invited to come forward with their sponsors and to kneel down. Then, the whole assembly is invited to pray for them in silence. It is a very solemn moment. This community has cared for these elect for some months now on their journey. We have sent them to reflect more and more deeply on the Word of God, and expressed to them our longing for the day on which they would join us at the table of the Lord. Now we pray for them in this sacred silence, deeply asking God to protect them and heal them in the weeks ahead.

Prayer of Exorcism: We pray that they might be freed from the power of the Evil One and protected on their journey.

The Laying On of Hands: In a silent ritual deliberately reminiscent of the rite used for ordination in the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the priest or deacon lays his hands for a brief moment on the head of each of the Elect. It is a solemn act of calling down the Spirit of Jesus to be with them and protect them.

Dismissal of the Elect: The Elect are then sent forth to reflect upon the Word and this powerful gesture of love on the part of this community, that cares for them so deeply, with the love of Christ.

PRAYER KNOCKS, FASTING OBTAINS, MERCY RECEIVES

There are three things, my brethren, by which faith stands firm, devotion remains constant, and virtue endures. They are prayer, fasting and mercy. Prayer knocks at the door, fasting obtains, mercy receives. Prayer, mercy and fasting: these three are one, and they give life to each other.

Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting. Let no one try to separate them; they cannot be separated. If you have only one of them or not all together, you have nothing. So if you pray, fast; if you fast, show mercy; if you want your petition to be heard, hear the petition of others. If you do not close your ear to others you open God's ear to yourself.

When you fast, see the fasting of others. If you want God to know that you are hungry, know that another is hungry. If you hope for mercy, show mercy. If you look for kindness, show kindness. If you want to receive, give. If you ask for yourself what you deny to others, your asking is a mockery.

Let this be the pattern for all men when they practice mercy: show mercy to others in the same way, with the same generosity, with the same promptness, as you want others to show mercy to you.

Therefore, let prayer, mercy and fasting be one single plea to God on our behalf, one speech in our defense, a threefold united prayer in our favor.

Let us use fasting to make up for what we have lost by despising others. Let us offer our souls in sacrifice by means of fasting. There is nothing more pleasing that we can offer to God, as the psalmist said in prophecy: A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit; God does not despise a bruised and humbled heart.

Offer your soul to God, make him an oblation of your fasting, so that your soul may be a pure offering, a holy sacrifice, a living victim, remaining your own and at the same time made over to God. Whoever fails to give this to God will

not be excused, for if you are to give him yourself you are never without the means of giving.

To make these acceptable, mercy must be added. 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, sow 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 into 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.

From a sermon by Saint Peter Chrysologus, bishop

ST. PETER CHRYSOLOGUS

Saint Peter Chrysologus (meaning Peter the "golden-worded") (c. 380 – c. 450) was Bishop of Ravenna from about AD 433 until his death. He is revered as a saint by the Roman Catholic Church and was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Benedict XIII in 1729.

Peter was born in Imola, where he was ordained a deacon by Cornelius, Bishop of Imola. He was made an archdeacon through the influence of Emperor Valentinian III. Pope Sixtus III appointed Peter to the See of Ravenna in about the year 433, apparently rejecting the candidate elected by the people of the city. The traditional account, as recorded in the Roman Breviary, is that Sixtus had a vision of St. Peter and St. Apollinaris, the first bishops of Rome and Ravenna respectively, who showed Sixtus a young man and said he was the next Bishop of Ravenna. When the group from Ravenna arrived, including Cornelius and his archdeacon Peter from Imola, Sixtus recognized Peter as the young man in his vision and consecrated him as a bishop.

Known as The Doctor of Homilies, Peter was known for his short but inspired talks; he is said to have been afraid of boring his audience. After hearing his first homily as bishop, Empress Galla Placidia is said to have given him the surname Chrysologus, by which he is known.