

~From the Administrator~

Dear Parish Family,

February 14, 2010

Thanks be to God! The new altar is in place, the old altar has been placed in the crypt chapel, and the old altar from the convent chapel is back. Thank you to all of those who helped out after last week's 10:30 am Mass in moving everything around. God bless you all!

Thank you's go out in abundance to Gary Hauck and Dominic Finnerty for their fantastic work on the new altar; and Weber Brothers Sawmill and Absolute Granite for the materials. Now that the altar is in place, it is even more extraordinary and beautiful. Work is now beginning on a new ambo and altar of repose for the tabernacle. Please continue praying as this project, begun by Father Tom McNamara, comes to completion.

Despite the festive nature of the last two weekends with Super Bowl Sunday last week and the Consecration of our new altar this week – this Wednesday is Ash Wednesday and begins the Season of Lent.

Lent is sometimes called a forty-day-fast, recalling the period of time that Jesus fasted in the desert before undertaking his public ministry. At one time, keeping Lent involved extensive fasting. These days, 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 from meat and poultry is required of all those in good health who are 14 years and older on ALL Fridays of Lent; as well as on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Besides the few days on which a strict fast must be kept, there is a 'spirituality of fasting' that permeates the forty days of Lent. This 'fasting' can include acts of self-sacrifice for others, exercising spiritual discipline, and refraining from pleasures and frivolous activities so as to make room for prayer and works of charity. The practice of prayer and almsgiving is also part of Lenten spirituality.

Also, Lent begins our implementation of the new postures during Mass. If necessary, I will offer the gentle reminder at the appropriate times of: "Please stand," and "Please kneel." I anticipate everything will go smoothly.

Please remember to pray for Norm Vogel, who was buried this past week; as well as for his family. ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO HIM O LORD, AND LET PERPETUAL LIGHT SHINE UPON HIM. MAY HE REST IN PEACE. MAY HIS SOUL, AND THE SOULS OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED, THROUGH THE MERCY OF GOD, REST IN PEACE.

God bless you for your prayers and support! Please take these last few days leading into Lent as a time for prayerful preparation as we enter this Holy Season. Remember to pray for each other. See you in church or on the playground!

Fr. David

"The annual observance of Lent is the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter. Through its ... theme of repentance ... the Season of Lent disposes ... the faithful to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. ... The faithful, listening more intently to the Word of God and devoting themselves to prayer, are prepared through a spirit of repentance to renew their baptismal promises. ... As this Season of Lent unfolds, let us recall that God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and full of kindness. With humble hearts, we begin this season of grace."

— Ceremonial of Bishops

THE HISTORY OF LENT

AND THE DAYS LEADING UP TO LENT



The English word Lent originally meant spring (as in German language *Lenz* and Dutch *lente*) and derives from the Germanic root for long because in the spring the days visibly lengthen. In Latin the term *quadragesima* (translation of the original Greek *tessarakoste*, the "fortieth day" before Easter) is used. This nomenclature is preserved in Romance, Slavic and Celtic languages (for example, Spanish *cuaresma*, Portuguese *quaresma*, French *carême*, Italian *quaresima*, Croatian *korizma*, Irish *Carghas*, and Welsh *C(a)rawys*).

Mardi Gras is French for "Fat Tuesday," and refers to the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, a traditional day for eating rich foods made with sugar, butter and other fats, and meat. This was because it was the last day before the start of Lent, which calls for prayer, penance, and almsgiving. The term has also come to stand for celebrations, which in some areas take place for several days or even weeks before Ash Wednesday.

Carnival comes from the words "*carne vale*" which is Latin for "Farewell to Meat," and signifies the last days when someone could eat meat before the fasting of Lent. Carnival typically involves a public celebration or parade combining some elements of a circus and a public street party. People often dress up or masquerade during the celebrations, which mark an overturning of regular daily life.

Shrove Tuesday is a term commonly known in many English-speaking countries for the day preceding Ash Wednesday, the first day of the Lenten season. The word *shrove* is the past tense of the English verb *shrive*, which means to obtain absolution for one's sins by way of confession and doing penance. During the weeks before Lent, sometimes called Shrovetide in England, Christians would go to confession in preparation for the penitential season of Lent. Shrove Tuesday was the last day before the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, and noted in histories dating back to the year 1000.

Septuagesima is the name given to the third from the last Sunday before Lent. This period is also known as the Pre-Lenten season or Shrovetide. The next two Sundays are labelled Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, the latter sometimes also called Shrove Sunday. Septuagesima comes from the Latin word for "seventieth," with Sexagesima and Quinquagesima equalling "sixtieth" and "fiftieth" respectively. They are patterned after the Latin word for the season of Lent, Quadragesima, which means "fortieth", as Lent is forty days long excluding Sundays. Because every Sunday recalls the resurrection of Christ, they are considered "little Easters" and not treated as days of penance.

While the terms do not literally correspond to the actual periods of time, some have theorized that Septuagesima may have been added to the liturgical calendar to commemorate the Babylonian Captivity, which lasted 70 years. There is evidence that some early Christians began fasting 70 days before Easter, but whether that custom was meant to recall the Babylonian Captivity is not entirely clear. Also of note is that the minimum number of days between the Octave day of the Epiphany (January 13) and the earliest date for Easter (March 22) is 68 days, implying that a season about 70 days long can always fit between the two.

