

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

March 19, 2010

Next weekend (March 27/28) we will celebrate **Palm/Passion Sunday** and the beginning of the **Week** we call **Holy**... The sacred nature of that week is something seen only through eyes of faith. Only those who believe in Christ can see through the baskets of candy and the bunnies and chicks to the gift of the Risen Jesus who shares with us the life that is his in the Resurrection. **How will this week be holy for each of us, and for all of us as a parish?** Holy Week might be the time when some of us finally begin to take Lent seriously. Although the season of Lenten grace is almost behind us, **it is never too late** to begin to pray, fast and reach out to the poor in preparation for Easter. The lesser failure is to have ignored Lent thus far; the greater failure would be to pass up these last days of opportunity.

In addition to *Living Faith* and the *Little Black Books* we distributed for Lenten prayer, I invite you to visit my blog at www.ConcordPastor.blogspot.com Nearly all of my posts there since Ash Wednesday have focused on Lent and if you're a bit behind the times in this season, those posts might provide a kind of quick review and catch-up.

The Church celebrates the most important and beautiful liturgies of the whole year on **Thursday, Friday and Saturday of Holy Week.**

On Thursday, the **Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper** with the Washing of Feet and procession with the Eucharist will be celebrated at **7:30 p.m.** All those present will be invited to have their feet washed and to wash the feet of another person, just as Jesus instructed us at the Last Supper. While 50 or 60 people generally participate in this, it is an option and many share in this simply by praying and witnessing this sign of service.

On Friday evening at **7:30 p.m.** we will have the **Celebration of the Lord's Passion.** This liturgy includes the proclamation of the Passion from the gospel of John, the annual Solemn Prayers of the Faithful, the procession with and Veneration of the Cross, and Holy Communion. At **3:00** on **Good Friday afternoon** we will have a **children's service** which is a simplified version of the evening liturgy, although Holy Communion will not be distributed.

On Saturday night at **8:00 p.m.** the **Easter Vigil** will begin outdoors with the lighting of the New Fire. This is followed by the procession with the Easter Candle and the candlelit proclamation of the Easter Exsultet. A series of vigil readings and sung responses will trace our salvation history right up to the gospel account of the Resurrection. After the homily we will renew our own baptismal promises and welcome Steve Shirley into full communion with the Catholic Church through the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. And of course, the Easter Vigil includes the celebration of the first Eucharist of Easter 2010.

Of all the things that truly mark us as Catholic, these three liturgies are at the top of the list. As I have written before, it is unfortunate that many Catholics live their whole lives without ever participating in these great annual celebrations. Please plan on joining us for all three – and if that seems too daunting, come at least to one or two!

On Easter Sunday Mass will be celebrated as usual at **7:30, 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.** (I'm pleased and very grateful that Fr. Michael Medas will celebrate the 7:30 a.m. Mass on Easter Sunday.) At the **11:30 Mass on Easter Sunday** we will baptize Johannes Beckwith, the recently born son of Andrea Laux (our Coordinator of Youth Ministry) and her husband, Ben Beckwith! On Easter Sunday night, **Evening**

Prayer will be celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** followed by a short **concert of Easter music** - a perfect way to complete the prayer of Holy Week.

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As you know from my letters since before the beginning of Lent, the Archdiocese of Boston is sponsoring a program in which there will be a priest available for confessions in every church and chapel of the archdiocese on the Wednesday nights of Lent: February 24 and March 3, 10, 17, **24** and **31** from **6:30 - 8:00 p.m.** Our parish is participating in this effort on those dates and at the prescribed time. On most Wednesdays I will be the priest available for confession but on **March 24, Fr. Michael Medas** will be in the Penance Room.

To assist you, I included in the bulletin several weeks ago an insert with a guide for celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, with explanatory notes: a refresher on “what to say and do” and, on the reverse side, a guide for examining one’s conscience prior to coming to the sacrament. This insert should be helpful to adults and high school students. For those of you who were not here on the weekend of this insert, copies are available at the church doors and will be available in church on the Wednesday nights of Lent. A similar guide, suitable for younger children, will be available in the same way. And of course, in addition to these special times, confessions will also be heard at the regular time: Saturday afternoons from 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Sincerely,
Fr. Fleming

A bouquet of green carnations to the members of our Special Events Committee for all their great work on our St. Patrick's Day Dinner last Saturday night: Joanne Cormier, Bernadette and Bill Jaros, Maureen Swanson, Cheryl Stetson, Denise Webber, Bobbie Arena, Mary Fasano, Jean Hull, Joanne Mente, Erin Logan, Kathleen O'Grady, Lois Sweet, Anita Tekle, Barbara Finan, Evelyn Finneran, Joan Fitzgerald, Ellie Cullinane, Gene Kingman, and Ray Snay. A fine time was had by all with great food, good company and fine entertainment by young Irish step dancers.

The High School Service Trip group is holding a raffle this weekend (Mar 20 & 21st) and next weekend (Mar 27 & 28) to raise money for the upcoming service trip to Marylnad. Items that are being raffled include: an **ipod Touch**; lunch for four at the **Blue Ginger** (in Wellesley) PLUS a cookbook autographed by Chef Ming Tsai; passes for the **New England Aquarium**; **4 tickets** for Boston College (BC vs. Weber State on September 4) PLUS a tailgate parking pass; and a **basketball autographed** by the Boston Celtics

Raffle tickets are 4 for \$10 and 10 for \$20.

Please support this worthwhile cause!