

Dear Parishioners,

Last Week's Word: "In the Gospel last week we heard of Jesus' temptation in the desert by the devil. One of the most common questions I receive is, 'Father, how do I deal with these temptations!' We ALL suffer from temptations of all varieties. The primary defense against temptation is prayer. During Lent we have extra opportunities to grow in prayer. Specifically Lenten prayer practices are the Friday Stations of the Cross and our Annual Lenten Parish Mission. Additionally at St. Mary's and St. Paul's this year we have the book 'Rediscover Jesus' that we all received at Christmas (a few copies are still left in the narthex). You can also sign up on the website DynamicCatholic.com/Lent to receive a daily email reminder/summary of each of the 40 chapters of Matthew Kelly's simple and great Lenten read. This is a great way to build a real habit or ritual of spiritual reading and prayer. Then in addition to prayer there's fasting and almsgiving.

All these practices are meant to help us grow in our relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Without the relationship with God piece, fasting just makes us light headed and cranky. Everything we do as Catholics, especially during Lent, is meant to focus on our relationship with God in Jesus Christ. Jesus spent whole nights in prayer to His Father. It was through prayer in His humanity that Christ received, in His humanity, deep within, His true identity as the Son of God. From that true identity, He went out to save the world. How much more do we sinful fallen creatures need to spend many, many hours in prayer to come to know who we really are and who God really is for us in Christ by the Holy Spirit.

Our Lenten Mission is focused on Consecration to Jesus through Mary, according to the way of St. Louis Marie de Montfort. We are going to use the book, '33 Days to Morning Glory' to grow and prepare for this great act of Renewal of our Baptism. This week we had the relics of St. John Paul II and the veil of Our Lady of Guadalupe to help us understand the power of this consecration through Mary's intercession. We will use the program of the 33 Days after Easter to consecrate our Parish to Jesus through the Blessed Mother, but feel free to start anytime."

THANK YOU to Br. Mauricio Torres and all who helped make our Parish Mission and Healing Mass an experience 'Full of Grace'!

If you received any special graces from the Parish Mission, PLEASE SHARE THEM with your neighbors!

➤ ***Another Note on Special Collections***

While we will generally no longer have second collections, and instead encourage you to use the designated envelopes for such, there is one upcoming collection that we will offer as a second collection. This is to help offset the cost of the Leadership Course, 'Good Leaders, Good Shepherds' that the Archdiocese is enrolling all the new pastors in. I and my brother priests have found this to be VERY helpful and practical tool in learning how to exercise the governing office of the priesthood in the parish setting.

➤ ***Kitchen & Facilities Update:***

As some of you may know, we've been catching up on a lot of deferred maintenance around our grounds and facilities. In addition to our new phone system that was just installed campus-wide, we've had a series of challenges with the kitchen equipment: specifically, the gas and the dishwasher. Special thanks to **Travis Switalski**, our Facilities Supervisor, for getting to the bottom of these problems.

In the meantime, **everyone** is asked to please take any and all emergency precautions if something seems wrong, like turning off the gas if you smell gas, closing doors that should be locked and closed, notifying the office if there are homeless folks camping on the grounds. And of course *let the office know what's happening*. **All of the above things have happened recently at St. Mary's and we all need to help each other ensure a safe environment.** Thank you.

➤ ***SUNDAY MASS TIME CHANGE: Please note starting on Easter Sunday, the late Mass at St. Mary's will change from 10:30AM to 11 AM. More information on the reason for this change coming soon.***

➤ ***Youth Program Updates Coming Soon. Please stay tuned!***

Fr. Straz