
NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Lenten Season

By Fr. John Appiah

Each year the Church offers ALL people the period of lent to grow closer to God. The members of the Body of Christ are called to fast, pray, and give alms. To do as the Church recommends, living out your Baptismal promises, hopefully leads to conversion. On Ash Wednesday—the pre Lenten Season—we receive blessed ashes made from the previous years Palm Sunday palms. Why ashes on the forehead? It reminds us that we are not as pure as we like to imagine, that we do not shine as brightly as we should, and that we are not clean or free of sin as we think. In essence it is a call of all times—in the Bible, place—Nineveh and America, and people—King David—also you and I, to continue the climbing of the holy mountain. The way back to God is acknowledgment and confession of personal sin(s) along with societal ones.

The Lenten Season reminds us that God is the giver of all life, human and divine, that God is the healer of soul and body and welcomes us back time and again. We, in turn, must follow through with action by praying, fasting, giving alms, practicing forgiveness, doing away with hardness of heart, loving our enemies, and not turning a blind eye to those who come in the chamber of justice.

Some of the moving recommendations for spiritual growth I will suggest are the three “r’s”: read, reflect and retreat. An individual can engage their being and God by reading the Bible (God knows Catholics don’t do enough of that) along with a rich harvest of spiritual materials. For example, in this year of Saint Paul, what have I learned about the great apostle to the Gentiles? The second is to reflect Christ wherever you may be, whatever you do, and wherever you go. In other words, be Christ like! The third is to retreat to a place where you cannot be reached. It is better to actually go away; but retreats can take place at home, outside, on the field, or inside a church.

In the book *Anyway* by Kent M. Keith, the following will be a great goal for Lent: (1) People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered—*Love them anyway*. (2) If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives—*Do good anyway*. (3) If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies—*Succeed anyway*. (4) The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow—*Do good anyway*. (5) Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable—*Be honest and frank anyway*. (6) The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds—*Think anyway*. (7) People favor underdogs but follow top dogs—*Fight for a few underdogs anyway*. (8) What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight—*Build anyway*. (9) People really need help but may attack you if you do help them—*Help people anyway*. (10) Give the world the best you have and you’ll get kicked in the teeth—*Give the world the best you have anyway*.

An Invitation... It gives me great joy to invite all of you to a gathering on Saturday, February 21, 2009. We will begin with Mass at 9:00 a.m. and proceed to address the needs for our parish immediately afterwards.

Follow the parish Lenten schedule through our bulletin and calendar. There are events and activities that will help each of us prepare for the celebration of the paschal mystery through prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and penance.

Bishop Elect... We have a new bishop, Bishop Elect Richard Stika. We have started our spiritual bouquet for him with a Mass. In the succeeding weeks the parish invites all to join in the Mass offered for our bishop elect. Also, plan to undertake and contribute to the spiritual bouquet so that God will strengthen our Bishop to be a good shepherd for the Diocese of Knoxville. Please alert Father John of individual spiritual exercises, for example; prayer, Mass offerings, charitable acts on our bishop’s behalf. We will offer these to him in the near future. Finally, a request from our bishop elect: please conclude all prayers by invoking the intercession of Saint Joseph.

There is a sign up sheet for those who plan to attend the ordination but do not wish to drive. The bus company has quoted different group rates depending on how many people sign up to go. The sign up will close on Ash Wednesday. Please reference chart and cost associated. (A \$200 parish contribution reduces the cost as shown.)

14 passengers	8 Hours	\$400.00	\$28.00 per Person (\$15)
30 Passengers	8 Hours	\$600.00	\$20.00 per Person (\$14)
47 Passengers	8 Hours	\$750.00	\$16.00 per Person (\$12)
55 Passengers	8 Hours	\$870.00	\$16.00 per Person (\$11)

Mass Parts in Latin... We are going to start learning part of the Mass in Latin. This may entail arriving 15 minutes early. We will concentrate on The Kyrie - Greek, Gloria, Sanctus, Mysterium Fidei, and Agnus Dei. We hope to be ready for Confirmation on May 24, 2009, when Bishop Richard Stitka will be here for the 11:00 am Mass.

