

February 22, 2019

Dear Members and Friends of St. Joseph Church,

May God bless you warmly as we face the months ahead. I know the month of March will be full of activities. Please consult the calendar to keep track of all that we have planned.

To help prepare for the 50-day celebration of Easter we will be studying the Lenten Sunday Readings. The classes are scheduled from 6:30-8:00 pm on Tuesdays, beginning March 5. I encourage those who will be proclaiming the Readings at the weekend Masses to participate. All are welcome to attend. This is an excellent way to observe the season of preparation for celebrating the Easter Sacraments. Easter Sunday is April 21.

Ash Wednesday, March 6, marks the beginning of Lent. Here at St. Joseph, we will have a Liturgy of the Word with the Distribution of Ashes (no Communion) at 9:00 am. I will celebrate Mass at Noon and at 6:00 pm here at St. Joseph. Lent is the time of preparation for those who will be baptized, confirmed and admitted to the Eucharist during the Easter Vigil on April 20. For those of us who are already fully initiated, Lent is a time for us to renew our prayer, fasting, and charitable actions as a way of modeling our Christian faith.

The Rite of Penance is available on Saturdays at 3:30 pm. The Communal Penance Services, beginning at 7:00 pm., are at St. Christine on March 18, at Immaculate Heart of Mary on March 19, and here at St. Joseph on March 20. Thursday, March 28, at 7:00 pm, there will be a Penance Service at St. James Church in North Jackson.

The Stations of the Cross are prayed on Fridays (beginning on March 8) at 7:00 pm.

The season of Lent calls us back to the basic religious actions of prayer, fasting and giving alms. These actions, when performed in a grace-filled way, help us grow in faith, hope, and love. Self-denial helps us to be emptied so that God may fill us with the Holy Spirit. Catholics in good health from the age of 18 to 59 are obliged to fast and abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. They are to abstain from meat on all other Fridays of Lent. Youth, age 13 and older, are to abstain from meat on those days. "Fasting" means no more than one main meal is eaten that day, while in the same day no more than two partial meals are eaten which together do not equal the one main meal.

The Month of March has a couple of activities I will highlight:

- Sunday, the 3rd, The St. Vincent de Paul Society is sponsoring donuts after Mass. There will also be a meeting for the parents of our First Communion Candidates after Mass.
- Friday, the 8th, Celebrate Weekend Begins.
- Sunday, the 24th, The St. Joseph Feast Day Dinner will begin at Noon.
- Saturday, the 30th, The Candidates for First Communion will have the Jesus Day Retreat.

We are richly blessed in our parish by the grace of God. We have many active and generous parishioners who share their time, talent and treasure. We enjoy activities and events that enable us to experience Christian fellowship and support.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Gregory F. Fedor