

FEBRUARY 18, 2024 BEEHIVE

On the first Sunday of Lent, we proclaim Mark 1:12-15 at Mass. After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit led him into the ruthless land of strong heat, penetrating sun, and forty days of fasting. In the desert, Jesus confronts the brutality of the environment. Jesus is tempted by evil. He overcomes his anguish. The desert experience of Jesus becomes the central

ful, lush shrubbery. Life sprang up with just a small amount of water. The brutality of the environment was eased even by the idea that in the desert, life is possible.

Since that summer, I have prayed with this image of the earthly desert, of greenery emerging from nothingness. Sometimes, the barrenness of that desert is nothing compared

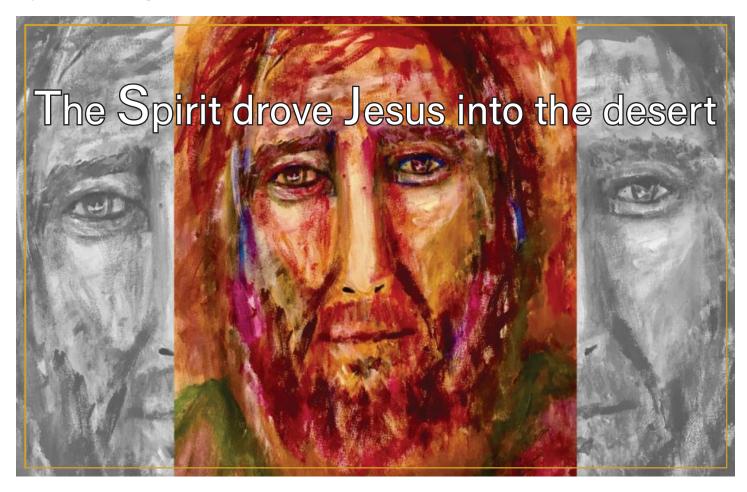


image of our Lenten journey. This gospel invites us to follow Jesus into a brutal desert in order to discover genuine healing and authentic life.

Years ago, while in college, I studied in the Holy Land during the summer. Our group traveled to an expansive desert. We traversed over barren rock while burning in the sun's heat. The foreign land to me seemed incapable of life. We walked to the edge of a cliff, then looking out beyond us to the other side of a hill, we all noticed something that stopped us in our tracks. Across the hill, a line of greenery flowed down the barren land. A small stream created beauti-

to my inner life. My heart is often a dry place of brutal turmoil. My inner life is often desolate and lonely. Anger is a treacherous landscape. My prayer is often the ground upon which I ache for change or healing. The physical desert of the Holy Land has become an interior landscape and experience of seeking Jesus' love, especially on this journey to Easter renewal. I return to this desert in my heart and memory every year in Lent.

In Lent, our inner lives may seem just as treacherous and barren. The image of the Lenten desert reveals to us that in Christ, all things are possible. In this season, we journey

Continued on page 2

The Spirit Drove Jesus Into the desert

Continued from page

to Easter to renew our life in Christ in baptism. In these waters, we are born again, we discover life amid our inner pain and turmoil. The landscape of the heart is given new growth, even when we feel overwhelmed by the immensity of human suffering. In Christ, even our thoughts, reactions, and voices discover new life. This new life is a surprise and delight, an unexpected growth along the contour of our hearts.

The personal desert experiences of people also teach me about our quest for God's love. I am in awe overhearing people's anguish and survival stories. I listen to a young woman slowly tell me the story of losing a child. Such a desert place becomes a sacred story. I listen with tears as the path of such a story unfolds. I listen to such sacred words at the bedside of a prisoner dying of cancer. At her hospital bedside, a guard stands in command wearing a bullet-proof vest and carrying a gun. In that holy moment, she is free of her inner desert place of regret and shame. I listen to the anguish of a young father tell me of being abused as a child. The terrain of such a story guides us both into silence.

Such emotional and spiritual deserts have taught me over the years not to judge other people. We are all shaped in thought and in deed by the deserts we have traveled in life. I have learned in many Lenten seasons of my priesthood to listen with a tender heart and a non-condemning ear. It is the privilege of my life and ministry to have been invited into the personal desert stories of so many people in the parishes in which I have served. Desert places of the heart are universal, though anguish is so personal.

Jesus entered the desert for forty days. Our deserts may not have a time limit on them. Some of us have carried such desolate places within us for most of our lives. Some spiritual dry places may never be healed and certainly not forgotten. Some personal deserts just need to be traversed in the sacred moment during the Sacrament of Reconciliation in a new Lenten season. Some desolations may become lifegiving simply by sharing deeply with someone who understands such desert experiences. No matter our sins, our doubts, our scars of life, our deserts are not easily changed. Sometimes, we cling to our deserts because it is the only life we know. Only in God can our suffering be healed and our perspectives changed.

Jesus confronted every aspect of the physical desert. In doing so, he was empowered by the Holy Spirit. Jesus also confronts our inner suffering. Jesus desires us. He wants the best for us. He wants our anguish to heal. In our bewildered moments, he chases us down, carrying us as lost sheep. Jesus invites us on another Lenten journey through the desert to renew our lives again at Easter. Like the stream flowing down the desert hill, Jesus is the life we seek when our hearts remain dull, lifeless, and hurting. All things are possible with God in our inner deserts.

Jesus did not resist the desert. He did not hesitate to be changed by it, to become stronger for his mission on earth. I admit, that I often find myself resisting God during Lent. There is still something in me that tells me I don't want to change; I don't want what Jesus offers me. I encounter this resistance every year in Lent. My resistance melts in Lent only with honest prayer and the support of the sacraments. I cannot live or become stronger through my own pain without the sustenance of God's fidelity. I cannot travel through my own desert without God in communal ritual, personal silence, and sharing my life with others in the community.

Jesus fasted in his desert experience. We fast as to become hungry for God's mercy, fidelity, and presence. We fast to be sustained more deeply in God's love for us. We all desire God in our pain, our anguish, and our unanswered questions in life. However, we may still cling to other things that we think will feed us, such as technology, pornography, stuff we purchase, or just our own stubbornness of heart. In Lent, God transforms our hunger into love and a deeper meaning in life. The food we feed upon every day becomes who we are in the world. We are what we consume, what we cling to, and all that surrounds us. In Lent, we have another chance to let God be the source of our life in the Eucharist. Christ feeds us with hope, mercy, and forgiveness. Our hunger leads us to belong in Christ's passion, death, and resurrection.

No matter the deserts we face in this Lenten journey, God desires to accompany us. Our call in Lent is to listen. Our way forward in the uphill climb of desert temptations is to listen even more attentively to Christ in the quiet places of our hearts. Listening to Christ is the form of prayer most often forgotten and even resisted during our journey toward the glory of Easter. Our communal expressions of prayer are utterly important in the Lenten season such as Mass, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or the more devotional prayers of The Stations of the Cross or the Rosary. However, listening to the ways of Christ in our lives becomes the place of inner freedom in the heat of our desert experiences of loss, grief, and uncertainty. May we not fear Lent's desert.

As we enter the Lenten season, I invite you to listen carefully to God and to renew your own baptismal life in Christ Jesus. As we pray, as we fast, and as we offer alms to God's beloved poor, the Holy Spirit is guiding us through the deserts of hopelessness, fear, and uncertainty. On Easter, our voices shall be one, and our lives committed again to the joy of our relationship with Christ who turns the heat of the desert into the fires of commitment in our Christian communities.

Written by Rev. Ronald Raab, C.S.C. for the Congregation of the Holy Cross. For more, please visit holycrossusa.org

Things Considered

I know – Covid is *sooo 2021*, but I am an antiquarian at heart. I've been sick this past week with a nasty case of Covid. I'm being treated with a course of Paxlovid. I hope to be asymptomatic and non-contagious by this weekend. My thanks to Fr. Bede Louzon and Bp. John Quinn for filling in for me on short notice.

XXX

Getting the ARK up and running has been a complex 32-month job and regretfully, our contractor missed our Ash Wednesday "drop dead by date" for reopening. Consequently, we're taking a pass on all our Lenten Fish Dinners in 2024.

We might have had a chance at making that deadline if I had not shut down interior construction work last month after mineral spirits were found leaching into our ARK sump pump.

First noticed in the late Summer, this chemical residue, and a continuously gushing flow of water, became a serious enough concern in December for us to make a report to the GPP Fire Department. In turn, they called Lansing's office of the Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) to come out to do air quality testing of the room.

Since that time, the parish has done at least three independent laboratory tests on the contents filling our sump. They all came back showing the same results. The ARK was picking up mineral spirits in high quantities from an unknown source. 69000 ug/L in the first lab test in early December to 50000 ug/L in the one from January 22 2024. At least they are diminishing.

In addition to scientific data, I received cautionary advice from Bodman Law that I should not make assertions about the source of the chemical discharge or present scientific information that may not be reliable. For ex-

ample: I should state that many things can cause a spike in indoor air readings that would have nothing to do with a "petroleum" issue. In fact, the highest VOC that was registered in our preliminary test was Ethanol, and as was pointed out, there were multiple hand sanitizer containers in the ARK that easily could have been the source of the Ethanol.

Let me also ask well-meaning neighbors and parishioners (and myself) to not put the EPA or EGLE on the defensive – they are our allies.

Steve Guyot, the environmental engineer contracted by the parish through the Archdiocese, had a site visit to the Performing Arts center two weeks ago. The EGLE project manager, Steve Moorhead, was there as well. The site superintendent for the new construction agreed to provide a set of the plans and copies of the environmental reports that were prepared prior to that construction's beginning. The GPR was scheduled for the Thursday after we went to print.

On that visit to the new building site, Guyot and Morehead were shown two storage tanks that were excavated sometime earlier. They photographed, but did not test their contents.

On our end, we have completed a clean-up of our sump machinery and space. We increased ventilation in the room. It had been suggested that fumes from the mineral spirits in the pit might have penetrated the dry-wall and floor of the room. Now cleaned, this establishes a new benchmark and we now have taken new sets of air and water tests to determine if the mineral spirits are still entering the ARK. Anecdotally, they seem to be in remission.

In a perhaps unrelated issue, we have noticed that the western part of our parking lot has started to drift. This could indicate underground water movement. This past week I authorized a ground-penetrating radar examination of the lot in an effort to identify a problem that we cannot see.

Forgive the pun, but I am "dispirited" by so much of this. It's been my experience while asking questions

about the infrastructure grid following the water event of 2021 and now asking questions about the issues flowing from the new construction, **non rapid disclosure** is the *modus operandi*.

When the ARK and performing arts center projects come to fruition, they will be centerpieces of a true showcase neighborhood. Ambrosians can take pride in their foresight and investment. But these projects have to be done right – not sacrificing speed for expediency – or basic neighborliness.

XXX

Sometimes you plant a seed and are surprised that it took root in an entirely different location.

When deacon intern Tom Nguyen was here in 2015, one of his assignments was to build up a young adult ministry outreach based on the "Theology on Tap" program already enjoying success in Chicago and two others here in the Detroit area. But a another ToT program was not allowed by our Archdiocese unless it was under their direction. We solved that by placing our program under Capuchin supervision and gave it a different name – "Tap Into Life."

Our program struggled to take hold at a few different venues, and eventually found its way into Capuchin houses. After Fr. Tom's ordination, he was assigned to different ministries within the Order, but his "sidekick" in the project from day one, Maggie Jackson, persevered.

That's why I was pleased to see that Maggie and five of the original members of the old Tap Into Life group are growing our old idea in a new way. In January of this year, they made the decision to become an official "YouFra" chapter - one of many chapters across the world, inviting young adults to increase their spirituality and learn more about Franciscan spirituality. They participate in a simple service Saturday once a month. Fr. Fred Cabras, OFM Cap., serves as the spiritual minister for the Solanus Casey YouFra chapter. Check it out at http://tinyurl. com/3y94ty2t

St. Ambrose Liturgical Choir

Now under the direction of Josh Burcroff, our Liturgical Choir is reconstituting itself. They sing at the weekly 11:15 a.m. litugy and major feast days of the Church.

There's lots of great music at Mass that needs to be sung that just cannot reasonably be done by a congregation. By spending the time and effort to rehearse each week, the choir provides a great service to the congregation by opening up the amount of literature the Assembly can be exposed to. Used appropriately, this has significant theological and musical implications, broadening the congregation's experience of the divine. It's a real ministry.

For more information, contact Mr. Burcroff at burcroffjosh@gmail.com. or stop up in the loft before or after Sunday's masses.

Faith Formation Station

The word "Lent" means "spring." The awakening and rebirth of nature became a sign of the awakening to new life of Christians through baptism. In the Christian tradition, Lent is a time to focus on the more serious side of life. The forty days of Lent are a time of renewal, and an annual change to live the Gospel as fully as possible.

During Lent we should concentrate on performing good deeds, fasting and praying. By getting rid of lesser things, we can make more room in our hearts for God's love and the love of others. Each week throughout Lent, share moments of generosity, prayer, and fasting with your child. Every Friday our religious education families receive a Family Flocknote email with program updates, prayers, resources, and links for enriching their family life at home. Remember to check your email Friday afternoons.

10 LENTEN IDEAS FOR YOUR FAMILY'S LENTEN JOURNEY:

- 1. Begin each day with the prayer, "Lord, we offer you this day, and all that we think, and do, and say."
- 2. Take the kids grocery shopping for the poor and bring the food to a parish pantry or local food bank.
- 3. Let children light a candle at home or church for people who are sick or suffering.
- 4. Write a letter to someone you know who is in need of an extra prayer or smile.
- 5. Turn off electronic devices and spend quality time together.
- 6. Read the Lives of the Saints to your child/ren or pray the Rosary together.
- 7. Encourage each family member to do something nice for someone every day.
- 8. At dinnertime, let each family member mention one person or problem that they would like to pray for.
- 9. Abstain from meat for an extra day or two each week and donate the savings to charity.
- 10. Volunteer as a family to help your parish. Whether it's cleaning the church, assisting with a food drive, helping out at Mass, it gives you a chance to serve together. Check out our Family of Parishes Lenten Evangelical Charity & Service Opportunities flyer in your inbox.

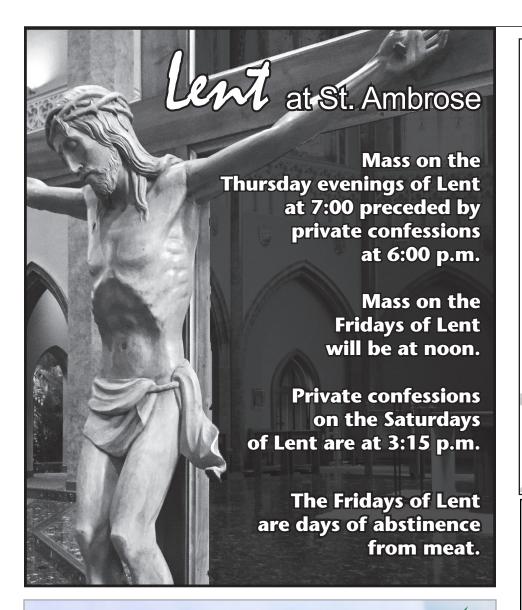
FIVE FINGER PRAYER:

This prayer is often attributed to Pope Francis long before he became Pope.

- Concentrate on your thumb. It is the finger closest to you. Pray for the people who are close to you: parents, siblings, relatives, teachers, and friends. They are the easiest to remember.
- Give thanks to God for these people and ask for their protection.
- Concentrate on your pointing finger. Some people point us in the right direction. Pray for those who teach, instruct, heal, coach, and counsel. Thank God for their instruction and ask him to help them in their important work.
- Concentrate on your tallest finger. Some people must stand tall all the time. Pray for Pope Francis, Fr. Tim, Fr. Bede, world leaders, governors, mayors, leaders of industry and business, the military and police. Thank God for their service and ask Him to guide them in wisdom and right judgment.
- Concentrate on your ring finger. This is our weakest finger. Pray for the homeless, the imprisoned, the sick and the lonely. We cannot pray too much for them. Pray that God will look over them and give them new strength.
- Concentrate on your pinky finger. God wants to hear your needs too, especially when you put others first. Pray for your own growth in mind, body, and spirit.

PROGRAM REMINDERS:

• Mid-Winter Break: Following the GPPSS calendar, we do not have class on 2/18 & 2/25. Classes resume for us on March 3, 2024. See you at Mass.



Woman's Lenten Retreat

The Virtues of Faith, Hope and love

Join us for a Lenten Retreat for women of all ages as we discover our call to the fullness of life through the Theological Virtues of Faith, Hope and Love. See how the lives of women in Sacred Scripture can help. Inspire us to navigate challenges in our lives and model these life-changing virtues to the world around us, strengthened by the Eucharist.

Saturday, February 24, 2024

St. Paul on the Lake Church and School

Mass 8:15 am (church building)
Breakfast 9:00 am (St. Paul School Canfield Center)
Retreat 9:30 am -12:00 Noon

To register, contact Anne Graves at agraves@stpaulonthelake.org or call 313.885.8855 (x144)

Ghirelli Rosaries

Six different custom designed rosaries were made by hand in Italy expressly for St. Ambrose Parish. The bead collection ranges from hardwoods to various semi-precious stones.

The crucifix is modeled from the Ark Plaza sculpture and the centerpiece depicts the First and Second Coming of Christ from our sanctuary. The "Pater" bead is taken from details in our stained glass windows.

A Ghirelli Rosary is a perfect Easter or Special Occasion Gift, for someone joining the Church, or for a First Communion keepsake

To order, please visit our website, use the QR code below, or visit the parish office.



The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Priest in Solidum: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski Religious Education: Kelly Anne Woolums Minister of Music: Office Manager: Peggy O'Connor Secretary: Mary Urbanski

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day – Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m. Sunday - 8:30 & 11:15 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton
Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230
Tel: (313) 822-2814 Fax: (313) 822-9838
Email address: stambrose@comcast.net
Religious Education: (313) 332-5633
Pastoral Ministry: (313) 332-5631
Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814
Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule

Monday, February 19

Weekday 1st week of Lent

Tuesday, February 20

Weekday 1st week of Lent

8:30 a.m. – Joseph Serventi, Jr.

Wednesday, February 21

St. Peter Damian, bishop & doctor

Thursday, February 22

The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle 7:00 p.m. – Abel & Aida Busque

Friday, February 23

St. Polycarp, bishop & Martyr 12:00 p.m. – Mass – Fr. Mitch Szarek

Saturday, February 24

Weekday 1st week of Lent

4:00 p.m. – Mass – For All People

Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday of Lent

8:30 a.m. - Mass – For All People

11:15 a.m. – Mass – For All People

Scriptures for the 1st Week of Lent

February 19

Lv 19: 1-2, 11-18 Ps 19: 8-10, 15

Mt 25: 31-46

February 20

Is 55: 10-11 Ps 34: 4-7, 16-19

Mk 6: 7-15

February 21

lon 3: 1-10

Ps 51: 3-4, 12-13, 18-19

Lk 11: 29-32

February 22

1 Pt 5: 1-4

Ps 23: 1-6

Mt 16: 13-19

February 23

Ez 18: 21-28

Ps 130: 1-8

Mt 5: 20-26

February 24

Dt 26: 16-19

Ps 119: 1-2, 4-5, 7-8

Mt 5: 43-48

February 25

Gn 1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 Ps 116: 10, 15-19 Rom 8: 31b-34

Mk 9: 2-10

First Sunday of Lent February 17th & 18th

Reference # in our Breaking Bread Hymnal or on your iphone using the QR code.

Entrance: Ashes #117

Responsorial: Psalm 51: Be Merciful, O Lord #783 Preparatory: Though the Mountains May Fall #436 Communion: From the Depth We Cry To Thee #132

Recessional: Blest Be the Lord #448



To participate electronically, go to: **facebook.com/stambroseparish** or better yet, to You Tube at **www.youtube.com/channel/UCbymBGIQxUF6UqPct5xFg**

Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish	
requires a <i>minimum</i> of\$10,100.0	0
On Sunday, February 11, 2024	
in envelopes we received\$4,194.0	0
in the loose collection\$1,584.0	16
in electronic donations\$3,558.4	9
for a total of	5
<u>Under</u> budget for the week \$763.4	5
Number of envelopes mailed 62	1
Number of envelopes used62	2



Our Sick

Please pray for those who are seriously ill or who are hospitalized: Pat Blake, Donald Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Matthew Elias, Mary Martin, Emilie Kasper, Anna Noto Billings, Eileen O'Brien, Liz Linne, Donna Barnes, Charmaine Kaptur, Frank Gregory, Alex Billiu, Jackie Walkowski, Maria Simcina, Sharif Hannan, Shirley Whelan, Albina Checki, Judy Sivanov, Matthew Brown, Lily Faith, Patty Freund, Janis Ramsey, Colette Gilewicz, LaHood, Valerie Hudson, Al Angela Hansen, John Freund, Kevin O'Connor, Tiffany Saine, Nick Piccione, Ann Billiu, Tamam Tedesco and those suffering and hospitalized worldwide with Covid.

Our Dead

Cynthia Ann Warner (86), a pillar of St. Ambrose parish, died on February 7th. She and her husband, Peter, met at the University of Detroit where she graduated with a BA in English and an MA in Elementary Education. They married in 1963 and built a home and family in Grosse Pointe Park – Michael, Paul, Mary Ellen, the late John and Andrew. After the kids were grown, Cindy returned as an ambassador and educator in the local Catholic schools and the Grosse Pointe Academy.

Cindy and Pete invested themselves in the neighborhood and parish. They were members of the Grosse Pointe Sail Club and the Detroit Institute of Arts. Cindy and Pete's Catholic faith was at the core of their lives, with a life-long involvement in the Teams of Our Lady, which led them to visits to the holy sites of Rome, Jerusalem, Fatima and Lourdes. Their involvement in St. Ambrose included serving as a mentor couple for engaged couples, as Eucharistic Ministers and a significant apostolate with our local chapter of the St. Vincent dePaul Society.

Cindy and Peter recently moved to Northville where they were closer to their children and grandchildren, while maintaining a life-time of friendships here. Her funeral was celebrated on February 10th at St. Kenneth's Church in Plymouth.

Lenten Observances

Lent is the liturgical season which runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of *total* fast and abstinence from meat.
- All the Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence from meat.
- The **Law of Abstinence** from meat binds persons from the completion of their 14th year from the day after their 14th birthday, throughout life.
- The **Law of Abstinence** forbids the use of meat, but not eggs, milk or products or condiments made of animal fat. Permissible are soups flavored with meat, meat gravy and sauces.
- The **Law of Fasting** binds persons from the completion of their 18th year to the beginning of their 60th year, i.e., from the day after their 59th birthday.
- The Law of Fasting allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and evening, observing as far as quantity and quality are concerned approved local custom. The order of meals is optional; i.e. the full meal may be taken in the evening instead of at midday. Also: (1) the quantity of food taken at the two lighter meals should not exceed the quantity taken at the full meal. (2) the drinking of ordinary liquids does not break the fast.
- In keeping with the spirit and meaning of the Lenten fast, Catholics are encouraged to observe the Good Friday fast through Holy Saturday and until after the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

Eucharistic Revival

Please join in a Eucharistic Revival Mission to be held Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings on February 25-26-27. The first evening a talk will be given by Fr. Jim Lowe, C.C., followed by confessions and adoration, hosted at St. Margaret Parish, St. Clair Shores. Monday evening Fr. David Preuss, OFM Capuchin will give a talk at St. Pio Parish, Roseville bringing with him a relic of Blessed Solanus Casey for our veneration and intercession; and Tuesday evening the mission will conclude with Mass with Bishop Jeffrey Monforton at Our Lady of Hope Parish, St. Clair Shores. All talks take place at 6:30 pm.



THE EUCHARIST - CALL TO HOLINESS Feb. 25

FATHER JIM LOWE is a member of the Companions of the Cross Religious Congregation, a community of Catholic priests inviting people to know Jesus and empowering them to share Jesus. They are inspired by the conviction that God is real, alive, and desires

to be powerfully active in the life of the Church and in every one of her members. Please join us for Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation after the presentation.

THE EUCHARIST - CALL TO HEALING Feb. 26

FR. DAVID PREUSS is a Capuchin friar. Known as a dynamic speaker, Father ministers part time at the Solanus Casey Center as well as half time in the local family of parishes, including St. Charles Borromeo. Healing prayers will be offered after Fr. Pre-



uss' talk, along with a relic of Blessed Solanus Casey for our veneration and intercession. Prayer teams will also be available.



THE EUCHARIST - CALL TO SERVICE Feb. 27

BISHOP JEFFREY M. MONFORTON was appointed Sept. 28, 2023, as the 32nd auxiliary bishop in the history of the Archdiocese of Detroit. Since 2012, Bishop Monforton has served as bishop of Steubenville, Ohio until his return here this past year. He previ-

ously served as Sacred Heart Major Seminary's rector and president (2006-12). On this third evening of our mission, Holy Mass will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m. with Bishop Monforton's homily inviting us to "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord." An appetizer reception will follow the Mass.



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