

THE LORD IS MY ROCK!

"THE LORD IS MY ROCK, my fortress, my savior, MY GOD, MY ROCK OF REFUGE, my shield! PRAISED BE THE LORD! "(Psalm 18:3-4). This coming Wednesday, ASH WEDNESDAY, we enter into the beautiful pilgrimage of 40 DAYS OF LENT, and on that first day of Lent we will give each one of you a small ROCK with the number 40. Our young children (FIAT, Faith in Action) painted the number 40 on each of these 1,600 rocks: 40 HOURS of Adoration this Lent (April 1st-2nd), 40 DAYS before EASTER in this 40th Season of Lent at OLHOC; they could have painted 40-40-40, but there was not enough space on each rock! You can carry this rock during the entire 40 days of Lent or you can put it on your desk as a reminder that JESUS IS YOUR ROCK!

The focus of our Lenten Journey is not a little "40" rock. The little rock is simply to keep reminding us of JESUS, of JESUS as OUR LORD, OUR SAVIOR, as the ROCK FOUNDATION AND SALVATION OF OUR ENTIRE LIFE! The number "40" is simply to remind us that we are celebrating the 40 days of our 40th Lent as a parish! It is also the first Lent that we will have the special 40 hours of Adoration! You will recall that in the past our continuous hours of Adoration were one hour for each year of our existence as a parish: we began at 30 hours, then 31 hours and finally this year 40 hours! I always said that once we go beyond 40 years, we still stay at 40 hours (no 41, then 42, 43...).

As your pastor, I propose that the LENTEN FOCUS for everyone AT OLHOC WILL BE "RECONCILIATION AND UNITY IN THE EUCHARIST": OUR SAVIOR, JESUS has given us the two great SACRAMENTS, RECONCILIATION AND EUCHARIST, to help us on our daily journey toward Heaven! Fr. Ben and I have increased the number of hours we are available in the confessional. We have seen some increase in the number of confessions, but we are far from where we would like to be. On Wednesdays outside Lent (6 pm), we have few people coming to confession. On Saturdays (4 pm) and Sundays (6:45 pm), we have long lines at times and have been available for confessions during the 5 pm and 7 pm Masses. We hope that this Lent (THE LIGHT IS ON) we will have long lines every Wednesday (6 pm till 6:45 pm and 7: 45 pm till 8:30 pm) but also every Saturday (4 pm) and Sunday (6:45 pm). We also

hope to see a full church for our LENTEN PENANCE Service at 6:45 pm MONDAY MARCH 16 (when we will have 12 PRIESTS). Mark your calendars!

Why is CONFESSION so central to our life? We need to be RECONCILED WITH GOD. We need to be READY for the day the Good Lord will call us back to HIM! This can happen at any time. It can happen TODAY! Unless our sins are forgiven by God, we cannot be at PEACE; we cannot be reconciled with our brothers and sisters. For us Catholics, our grave sins are forgiven ONLY through CONFESSION TO A PRIEST and only when we are sorry and promise to God to avoid future sin with His Help. UNLESS WE ARE IN A STATE OF GRACE, WE SHOULD NOT RECEIVE THE EUCHARIST! We should all go to regular confession, followed by the EUCHARIST, THE BODY OF CHRIST, is essential to NOURISH OUR SOULS!

Last Lent, over 100 people attended the GIFT OF THE MASS. This Lent, we are going deeper into the mystery of the EUCHARIST, and its understanding in the context of both the OLD and NEW TESTAMENT. This Lent, you are all invited to attend THE GIFT OF THE EUCHARIST beginning this week on Thursday (6:45 pm) and Saturday (9:45 pm). You can choose either session. Like last year, this series will continue for 5 weeks of Lent. We consider this series of the GIFT OF THE EUCHARIST AS OUR PARISH LENTEN MISSION. I can assure you that if you come you will not be disappointed. You will obtain a new understanding of the EUCHARIST, the center of our LIFE IN CHRIST! To facilitate logistics, please register online or use the sign-up sheet at the end of Sunday Masses

Let us pray that this Lent, God will help our parish to be renewed spiritually, reconciled and united in the Sacraments of Penance (Confession) and the Eucharist!

MAY THE LORD BE OUR ROCK AND SALVATION THROUGHOUT THIS 40th LENT AND BEYOND!

One in Christ,  
Father Alain