

# The Bell Ringer

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, HYANNIS + MARCH 2022



## With a Father's Heart

*On the 150th Anniversary of the proclamation of St. Joseph as patron of the Universal Church, December 8, 2020, Pope Francis issued the Apostolic Letter, Patris Corde, which means With a Father's Heart. Since we are completing the Year of St. Joseph and March is dedicated to him, we offer excerpts from that letter. . .*

WITH A FATHER'S HEART: that is how Joseph loved Jesus, whom all four Gospels refer to as "the son of Joseph".

Matthew and Luke, the two Evangelists who speak most of Joseph, tell us very little, yet enough for us to appreciate what sort of father he was, and the mission entrusted to him by God's providence.

We know that Joseph was a lowly carpenter (Mt 13:55), betrothed to Mary (Mt 1:18; Lk 1:27). He was a "just man" (Mt 1:19), ever ready to carry out God's will as revealed to him in the Law (Lk 2:22.27.39) and through four dreams (Mt 1:20; 2:13.19.22). After a long and tiring journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, he beheld the birth of the Messiah in a stable, since "there was no place for them" elsewhere (Lk 2:7). He witnessed the adoration of the shepherds (Lk 2:8-20) and the Magi (Mt 2:1-12), who represented respectively the people of Israel and the pagan peoples.

Joseph had the courage to become the legal father of Jesus, to whom he gave the name revealed by the angel: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21). As we know, for ancient peoples, to give a name to a person or to a thing, as Adam did in the account in the Book of Genesis (2:19-20), was to establish a relationship.

In the Temple, 40 days after Jesus' birth, Joseph and Mary offered their child to the Lord and listened (*Continued on page 2*)

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learn about  
Ignatian  
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## **... Father's Heart**

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with amazement to Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus and his Mother (Lk 2:22-35). To protect Jesus from Herod, Joseph dwelt as a foreigner in Egypt (Mt 2:13-18). After returning to his own country, he led a hidden life in the tiny and obscure village of Nazareth in Galilee, far from Bethlehem, his ancestral town, and from Jerusalem and the Temple. Of Nazareth it was said, "No prophet is to rise" (Jn 7:52) and indeed, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (Jn 1:46). When, during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Joseph and Mary lost track of the 12-year-old Jesus, they anxiously sought him out and they found him in the Temple, in discussion with the doctors of the Law (Lk 2:41-50).

After Mary, the Mother of God, no saint is mentioned more frequently in the papal magisterium than Joseph, her spouse. My Predecessors reflected on the message contained in the limited information handed down by the Gospels in order to appreciate more fully his central role in the history of salvation. Blessed Pius IX declared him "Patron of the Catholic Church", Venerable Pius XII proposed him as "Patron of Workers" and Saint John Paul II as "Guardian of the Redeemer". Saint Joseph is universally invoked as the "patron of a happy death" . . .

### ***A beloved father***

The greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus. In this way, he placed himself, in the words of Saint

John Chrysostom, "at the service of the entire plan of salvation".

Saint Paul VI pointed out that Joseph concretely expressed his fatherhood "by making his life a sacrificial service to the mystery of the incarnation and its redemptive purpose. He employed his legal authority over the Holy Family to devote himself completely to them in his life and work. He turned his human vocation to domestic love into a super-human oblation of himself, his heart and all his abilities, a love placed at the service of the Messiah who was growing to maturity in his home" . . .

### ***A tender and loving father***

Joseph saw Jesus grow daily "in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor" (Lk 2:52). As the Lord had done with Israel, so Joseph did with Jesus: he taught him to walk, taking him by the hand; he was for him like a father who raises an infant to his cheeks, bending down to him and feeding him (Hos 11:3-4).

In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God: "As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him" (Ps 103:13).

In the synagogue, during the praying of the Psalms, Joseph would surely have heard again and again that the God of Israel is a God of tender love, who is good to all, whose "compassion is over all that he has made" (Ps 145:9) . . .

In his role as the head of a family, Joseph taught Jesus to be obedient to his parents (cf. Lk 2:51), in accordance with

God's command (cf. Ex 20:12).

### ***An accepting father***

During the hidden years in Nazareth, Jesus learned at the school of Joseph to do the will of the Father. That will was to be his daily food (Jn 4:34). Even at the most difficult moment of his life, in Gethsemane, Jesus chose to do the Father's will rather than his own, becoming "obedient unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8). The author of the Letter to the Hebrews thus concludes that Jesus "learned obedience through what he suffered" (5:8).

All this makes it clear that "Saint Joseph was called by God to serve the person and mission of Jesus directly through the exercise of his fatherhood" and that in this way, "he cooperated in the fullness of time in the great mystery of salvation and is truly a minister of salvation."

". . . The spiritual path that Joseph traces for us is not one that explains, but accepts. Only as a result of this acceptance, this reconciliation, can we begin to glimpse a broader history, a deeper meaning. . . .

Joseph is certainly not passively resigned, but courageously and firmly proactive. In our own lives, acceptance and welcome can be an expression of the Holy Spirit's gift of fortitude. Only the Lord can give us the strength needed to accept life as it is, with all its contradictions, frustrations and disappointments. Jesus' appearance in our midst . . . makes it possible for each of us to be reconciled to . . . our own history.+

# *It's Lent Again: What's My Plan?*

*Father Michael encourages us to prepare for Easter by having a real plan!*

*By Janet M. Daly*

Did you ever notice that Father Michael often assigns his parishioners homework during his Sunday homilies? Well, after the assignment he strongly suggested about designing our own plan that each of us would follow during Lent sent me off to the internet for some ideas and I decided to share some with you. [Note: I'm not printing my own plan, but here are ideas for us all to think about.]

Since Lent begins March 2, *The Bell Ringer* will be available on the weekend before at the church doors and on the parish website so you can be ready.

## **Beyond Chocolate**

On [bustedhalo.com](http://bustedhalo.com), I found an article, *25 Great Things You Can Do for Lent: Besides giving up chocolate*, written last year by Renee Lareau, who offered an explanation of why we should have a plan.

"Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 days of preparation for the Easter season when Christians are called to deepen their spiritual lives through the practices of fasting, prayer, and alms-giving. The belief is that our consistent participation in these practices — like exercise we do for our physical health — improves our spiritual well-being by stripping away all that is unnecessary and becoming more mindful of how God is working in our lives. Challenge yourself this year,

and go beyond the usual practice of 'giving up' something. Now is a great time to take stock of your spiritual life and to grow in it."

Sounds like something our



beloved pastor might suggest, doesn't it. I'm not going to list the ideas, but you can take a look by going to the website and see what might fit into your plans.

## **The Angelic Doctor Speaks**

*Aleteia*, the online Catholic newsletter, featured an article by Philip Kosloski on February 19 of this year entitled, "*Looking for a Lenten discipline? Try fasting until 3:00 p.m.*"

The blurb for the article read: "St. Thomas Aquinas recommended in his *Summa* to fast until 3:00 p.m. in honor of Jesus' Passion and to make fasting more meaningful."

Well when I saw who made the recommendation, I thought I have to look at this article.

Kosloski began the article: "In general, the Catholic Church doesn't have many specifics when it comes to fasting. Lent includes two primary days of fasting, Ash

Wednesday and Good Friday, while also instructing Catholics to abstain from meat on every Friday during Lent.

"This is meant to provide Catholics with a certain amount of freedom to choose those disciplines that help them the most in their relationship with God.

"St. Thomas Aquinas wrote more specific guidelines in his *Summa Theologiae*, first reflecting on the natural rhythms of the body as he saw them at his period in history:

"... [F]asting is directed to the deletion and prevention of sin. Hence it ought to add something to the common custom, yet so as not to be a heavy burden to nature. Now the right and common custom is for men to eat about the sixth hour [12:00 noon]." [Editor's Note: That was true in the 13th century.]

"With this in mind, St. Thomas Aquinas argues that extending one's fast another three hours — to the "ninth hour" (3:00 p.m.) — can be a suitable sacrificial act.

So St. Thomas notes: "Hence, in order that those who fast may feel some pain in satisfaction for their sins, the ninth hour [3:00 p.m.] is suitably fixed for their meal. Moreover, this hour agrees with the mystery of Christ's Passion, which was brought to a close at the ninth hour, when 'bowing *Continued on page 4*

## *It's Lent Again . . .*

*Continued from page 3*

His head, He gave up the ghost' (John 19:30): because those who fast by punishing their flesh, are conformed to the Passion of Christ, according to Galatians 5:24, 'They that are Christ's, have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences.'"

Kosloski notes: "This type of fasting isn't a requirement of the Catholic faith, or something that everyone should adopt immediately into their life." And there's more to Lent than fasting.

But that part about some pain being involved with fasting is possible, even if it means fasting from your favorite TV programs or turning off your computer games for a day a week.

### **Let's Turn to Prayer**

I found some interesting ideas on adding prayer from [blessedcatholicmom.com](http://blessedcatholicmom.com) to our plans for Lent. Here's what Mary, the mom in question, had to suggest:

"Adding more prayer to our lives during Lent can help us to draw closer to God and understand Him better. You may decide to spend more time in personal prayer or pray with others. . . .

"Most churches have a scheduled time for people to gather in the church to pray the Stations of the Cross together during Lent.

Some other ideas suggested included:

- + Attend daily Mass on a day during the week.
- + Pray the Rosary more often.
- + Spend time in Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.

+ Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

+ Attend one or more of the Triduum liturgies: Holy Thursday Mass, Good Friday service, Holy Saturday Mass.

"Make the effort to be more mindful of God in your daily life. Pray and spend time thinking about what you will do to add more prayer to your life to enhance your Lent experience and draw closer to God," she added.

### **Alms Giving in Lent**

The third leg of the Lenten practices is almsgiving. I found an excellent definition for almsgiving on this website [missionimpact.svdmissions.org](http://missionimpact.svdmissions.org)

"The Catholic Church considers almsgiving 'a witness to fraternal charity' and 'a work of justice pleasing to God' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2462).

"Almsgiving is the act of donating money or goods to the poor or performing other acts of charity. However, when defining almsgiving, it helps to understand the meaning behind the word itself.

"The roots of the word *alms* can be found in ancient Latin and Greek words meaning mercy and pity. Similarly, the root of the word *charity* comes from the Latin *caritas*, meaning love.

"Charity, or almsgiving, is an outward sign of Christian love for others. Generally, it involves some type of sacrifice on behalf of the giver in order to provide for the needs of the other. In doing this, bonds of community are formed.

"While almsgiving is most closely associated with Lent, the practice of giving alms can, and should, be a year-round spiritual exercise for all Catholics and Christians.

Giving alms is essential to fostering a deep spiritual life because it allows us to step outside of ourselves and focus on the needs of others."

Almsgiving is more than donating money, it involves time, talent and treasure, incorporating the spiritual practices of prayer and fasting in a way that manifests itself by caring for our neighbors in need. . . .

"Acts of almsgiving during Lent allow us to: Let go of our own desires and focus on the needs of the less fortunate.

"Sacrifice our temporal comfort for the good of another person.

"Rely on God to meet our needs rather than providing for ourselves."

The St. Vincent de Paul Society in our own parish has need for funds more than ever. It's Christmas Card fundraiser never took place due to the pandemic. So do use those white envelopes in the pews to give locally for our neighbors.

Here are some other ideas from Mission Impact:

- + Tutor a schoolchild or mentor a college graduate.
- + Increase your donation to your local parish.
- + Do some grocery shopping or run an errand for an elderly neighbor.
- + Each week, write a note of affirmation to someone special in your life
- + Make a meal for an elderly neighbor or a new mother and take it to them.
- + Show an act of kindness to someone who is difficult to get along with."

Well I hope you find these ideas catalysts for you to create your very own personal plan for Lent and beyond by drawing closer to God. +

# What Is Ignatian Discernment?

By Rev. Doug Leonhardt, S.J.

Anyone who day dreams can understand Ignatian discernment. A junior in college is sitting by a lake and begins thinking about what she might do in graduate school. She sees herself as a physician's assistant working in a clinic for the poor in her home town of San Antonio, Texas and begins thinking about serving immigrants.

Then her thoughts drift toward another interest of hers. She has always been attracted to getting a Master's degree in English so she could go back to San Antonio and teach in Immaculate Heart of Mary High School from where she graduated. As she relishes her day dreams she begins to notice subtle differences in her feelings when she considers each of the alternatives.

When she ponders working at the clinic, she feels some heaviness come over her. So she looks to where this heaviness might come from. She traces it to two experiences: her dislike of the sciences and a character trait in which the suffering of others causes her sleepless nights. When she considers high school teaching, there is a different feeling. She feels positive energy about working with the young women in the same manner her teachers affirmed her and gave her confidence in an ability to write.

Pondering and noticing interior movements of attraction and heaviness are at the heart of Ignatian discernment. Discernment involves prayer and weighing facts and feelings about the several good choices which ultimately leads to a choice about what is the best fit for an individual.

In the traditional language of Christianity, good Christians try to find the will of God for their lives. They look for signs but often when no clear signs are given, they make a decision and then ask God to bless it.

St. Ignatius Loyola developed a way of decision making/discernment from his own experiences. When St. Ignatius was convalescing after a cannon ball injury, he began day-dreaming about his future and noticed interior

facts. Those facts which enlivened his heart and gave energy toward a certain path, he called consolation. Those interior facts which left one restless, hollow or with distaste, he called desolation. And he came to understand that consolation usually came from the Spirit of God touching into one's heart and thoughts. And he came to learn that the spirit of disease, hollowness and restlessness came from the enemy of human nature that he saw as the evil spirit.



With this awareness of how God leads a person, Ignatius began to develop a set of guidelines for individuals wanting to make decisions about where God is calling them. He called these guidelines the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits. Use of these guidelines are for serious decisions an individual needs to

make—what path of life to take, what occupation best suits one's gifts and talents, changing jobs, determining the number of children a couple chooses to bring into life, buying a house, choice of college for a son or daughter or determining the best living environment for an aging parent. These are decisions in which there are competing goods and not a choice between good and bad.

As one faces important choices, St. Ignatius says there usually are three times when one can make a choice. His times are not linear but refer to one's awareness level as he or she goes about choosing. Sometimes as one ponders a choice, there is great clarity about which way one should go. There is a sense of, "That's it." Another time is described as having alternating certainties and doubts, of consolation and desolation, of strength and weakness. The third time is when one feels nothing. There is no leaning one way or another but a calmness and feeling one is stuck in one's head.

Ignatius counsels that the first two times are appropriate for weighting facts and feelings and coming to a decision. When one is in the third time, more work attention is needed. It can involve listing advantages *Continued on page 6*

## **...Discernment**

*Continued from page 5*

and disadvantages, looking at the decision from a stranger's perspective or imagining one's self at the moment of death and looking back at the decision. Usually when one ponders these realities, there is stirred up consolation or desolation in one's heart which can light the pathway to a decision.

Finally, when a decision is made, St. Ignatius invites an individual to bring the decision before God and offer it to God. As one offers it in prayer, Ignatius expects that God will fill the person with consolation which is confirmation of the choice.

What one can expect to experience a subtle drawing of heart toward the choice that has been made. Discernment is at the core of Ignatian Spirituality. +

*Father Leonhardt's article first appeared and is printed from the Marquette University's Faber Center for Ignatian Spirituality. See it at [Marquette.edu](http://Marquette.edu).*



*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains that a "virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself."

The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God. The Catechism speaks of human virtues, including the cardinal virtues and theological virtues.

Justice is a cardinal virtue, one of four pivotal virtues that are pivotal to living in imitation of Christ. The other three cardinal virtues are temperance, prudence and courage.

This month, we are invited to learn more about justice and ways we may acquire it. "The moral virtues are acquired by human effort," the Catechism explains. "They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts, they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love."

"Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice toward God is called 'the virtue of religion.' Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish on human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good.

"The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor. 'You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor (Lev 19:15).' 'Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven (Col. 4:1),' " so concludes the Catechism section.

It has been said that justice exists between selfishness and selflessness. Let's examine our lives and make an effort to acquire the prudence to seek justice, employing temperance and courage in doing so. +

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### **March Prayer Intention:**

#### **For a Christian Response to Bioethical Challenges**

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

#### **Prayer for the Holy Father**

Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Pope Francis, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of Thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

*Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory Be to the Father. . .*

# *Where Can We Turn When Bioethical Issues Arise?*

Pope Francis' prayer intention for the month: *For a Christian Response to Bioethical Challenges*, is most appropriate at this time with legislation at the state and federal levels involved with matters of life and death for the unborn and the elderly and many others.

"We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action," is how the Pope asked us address these problems, but where can we get the facts to support a Catholic's defense of all human life?

Luckily, the Church has the National Catholic Bioethics Center, (NCBC) an independent Catholic institution based in Philadelphia, Pa., working to provide guidance based in Church teaching to laity, clergy, and scientific professionals to help them clarify the murky bioethical issues Catholics wade through in our world today.

The NCBC is not a part of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, but has the support of the U.S. bishops, and bishops and cardinals are board members. The NCBC is focused not on creating doctrine or defining teaching for new situations, but putting existing Church teaching in practice in difficult situations.

Founded in 1972, the NCBC mission was to deal with new bioethical challenges facing the scientific and Catholic communities. It was just in time to deal with the Supreme Court decisions permitting abortion in 1973, the HIV/AIDS crisis, stem cell isolation and research, and the sequencing of the human genome.

"We are so practical," Fr. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, director of education and ethicist for the NCBC told Catholic News Agency. [Father is a priest of the Fall River Diocese and writes a monthly column for our diocesan newspaper, *The Anchor*.]

"The Church brings something very substantive and when people can tap into that they realize that this goes back centuries – centuries of moral reflection," he said. That tradition of the Church, he offered, is the center's secret weapon.

But many young people are leaving the church because they see an incompatibility between science and the faith, which does not exist. There's a lot of ignorance due to poor catecheses, a misunderstanding of the Church's natural law tradition, substituting Protestant or materialist views of science, reason, and faith driving false wedges between faith and reason, Father noted.

For more Catholic information on bioethics, contact the Center at [ncbcenter.org](http://ncbcenter.org) . +

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## *Repentance and Forgiveness*

*By Catherine de Hueck Doherty, Servant of God*

Repentance is a powerful word. We should use it not only in Lent but constantly because daily we commit acts, say words, have inward movements that we are sorry for, wish we had not said or done, and in some way wish to atone for. That is good. It is also good to know that sin is not the immediate cause of this or that calamity. Sometimes God sends us sorrow, trials, and sadness so that we repent, do penance, and turn our face to him. . . . Let us be reassured and let us open ourselves to whatever God sends us. A supposed calamity changes into a benediction, into something we could offer to God. Let us look at things that way; it takes faith, but you pray for faith. . . . Pain and suffering can lead to repentance and

unite us again with Christ, especially if we have lost him temporarily.

Sin is turning my back on God. I walk away from God into a deadly place, a Godless place, in which I look at mirrors, and in every mirror I see myself. Sin is the adoration of self, in a manner of speaking, instead of God. . . .

Listen and you will understand the starting point of Lent, the mysterious mixture . . . of darkness and light. I stand before God, before the glory and the beauty of his kingdom. I realize that I belong to it, that I have no other home, no other joy, no other goal. I also realize that I am exiled from it in the darkness and sadness of sin: "for I am afflicted Lord." Only God can help in that affliction, only he can attend to my soul. +

***Ecce Ancilla Domine Prayer  
Will Be Introduced on Feast of  
the Annunciation***

With the weekend of March 19/20 marking the end of our prayer to St. Joseph, Father is introducing us to *Ecce Ancilla Domine*, a prayer to Our Lady, which will begin to be prayed on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, at Mass following prayer intentions.

***Ecce Ancilla Domine***

*I am in your hands O Mary.  
Mold and fashion this clay which  
I am. Give it a form and break it  
again. You are its mistress, it  
may not complain. I am satisfied  
that it should serve your purpose  
and that nothing in me should be  
opposed to your good pleasure.  
Whether you ask, command, or  
forbid me—I am ready to obey.  
What would you have me do or  
not do? Whether I be exalted or  
humiliated, comforted or grieved,  
able to work for you or incapable  
of anything, helpful to all around  
me or burdensome to everyone, I  
shall ever love you and sacrifice  
my will to yours in all things  
saying: my soul is Mary's slave of  
love. May all things be done to  
me according to her good  
pleasure. Amen. +*

***Faith Fostering Will Offer  
A Journey for Lent***

Father Michael will be leading the Faith Fostering members through *Journey for Lent* featuring Scott Hahn on the sacraments and scripture. +

***JPII on The Annunciation***

In the Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis cultus* Paul VI, of venerable memory, presents the Blessed Virgin as a model of the Church at worship. . .

She who at the Annunciation showed total availability for the divine plan represents for all believers a sublime model of attentiveness and docility to the Word of God.

In replying to the angel: "Let it be to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38) and in stating her readiness to fulfil perfectly the Lord's will, Mary rightly shares in the beatitude proclaimed by Jesus:

"Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it!" (Lk 11:28).

With this attitude, which encompasses her entire life, the Blessed Virgin indicates the high road of listening to the Word of the Lord, an essential element of worship, which has become typical of the Christian liturgy. Her example shows us that worship does not primarily consist in expressing human thoughts and feelings, but in listening to the divine Word in order to know it, assimilate it and put it into practice in daily life. . .

Mary was a witness to the historical unfolding of the saving events, which culminated in the Redeemer's Death and Resurrection, and she kept "all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Lk

2:19) She was not merely present at the individual events, but sought to grasp their deep meaning, adhering with all her soul to what was being mysteriously accomplished in them.

Mary appears therefore as the supreme model of personal participation in the divine mysteries. She guides the Church in meditating on the mystery celebrated and in participating in the saving event, by encouraging the faithful to desire an intimate, personal relationship



with Christ in order to cooperate with the gift of their own life in the salvation of all.

Mary also represents the model of the Church at prayer. In all probability Mary was absorbed in prayer when the angel Gabriel came to her house in Nazareth and greeted her. This prayerful setting certainly supported the Blessed Virgin in her reply to the angel and in her generous assent to the mystery of the Incarnation.

In the Annunciation scene, artists have almost always depicted Mary in a prayerful attitude. . . This shows to the Church and every believer the atmosphere that should prevail during worship. . . In particular, she teaches Christians how to turn to God to ask for his help and support. in all circumstances of life. +



**Words of  
WISDOM**

### **Quotations for Lenten Meditation**

"Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves. . . What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit? Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation."

— **Servant of God Catherine Doherty**

"Unless there is a Good Friday in your life, there can be no Easter Sunday."

— **Ven. Fulton J. Sheen**

"Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt."

— **Pope Francis**

"And he said to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me"

— **Luke 9:23.**

"Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven."

— **St. Rose of Lima**

"As Lent is the time for greater love, listen to Jesus' thirst. . . He knows your weakness. He wants only your love, wants only the chance to love you."

— **Blessed Teresa of Calcutta**

"(Lent) is a period of spiritual 'combat' which we must experience alongside Jesus, not with pride and presumption, but using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the promises of our Baptism."

— **Pope Benedict XVI**

"Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one's flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, kindles the true light of chastity."

— **St. Thomas Aquinas**

"Fasting is most intimately connected with prayer. For the mind of one who is filled with food and drink is so borne down as not to be able to raise itself to the contemplation of God, or even to understand what prayer means."

— **Catechism of the Council of Trent**

"The goal of fasting is inner unity. This means hearing, but not with the ear; hearing, but not with the understanding; it is hearing with the spirit, with your whole being."

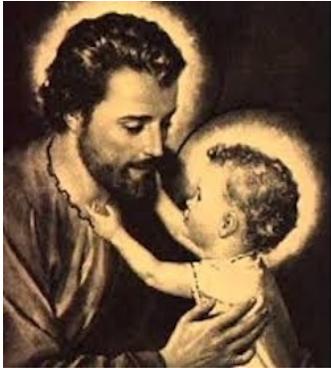
— **Thomas Merton**

"Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy [almsgiving] is the lifeblood of fasting. Let no one try to separate them. . . So if you pray, fast; if you fast, show mercy."

— **St. Peter Chrysologus**

# The Month of March 2022

## Monthly Focus: St. Joseph



March is the month of devotion to St. Joseph, whose feast falls on March 19th, ending our parish's celebration of his year. The solemnity of St. Joseph dates to the end of the 15th century; within a few centuries, the entire month became part of tradition — a time for devotion to St. Joseph. In a society which seems to discourage the importance of marriage and fatherhood, St. Joseph models an obedient, faithful, Christian father.

### Prayer Intention: For a Christian Response to Bioethical Challenges

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

### The Virtue: Justice

Justice is the cardinal virtue consisting in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice to God is called “the virtue of religion.” Justice toward neighbors disposes one to respect their rights, and live in harmonious equity.