

# TIDINGS

OF HOLY NAME OF JESUS NATIONAL CATHOLIC PARISH

A Monthly Newsletter of Information and Events

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Month of March

No. 3

## Theological Reversals? – Part I

We have now entered into the season of the cross. The cross is both the solid foundation of the Christian faith and its most profound mystery. It is the most concise and recognizable summary of our faith, and simultaneously it remains ineffable to believers and disavowed by heretics. From the earliest days of the faith, the crossing hash marks have denoted a follower of Jesus. In the city of Pompeii, destroyed and preserved in 79 AD, a wall in the house of Paquius Proculus was adorned with the words “*Alpha* Our Father *Omega*” written once in a vertical line and a second time in an intersecting horizontal line, thus forming a cross. This is the earliest monument of Christian archaeology according to Robert Milburn and it incorporates the image of the cross as definitive of the faith.

But at the same time some of the first errors of the faith were centered on the cross. Docetism was already being condemned in the early second century for its teaching that Jesus only seemed (\_\_\_\_ [doke\_], "to seem") to die on the cross. The idea that God could suffer and die as tragically as the cross entailed led some early believers to imagine Jesus' death was only a divine illusion. This idea was adopted centuries later by the Muslims when this heresy is repeated in the Koran [Sura 4:157]. Surprisingly, it is the non-Christians who are scandalized by the idea of the crucified God, while we who are immersed within the Christian culture have too often become acclimated to the cross.

This is why we need the season of Lent to remind us again of the scandal that takes place at Golgotha. We need to be reminded that the cross is not an antiseptic piece of statuary or jewelry, but that it was the favoured Roman method of a tortured execution. The Cypress-wood doors of St. Sabina Church in Rome from the fourth century have one panel that is “the earliest known illustration, in clear-cut terms, of Christ crucified.” (Robert Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture*, 1988, p. 109.) This implies that earlier generations of believers were too close to

the reality of the crucifixion to be able to emotionally deal with the agony of Jesus' death in such a manner. We need to remember that Jesus did not “seem” to die, but the horrors that offended the earliest believers who were well familiar with crucifixion were what Jesus endured on our behalf. This is why we of later centuries need Lent.

I think the reality of the cross is behind the eucharistic theology that our church formally adopted in 1907 and which we reaffirmed in 2008. In the Declaration of Utrecht, which Bp. Hodur signed upon his consecration, it is written: “The Eucharistic celebration in the Church is neither a continual repetition nor a renewal of the expiatory sacrifice which Jesus offered once and for all upon the Cross; but it is a sacrifice because it is the perpetual commemoration of the Sacrifice offered upon the Cross and it is the act by which we represent upon earth and appropriate to ourselves the one offering which Jesus Christ makes in Heaven ...” In other words, the cross is an historical event that Jesus endured once, and through the merits of that one, historical sacrifice, Jesus, as the heavenly High Priest, becomes present during the Mass and through the Holy Eucharist.

This is why I was confused to read in the requirements for communion with our church that other denominations must accept the eucharistic theology quoted above but also that the Mass is “a re-presentation of the sacrifice of Calvary.” These are contradictory to me. The former statement treats the cross as a singular event, and the mystical presence of Jesus at the altar is based upon the authority of the glorified Christ of heaven. The latter returns Jesus to the cross at every celebration of the holy Mass. Rather than deny the efficacy of the cross, I believe that the former respects the horror of what Jesus endured on our behalf. The cross is somehow a necessary sacrifice that God had to endure to grant our forgiveness, but it was offered once, and even that once is deemed offensive to others outside the faith. Why then would we who believe insist on its eternal “re-presentation”?

CALENDAR OF EVENTS  
MONTH OF MARCH

- March 3, 2010 – Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series at the South Deerfield Congregational Church at 7PM.
- March 5<sup>th</sup> – Monthly visitations to the sick and the shut-in of the parish  
The *Bitter Lamentations* will be sung at 7PM.
- March 7<sup>th</sup> – Polish Mass will be recited at 7:45am.
- March 9<sup>th</sup> – Monthly meeting of the Parish Committee at 7PM.
- March 10<sup>th</sup> – Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series at the Sunderland Congregational Church at 7PM.
- March 12<sup>th</sup> – Stations of the Cross will be recited at 7PM.
- March 13<sup>th</sup> – Confession for the youth of the parish at 10:30am. Please note special week! Remember to set your clocks AHEAD one hour before retiring for the night.
- March 14<sup>th</sup> – **FEAST OF THE INSTITUTION**. Mass at 9AM, followed by our **Annual Congregational Meeting** in the parish hall at 10AM.
- March 17<sup>th</sup> – Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series hosted by our parish at 7PM.
- March 19<sup>th</sup> - The *Bitter Lamentations* will be sung at 7PM.
- March 21<sup>st</sup> – **PASSION SUNDAY**. Monthly meeting of the Adoration Society at 10AM. Please note special week.  
Central Seniorate *Meal in the Upper Room* at 4PM hosted by Holy Cross Parish in Ware, MA.
- March 24<sup>th</sup> – Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series at the Conway Congregational Church at 7PM.
- March 26<sup>th</sup> – Stations of the Cross will be recited at 7PM.
- March 27<sup>th</sup> – **EASTER FOOD SALE** in the parish hall from 9AM – 2PM.  
Youth Confession at 10:30am for the month of April. (Please note special week!)
- March 28<sup>th</sup> – **PALM SUNDAY**. Liturgy of the blessing and distribution of the palms, followed by the celebration of the holy Mass at 9AM.
- March 30<sup>th</sup> – Diocesan Mass of Chrism at 4PM at St. Valentine's Parish in Northampton.
- March 31<sup>st</sup> – Holy Wednesday. Lenten Penitential Service at 7PM.

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**FEAST OF THE INSTITUTION & ANNUAL MEETING**

This year's feast day celebration of the organization of our church denomination falls on the exact anniversary (March 14<sup>th</sup>) of Fr. Francis Hodur's first Mass for the independent congregation of St. Stanislaus Church in Scranton, PA. Annually, on the second Sunday of March, we take a brief reprieve from our Lenten regimen to celebrate the event we hold to be the inception of our church. On this day the purple is removed from the Sanctuary and flowers are added. We celebrate God's gift to us of church. On the 113<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our church, I hope we will all gather at Mass in thankfulness for the past and in prayerfulness for the present and future.

In the spirit of the Catholic democracy that was reborn in 1897, we will also conduct our Annual Congregational Meeting immediately after Mass. This is both a privilege and a responsibility for members of the parish. We will discuss our future course of events and elect our parish officers. Also, we may choose not to elect General Synod delegates at our March meeting, but we do need to keep this important event in mind and on our agenda. The Synod will be held in Niagara Falls, Canada from October 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>.

I wish to thank our Nominations Committee of Pat Blakeslee, Sue Dibrindisi and Shirley Mietlicki-Floyd for all their great work in searching out volunteers for our various elected positions.

**SEASON OF LENT**

During the season of Lent, we conduct our **Lenten Devotions**. These are held on all Lenten Fridays until Good Friday. The Bitter Lamentations are a three-part meditation upon the Passion and death of Jesus. As we sing this Lenten Devotion the faithful are able to ponder the ineffable sacrifice of the Son of God on our behalf. On alternate Fridays we recite the Stations of the Cross. This Devotion takes us along the path that led from Pilate's condemnation to Jesus' burial in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. Each step allows us who gather the chance to mediate upon the agony Jesus accepts because of His love for us.

Our thirteenth annual **Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series** has begun. The theme of this year's series is *A New Look at Old Stories: Parables for Today's World*. We will host the series on March 17<sup>th</sup>. We will need to provide a small reception after the talk. If you can help by

bringing a food or drink at that time, please speak with Pat Blakeslee or Jane Grybko. Thank you.

The faithful are reminded that all Lenten Fridays are **fasting** days when we should abstain from meat and eat simpler meals. Some keep the pious practice of fasting on all Lenten Wednesdays too.

#### **HOLY WEEK**

Holy Week commences with Palm Sunday. The liturgy begins with the blessing and distribution of palms to the faithful. On this day we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the people's acclamation of "Hosanna to the son of David." This mood will change quickly and the remainder of Holy Week's liturgies will carry us through the rollercoaster of emotions and events that define the last week of Jesus' life.

On Holy Tuesday the bishop and diocesan clergy will participate in the Mass of Chrism at the Northampton parish. The oils that are used in all of our parishes will be consecrated at this time. Since these are the oils that will be used at Confirmation in October, I have invited our class to attend this Mass in preparation for their reception of the sacrament. All others from the parish are encouraged to attend as well.

This year we will introduce a Lenten Penitential Service much like the one first used this past Advent Season. This will be held on Holy Wednesday in order to cleanse ourselves of sin before the sacred events to follow in quick succession.

Looking ahead to April, on Holy Thursday we remember Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples, and His institution of the Holy Eucharist. On this night we also must recall Jesus' capture in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The church is open throughout the day on Good Friday with our Mass of the Pre-Sanctified in the evening and Stations of the Cross in the afternoon.

The preparatory liturgies for Easter take place on Holy Saturday as Jesus lies in the grave. Due to His promise of resurrection on the third day, the church prepares in anticipation.

#### **EASTER FOOD SALE**

On the Saturday of Palm Sunday weekend we will hold our annual Easter Food Sale. Volunteers will gather on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> in the parish kitchen to make pierogi for the sale. On the 25<sup>th</sup> volunteers will meet in the morning to bake apple pies and in the afternoon to make golumpki. If you can help with the pierogi please speak with

Louise Puchalski, with the pies please speak with Marge Sanderson, or with the golumpki please speak with Theresa Boron or Jane Grybko. For our Food Sale to be truly successful though we need our parishioners to share their own kitchen specialties with the church. We are asking you to set aside time to cook and bake so that each family may share at least a little something with us for this important fundraiser of OUR church.

#### **EASTER FLOWERS**

During Lent we will accept donations after our Sunday Masses for the Easter Flower Fund. If you would like to make a memorial donation, this can be done through the rectory. The lilies have become a special symbol of the joys of Easter, and it is our donations that help us to adorn the sanctuary with all of these beautiful and fragrant flowers. Thank you for your generosity.

#### **UYA FLOWER SALE**

Every year the Parish United Youth Association takes your orders for Easter flowers. We buy them wholesale from Fairview Farms in Whately and deliver them to you at the church on Palm Sunday. Orders will be accepted after our Lenten Masses. Thank you for supporting our youth.

#### **ORGAN RESTORATION**

Our church organ was crafted in 1868. Southfield Organ Builders has refurbished the instrument at a cost to the parish of \$9,000. With their work now completed, "this instrument can furnish many more years of service to the Church." Music adds an irreplaceable gift to our liturgies, and our organ has been the mainstay of our church's music program for all of our 80 years. If our church music is important to you, we ask you to make a donation to our organ restoration appeal to help defray the cost to the church.

#### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND**

The following donations have been received: Ralph & Irene Farrick, \$200; Robert & Anne Adamski, \$300 (organ); Sharon Calvo, \$100 (organ); Stasia Boyden, \$30, in memory of Steve & Stefania Krol; Mike & Pauline Polczwartek, \$100 (organ) and \$100 (hall windows); Janice Dagilus, \$50 (organ); Beverly Orloski, \$100 (organ); Mike & Pauline Polczwartek \$20 and Sophie Gnatek \$20, in memory of Chestra Godin; Stanley Chmiel, \$25 (organ); and from Joseph & Peg Kostiuik a generous donation of \$1,000 (organ). Thank you all for your donations.

2010 - Thirteenth Annual Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series - 2010

***A New Look at Old Stories:  
Parables for Today's World***

**March 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Second session offered by Fr. Randolph Calvo  
At the South Deerfield Congregational Church at 7PM  
Session Title: *Once More Astonished*

**March 10<sup>th</sup>**

Third session offered by Rev. Dr. Christine Fontaine  
At the Sunderland Congregational Church at 7PM  
Session Title: *Small Miracles in the Everyday*

**March 17<sup>th</sup>**

Fourth session offered by Rev. Barbara Seamon  
At Holy Name of Jesus Church at 7PM  
Session Title: *The Stories of Our Life and the Parable of the Sower*

**March 24<sup>th</sup>**

Fifth session offered by Rev. Dr. Cynthia Crosson-Harrington  
At the Conway United Congregational Church at 7PM  
Session Title: *"What We Find in Loss: Considering the Parable  
of the Prodigal Son"*

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Refreshments will be served after each gathering by the host parish.

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Our parish will have a small reception on the 17<sup>th</sup>. If you can help by bringing a food dish or a drink on this day, please speak to either Pat Blakeslee or Jane Grybko. And thank you.