

MARCH 4, 2012

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH
ST. JOHN, TEXAS

ASCENSION OF OUR LORD CHURCH
MORAVIA, TEXAS

DIocese of Victoria in Texas



REV. JOHN C. PETERS, PASTOR

REV. TOMMY CHEN, PAROCHIAL VICAR

P.O. BOX H ✠ HALLETTSVILLE, TEXAS 77964 ✠ (361) 798-5888 ✠ (361) 798-4970 FAX

WEBSITE: WWW.SHCATHOLICCHURCH.ORG

E-MAIL: RECTORY@SHCATHOLICCHURCH.ORG

MASS SCHEDULE

Second Sunday of Lent

Saturday	March 3	6:00 P.M.	John & Angeline Trlica	Moravia
Sunday	March 4	9:30 A.M.	George Vasek	St. John

Third Sunday of Lent

Saturday	March 10	6:00 P.M.	Adela & Ludwig Dittrich	St. John
Sunday	March 11	9:30 A.M.	Henry & Julia Olsovsky & Rebecca Patterson	Moravia

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Saturday	March 17	6:00 P.M.	Joe & Irene Barcak	Moravia
Sunday	March 18	9:30 A.M.	Delaine Dittrich	St. John

THE WORD OF GOD

Second Sunday of Lent

Readings: Genesis 22:1-2,9a,10-13,15-18 Psalm 116:10,15-19 Romans 8:31b-34 Mark 9:2-10

Abraham offers the ultimate sacrifice of thanksgiving, the gift of his very son. This sacrifice prefigures the sacrifice of Jesus who died for us all. In his transfiguration, Jesus discloses a suffering messiahship.

Third Sunday of Lent

Readings: Exodus 20:1-17 or 20:1-3,7-8,12-17 Psalm 19:8-11 1 Corinthians 1:22-25 John 2:13-25

The law liberates and leads us to freedom. It is to be trusted for it is a source of wisdom. Jesus speaks of the ultimate freedom to be won for us by his being raised up. He is the sign of the power and wisdom of God.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Readings: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23 Psalm 137:1-6 Ephesians 2:4-10 John 3:14-21

God pardons and raises up those who have been unfaithful, those who have loved the darkness rather than the light. For God so loved the world that he sent his only Son to deliver the world from exile.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

2nd Sunday of Lent - Mountain climbers who ascend the highest peaks spend a lot of time in preparation. Unlike those of us who take a short hike in the woods or amble over rolling hills, serious mountain climbers can spend weeks or months planning an ascent. Often, the expense alone requires a search of sponsors if a trip is to involve a larger group of people. Mountain climbing for some people has become a thrill-seeking opportunity.

Peter, James, and John were fishermen, not thrill-seeking adventurers. But when they climbed up Mount Tabor with Jesus, they had an experience beyond words. In his Gospel Mark describes the transfiguration of Jesus as an appearance in which His clothes became dazzling white. Elijah and Moses, the prophet and the lawgiver, appear with Jesus in this startling scene. Mark says of Peter in his Gospel, "He hardly knew what to say, they were so terrified."

Every bit of thrill-seeking has some terror in it. A roller coaster is fun for so many people precisely because there is just that little bit of fear that adds to the exhilaration of the ride. But fear can also paralyze, as it did Peter up on the mountain, when he did not know what to say. Fear can also make us run away. That also happened to Peter, on the night when Jesus was arrested, and Peter denied Him

As Christians, we aren't necessarily thrill-seekers, but we are like mountain climbers in one important way: we spend a lot of time in preparation. Throughout our lives we seek the highest goal, life with Christ in heaven. Lent gives us the tools to get even better at reaching that summit. Our prayer, our fasting, our almsgiving can lead us to the peak of perfection in Christ.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

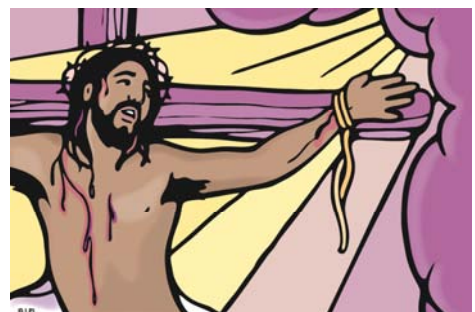
Fridays during Lent at 7:00 p.m.

Moravia - March 9, March 23

St. John - March 16, March 30

Sacred Heart - 6:00 p.m. - Every Friday

St. Mary's - 6:30 p.m. - Every Friday



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

St. Rose School would like to thank St. John and Moravia parishes for their support of the Souper Bowl of Caring. Our parishes collected \$383.00. The money collected from here and surrounding parishes totaled \$1300.00 and will be given to the Schulenburg Area Food Pantry. Your generosity is appreciated.

KJZT MEETING

Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas- KJZT 2012 District II meeting will be held at St. John's Parish Hall on Sunday March 18th. Registration at 1:30 pm and meeting at 2:00 pm.

ASCENSION CHURCH CLEANERS & USHERS

Moravia Church Cleaners for March: Kathy Guenther and Dorothy Henke
Moravia Ushers: Anthony Hrcncir and Thomas Brosch

ALTAR SERVER SCHEDULE

Saturday, March 3 - 6:00 p.m. - Moravia - Caitlyn Deem, Clayton & April Brossmann
Sunday, March 4 - 9:30 a.m. - St. John - Miranda Shimek, Rylie Lux & Dylan Goldberg

Saturday, March 10 - 6:00 p.m. - St. John - Miranda Shimek, Rylie Lux & Dylan Goldberg
Sunday, March 11 - 9:30 a.m. - Moravia - Blaine Besetzny, Caleb Krischke & Seth Eckhardt

Saturday, March 17 - 6:00 p.m. - Moravia - Caitlyn Deem, Ashley & Joshua Becan
Sunday, March 18 - 9:30 a.m. - St. John - Clayton & April Brossmann & Dylan Goldberg

ASCENSION PAVILION

Ascension Parish is in the planning stages of building a pavilion on the south side of the dance hall. The building committee members are J.G. Hrcncir, Kathy Guenther, David Halata Jr., Dale Janak, Perry Deem, Greg Kubenka, and Frank Pargac. Plans are progressing very well and the pavilion should be ready by our July picnic. This addition will greatly improve our picnic area on the south side.

GENERATIONS OF FAITH(GOF)

Our next Generations of Faith is on Wednesday, March 21, 2012. We will continue our study of “Responding in Prayer” by continuing our discussion of “Praying Through Lent.” If you wish to participate in the \$5.00 sandwich meal, please notify Mrs. Dana, 979-562-2381 or 713-822-3019, by Sunday, March 19, 2012.

Please remember to keep your eyes on Jesus during this Lenten season and continue to try to spend more time at prayer, increase your attendance at Mass, and participate in almsgiving by filling your Rice Bowl and bringing your savings each week to Mass.

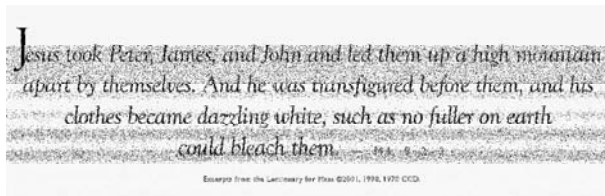
PRO LIFE NEWS

Just think, God creates human life in His own image for the same purpose for which He exists. God exists to love us - you and I and that little unborn child have been created for the same purpose: To love and to be loved. That’s why I believe that abortion is an act against God Himself because they are trying to get rid of the presence of God, of the image of God. (Mother Teresa from “Where There Is Love, There Is God”)

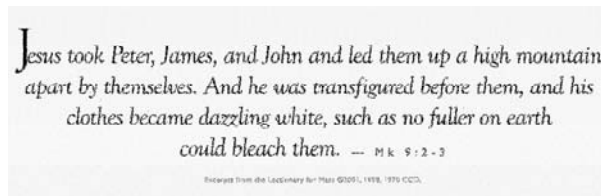
CATHOLIC MEN’S CONFERENCE – SAN ANTONIO

Today’s man faces many challenges and is in search of good for himself, his family and his future. Come to the San Antonio Catholic Men’s Conference for men of all ages on March 23-24 at St. Matthew Church on Wurzbach Road. The Conference will focus on Catholic Relationships, the Holy Spirit, the Eucharist, Spiritual Combat and Sexual Integrity for men today and will offer powerful speakers, meals, Mass with Bishop Oscar Cantu and much more! Call the Pilgrim Center of Hope (210-521-3377) for a brochure or check out the website www.CMCSanAntonio.com. Online registration is available.

Second Sunday
Of Lent



Third Sunday
Of Lent



The Word of God This Week

Set time aside each day this week with other members of your household, with other members of your parish or alone to listen to and reflect on the living Word of God. Use these passages from the Lectionary that are assigned for Liturgy this week. Reflect on how the Lord is inviting you to a deeper union with him.

TODAY

Genesis 22:1–2, 9A, 10–13
Romans 8:31B–34
Mark 9:2–10

MONDAY

Luke 6:36–38

“... the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

TUESDAY

Matthew 23:1–12

“... you have one Father—the one in heaven.”

WEDNESDAY

Matthew 20:17–28

“... the Son of Man came... to give his life a ransom for many.”

THURSDAY

Luke 16:19–31

“... no one can cross from there to us.”

FRIDAY

Matthew 21:33–43, 45–46

“... the kingdom of God will be taken away from you...”

SATURDAY

Luke 15:1–3, 11–32

“... this brother of yours was dead and has come to life.”

Knowing Who We Are

At the Transfiguration, Jesus stood in glory between Moses and Elijah, and the disciples saw him as they had never seen him before.

The key to this passage is found in the words from the heavenly cloud: “This is my Son, the Beloved.” They reveal the intimate, unbreakable bond of love that exists between Jesus and the Father.

But the next words from the cloud are every bit as important: “Listen to him!” We need to listen, because if Jesus is God’s beloved Son, then we who are baptized into Jesus are truly God’s beloved daughters and sons as well.

The mystery at the heart of the Gospel is that through Christ, we participate in the intimate union of love that exists between the Father and the Son. This is

what we must hear and believe above all else.

The minute we forget our standing as beloved daughters and sons, the Good News evaporates. When we substitute some other identity in place of our true status as God’s very own, the Gospel vanishes. When we ignore who God has made us to be and see ourselves primarily as sinners, victims, or unworthy persons, the power of the Gospel is lost to us. We do sin, and we are flawed. But despite all of our mistakes, we remain the chosen and beloved children of God.

It is only by claiming our true identity that we find the power to turn away from sin, the power to heal our hurts, and the power to claim the dignity that God has so freely given us.



The Faith of the Church

The Church firmly believes that through Baptism, Christians share in the intimacy of the Trinitarian life of God. Participating in the grace of Christ, Christians become children of God, able to call God “Father” along with the Son. The dignity of the Christian life is the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into the believer and forms the Church (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1997).



Questions of the Week

The Transfiguration of Jesus stands apart from other stories in his ministry. Jesus’ transcendent nature is displayed to the disciples as he stands between Moses and Elijah. But this revelation promises, to those who believe in him, a similar glory.

Adults

Can I remember a time when it was clear to me that I was beloved of God?

Children

How can I always remember that I am a beloved child of God?

Responding to God's Word . . .

God never forgets that we are his beloved daughters and sons. For all of our faults and failings, God continues to look at us with love. This is the truth we must hear and always remember.

When we become discouraged or find ourselves losing hope because of our faults, we should claim our status as God's own. When we are unable to be as patient or as generous as we would like, when we are inclined to be judgmental of others, we should remember that God loves us with the same love that he has for Jesus.

When things are going wrong, when we cannot find a way out, when we

begin to think that God is punishing us, we should remember that God's first thought is not about retribution. He loves us with a love that never ends.

When we become overwhelmed with grief, sickness, or an emptiness that will not let go, we must remember: God's love for us is everlasting.

We are not nameless creatures who God observes from afar. Our dreams and needs are always before his face. Jesus himself assures us, "You are God's favored daughter. You are God's beloved son." Listen to him!

SUGGESTIONS

Use one of these suggestions or one of your own to respond to God's Word this week.

In the home. Recall an incident in which you felt a beloved part of your family. Connect that feeling to God's love for you.

In the workplace or in school. Identify someone who is struggling with low self-esteem. Say a prayer that they might come to claim God's love.

In the community. Locate a group or effort that promotes the dignity of others. Support its work with your time or contribution.



Meditation Moment

There's a connection between the Transfiguration mountain event (Mount Tabor) and another mountain event (Mount Olivet). On Mount Tabor, Peter, James, and John saw Jesus in a moment of ecstasy, when his *divinity* was revealed in a privileged way. On Mount Olivet, the same three apostles saw Jesus in a moment of agony, when his *humanity* was revealed in a privileged way. The two events are complementary in that they reveal the total Jesus in a total way: true God and true man.

For reflection . . .

How do I tend to relate to Jesus in my prayer life—more as God or man?

BE THOU A BRIGHT FLAME BEFORE ME,
BE THOU A GUIDING STAR ABOVE ME,
BE THOU A SMOOTH PATH BELOW ME,
BE THOU A KINDLY SHEPHERD BEHIND ME.
TODAY—TONIGHT—AND FOREVER.

SAINT COLUMBA OF IONA (CA. A.D. 550)

FROM *MISSION* BY MARK LINK, SJ

Prayer of a Child of God

Almighty God,
it is your love which has
called me into existence and
led me to faith. I am unworthy to
possess such great gifts. When I fail
to see your goodness, when I doubt
your love, open my eyes and heart
to recognize how much I have
been given and free me to
rejoice in my status as
your beloved child.
Amen.

Carry this thought in your heart as a guide for your faith journey this week.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9

Profile in Faith

1 Peter

The First Letter of Peter was most likely written at the end of the first century by a cultivated Greek Christian. Addressing an audience that may well have felt alienated from their previous religious roots and the society around them, the author stresses the dignity of belonging to Christ.

NIHIL OBSTAT
Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Coerver, Censor Librorum
IMPRIMATUR

† Most Reverend Kevin J. Farrell, DD, Bishop of Dallas
November 21, 2011

The Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur are official declarations that the material reviewed is free of doctrinal or moral error. No implication is contained therein that those granting the Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed.

Author: George M. Smiga

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Front photo: Gene Plaisted, OSC/The Crosiers

The Scripture quotations contained herein are from the *New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition*, copyright 1989, 1993, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

© 2012 RCL Publishing LLC. All rights reserved.

The Faith Connection® is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and is published weekly by RCL Benziger.

877-275-4725

Contact us at RCLBenziger.com



Growing in FAITH™

Discovering **hope and joy** in the Catholic faith.

March 2012

Sacred Heart, St. Mary, St. John and Ascension Churches

Fr. John C. Peters, Pastor

One Minute Meditations

Forgive you

It is an unfortunate aspect of our human condition that we make mistakes, commit errors of judgment, break rules, and violate commandments. In order to get back on the right path, we need to seek God's forgiveness, but we have to forgive ourselves, too. Coming to terms with our failures is key to overcoming them.

Essence of happiness

It has been said that the essence of happiness is thankfulness or gratitude for what we have. Unhappiness often comes with yearning for what we do not or cannot have. Being content with our blessings, and thanking God regularly for his gifts, helps us on the road to happiness.

Reduce stress

One way to reduce your own stress, at least for a while, is to listen to another person's troubles. Actually, providing a sympathetic ear produces a double benefit. By listening, you take the focus off your own stress – and you help another person, too.



The new you

Lent is our chance to leave our old ways behind and adopt a new way of life. When Easter comes, what will the new you be like?

Be a more positive thinker.

This is the keystone habit that will help you form the other important habits. Squash negative thinking and trust that God will work with you to accomplish goals you set that are in harmony with his will.

Focus on what's important. First, identify what is most important to you – family, friends, faith, and so on. Then eliminate everything else. Not only will you be free to focus on what is most important, this habit will spill over into other areas of your life, such

as tasks, projects, and communication.

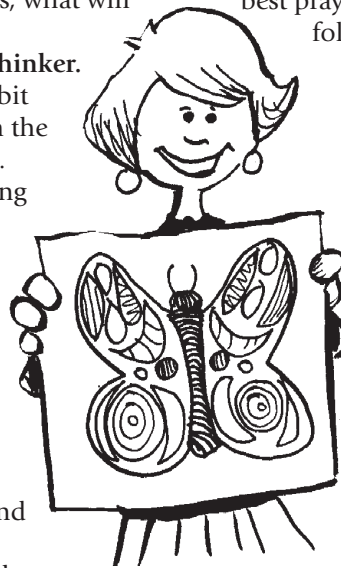
Find a powerful prayer routine.

The best prayer routines are the ones we follow every day. A firm, daily routine helps you focus on what's important, not just what comes up. Make sure to concentrate on Scripture and add time to listen, too.

Add kindness.

Kindness is genuinely caring for others, wanting the best for them, and taking action to demonstrate that caring. Each day, make a decision to add an act of kindness to your day. Let someone go ahead of you in line, give

a sincere compliment to a stranger, praise a coworker's effort, greet a passerby.



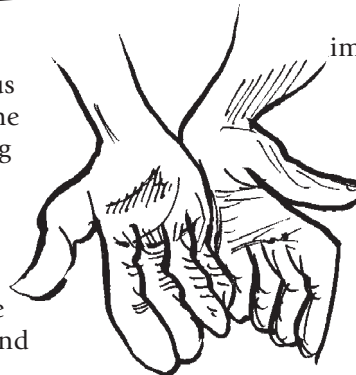
Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do we practice almsgiving?

Christ said that the poor would be with us always and stressed the importance of helping those who are less fortunate than ourselves. He said that when we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and

imprisoned, we do it for him.

Our bishops have said that we need to care for the poor. For example, to fulfill Christ's words, the Church recommends that we donate 5% of our income to the Church and 5% to charity. That's almsgiving.



Three ways to make a difference

One in five people in the United States is Catholic. Imagine if we all worked together to make a difference. We can start by thinking differently.

Walk in someone else's shoes. Ask a friend whose culture or tradition is different from your own to teach you about it. Try cooking native dishes or learning some of the language. When you explore cultures different from your own, you become more sensitive to others' perspectives. That helps you to be truly catholic (universal).

Build up the Church. The Church is under attack



and needs all of her members to come together in prayer and communion. Attending Mass more often is how we can strengthen our Church and grow in holiness as people and as a Church.

Become an instrument of healing. People are hurting all around us and we can learn to notice others' pain and to do something about it, just as Jesus asked. By modeling the healing qualities of Jesus – gentleness, forgiveness, sensitivity – we can learn to become healers, too.

from Scripture

John 12:20-33, Obedience yields new life

Jesus tried to warn his disciples about his death and prepare them for it. A grain of wheat dies in order to produce new life, and Jesus had to die to pay for our sins and bring us new life. With his resurrection, he proved he has eternal life and can offer it to us.

Then he said that we must "hate" our lives and be willing to lose them so we can live. He meant that we have to be ready to lay aside our attachment to goods, worldly security, and pleasure to serve God freely. Serving God



brings eternal life.

Jesus knew that his crucifixion lay ahead and being human, he dreaded it. He also knew that God sent him into the world to die for our sins in our place. So, Jesus said "no" to his human desires in order to obey his Father.

Although we will never have to face such a difficult task, we are still called to obedience. Whatever the father asks we should be willing to do and bring glory to his name.

Q & A

What are the three pillars of Christianity?

The three pillars, or foundations, of Christianity are: prayer, penance, and almsgiving. **Prayer comes first.** That is how we communicate with God. It is difficult to have a relationship with anyone without strong communication. In the family, if we are silent with each other or speak only when absolutely necessary, and then in one syllable words, we drift apart. The same is true in our relationship with God. To develop closeness with him requires speaking with him.

Next is penance. Sin damages or destroys our relationship with God. Sin means turning our backs on God. Penance repairs that relationship. It expresses our sorrow at what we've done to him. When we go to confession because of repentance, God forgives us our sins and returns us to a state of grace.

As for almsgiving, Christ did say the poor would be with us always. But he stressed the importance of helping those less fortunate. He said that when we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and imprisoned, we do it for him. Fulfilling Christ's words means being generous with what we have.

Feasts & Celebrations

March 17 – St. Patrick (493). Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited for having established the Church there.

March 19 – St. Joseph (1st century). Jesus' earthly father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and a protector of families.

March 23 – St. Turibius de Mogrovejo (1606). A brilliant scholar, he was serving as professor of law at

the University of Salamanca when he was chosen to lead the archdiocese of Lima in Peru. He was ordained priest and bishop and worked with intense fervor to strengthen his diocese.

March 25 – The Annunciation. The angel Gabriel visited the Blessed Virgin Mary with the extraordinary news of her role as the mother of God. Even at her young age, she had complete confidence in God's grace and trusted in his wisdom.



Our Mission

To provide practical ideas that promote faithful Catholic living.
 Success Publishing & Media, LLC
 Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™
 (540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax
<http://www.growinginfaith.com>
 (Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible)