

### This Year's Lenten Reflection-Question: “AM I A GOOD CATHOLIC?”

If you're reading this, you probably ARE a 'good Catholic' striving to become a BETTER Christian! But recently, many wonder if they're still a 'good Catholic' because of their political positions, faith convictions, or other factors. Recall what Jesus said: *“Behold, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves.”* [Matthew 10:16] This means we must wisely consider every issue using an adage accredited to Saint Augustine, though others claim to have said it first; the great Saint said: *“In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity.”*

The following current 'hot-topic' issues are neither exhaustive nor in any particular order; they are, in my experience, the matters about which many seek the Catholic Church's 'official stance.' This Lent, may we all listen more charitably to others; allow more leeway in what's non-essential, and accept the essentials of our Catholic Faith, its dogmas and doctrines, its creeds and ordinances.

### Immigration & Care for the Needy

While we can differ on HOW to deal with refugees and the poor, THAT we do something to help those in danger or need is non-negotiable. As we balance safety and security, upholding the ethical right to have secure borders, we must also share with and care for the needy. I suggest donating to Operation Rice Bowl, the children's Lenten Mite boxes, or other charities to show our Christian concern as we debate how best to help the less fortunate.

### Pro-Life Issues: Abortion & Death Penalty

Since Jesus' tunic was seamless or woven in one piece, His executioners did not divide it, as was the custom; instead they drew lots for it [C.f. John 19:23-24.] Some say His 'seamless garment' shows that all life is sacred ... which is true ... and that only God can give and take or control life and death. However, Catholic

teaching, citing society's right to defend itself and the vulnerable, only forbids taking totally innocent life. While 'good Catholics' cannot support abortion, which kills the most defenseless, or the intentional targeting non-combatants, euthanasia, etc., 'good Catholics' can support a just war, the death penalty, and other admittedly less than ideal means to protect and defend imperiled human life.

### God's Plan for Marriage & for the Needy

The Catholic Church is increasingly the only true 'Bible' Church, confessing only the biblical basis for Matrimony, divorce, human sexuality, life, etc. Contrary to what many say about us, we are not discriminatory or 'anti'-anything; we uphold and strive to live by God's revealed Truth. Catholicism also vehemently opposes any mockery, harm or hate directed toward anyone for any reason. In her pastoral outreach she strives to assist all who strive to live by God's ideal, regardless of their sexual orientation or situation. All 'good Catholics' must do the same!

### 'Separation of Church and State' Issues

The Catholic Church does not want to 'rule the world' politically and certainly not militarily - though she once meddled in these spheres. She does want the right to express her views and convictions - and share her thousands of years' worth of the Judeo-Christian experience. All 'good Catholics' must prayerfully consider her divinely inspired teachings to form an 'informed conscience' - so as to avoid our often selfish, self-centered, biased viewpoint ... the sad fallout of the Original Sin.

'Good Catholics' must allow Holy Mother Church to enlighten them and enhance what they often only hear through secular, and often anti-Christian sources, with divine revelation: Gospel values, biblical truths, Church teachings, etc. What will you do this Lent to become a better Catholic Christian?

**Rev. Mark A. Kreder--Pastor**

**+ Mardi Gras Tuesday February 28 +**

"Mardi Gras" is a French term meaning 'Fat Tuesday'. Please join us for Fat Tuesday fun from 6:00 -8:00 pm in the parish hall. There will be entertainment and snacks in the hall. At 7:15 we will go to the church for Night Prayer and then strip our church to bare essentials for our Lenten observance. Explanations will be given as to why we remove certain things from the church during the Lenten season. We end the evening by going outside to burn last year's palms for this year's ashes. Contact the Religious Education Office for details.



### Ash Wednesday March 1

Fasting from all signs and sounds of festivity, we strip away all that keeps us from focusing on God. Blessed ashes mark the start of our Lenten

journey of self-denial, penance and prayer, for we must 'spring clean' our homes and our souls! Ashes are a sign of repentance and mortality so those of any age may receive ashes. In Ash Wednesday's First Reading the Prophet Joel includes "infants at the breast" in the fasting and communal penance imposed on the people.

Ashes are distributed during Mass at:

**7:00 am – 8:30 am**  
**12:00 noon--7:00 pm**

and during a  
Liturgy of the Word  
[no Holy Communion]  
at 4:30 pm.

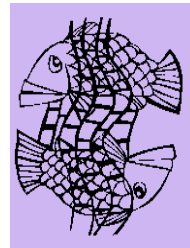
**Wear your ashes proudly!**

### Easter Precept or Easter Duty

All Catholics are obligated to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent, March 5, and Trinity Sunday, June 11. Those conscious of serious, grave or mortal sin must celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation first; they must go to Confession before receiving Holy Communion.

### Fast & Abstinence Guidelines

Those 14 and older are to **ABSTAIN** from meat on **Ash Wednesday** and all **Lenten Fridays**. Those between 18 and 59 should **FAST** by eating only one main meal and two smaller ones on **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**. Those unable to abstain or fast for a valid reason [*i.e., St. Patrick's Day party or wedding*] may abstain on another day or perform a different penance; Canon law only permits **PASTORS** to dispense from fasting or abstaining. Ignoring penitential days, without good cause, is a serious sin of omission. Our Bishops ask us to abstain from meat on Friday all year long for **Pro-Life causes** and **world peace**.



### Sunday Mass Obligation

**Saturday at 5:00 pm**

**Sunday at 7:30 - 9:00 - 10:30 am**

**12:00 noon**

**Weekdays Monday-Friday at 8:30 am**

**Saturdays at 9:30 am**

### Food Collection - Operation Rice Bowl

To help feed the hungry locally and abroad: make a donation to our special '**Fruit of our Fast**' collections on **Ash Wednesday** and **Passion [Palm] Sunday, April 9**, or donate money and/or nonperishable food to help those less fortunate. All are also encouraged to take part in **ORB: Operation Rice Bowl**; please return ORB donations on or before **Holy Thursday, April 13**, to the special **ORB** box in the narthex.

## Stations of the Cross Friday Evenings

The church is open weekdays (Mondays—Thursdays) from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm and on Fridays from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon- for private praying of the venerable *Stations of the Cross*. This is also a time you can spend in private prayer during the Lenten season. Public Stations of the Cross are prayed on the following Friday evenings at 6:30 pm. They will be led by:

**3/03:** Altar Rosary Society

**3/10:** Religious Education Students

**3/17:** Parish Deacons

**3/24:** Holy Innocents—St Justin Center of Learning

**3/31:** Men's Faith Group

**4/07:** No Stations—Lenten Penance Service

On **Good Friday** at 7:30 pm our St Justin Youth Group will conduct the beautiful Living Stations of the Cross. We reflect on how, we, the Body of the Christ, the Church, must die and rise to new life each day! Join us for this very moving, uplifting spiritual exercise!

## The Sacrament of Reconciliation Penance or Confession

Become a *better Catholic Christian* by confessing your sins in the Sacrament of *Penance* or *Reconciliation* - aka '*Confession*.' While only all *mortal* sins *must* be confessed, this Rite's sacramental grace also purges us of our lesser or venial sins. It serves as a 'check-up,' helps nip sinful habits in the bud before they bloom into full-blown sins, and strengthens us against temptation and other distractions.

Those guilty of mortal sin may **NOT** receive Holy Communion until they confess them to a Priest. Confession is also encouraged in *Lent* and *Advent*, before a Baptism, First Communion or Wedding, or serving as a Sponsor or Godparent. The 4 parts are:

**CONTRITION.** To be contrite or remorseful we must know our sins, so we examine our conscience by shining God's divine Light, found in Gospel values, the Ten Commandments, Precepts of the Church, Beatitudes and Seven Deadly Sins, into *every* aspect

of our life. *If you can't come up with any sins, ask your family or friends to help ... they know your sins!*

**CONFESSION.** Priests not only speak for God and the Church; as '*doctor of the soul*' they help cure sick souls, as medical doctors help heal bodies - but only if we are totally open and honest. Begin with "*Bless me, Father, for I have sinned*" or simply say, "*Please help me*" from behind a screen or face-to-face. We may remain anonymous, but should tell our state in life [*married, single, ordained, a parent, etc.*], and approximate date of our last confession. List all grave, serious mortal sins *by number and kind*: abortion, adultery, etc.; a *general admission* [*I'm impatient, rude, insensitive, etc.*] covers all lesser sins. An *Act of Contrition* card is available in the confessional; at Penance Services we recite it from a printed program; don't let not knowing an Act of Contrition keep you from this Sacrament of Healing!

**ABSOLUTION.** Listen as the Priest prays; make the Sign of the Cross on yourself as he imparts it on you at the end of the beautiful *Prayer of Absolution*.

**PENANCE.** To express our gratitude and offer a *token* of our willingness to try to avoid future sins, we perform a *penance*: a prayer, good deed or other sign. To celebrate Reconciliation come to the:

## Parish Penance Service

**FRIDAY - APRIL 7 - 7:00 pm**

Several priests will hear private confessions after the communal Examination of Conscience & Act of Contrition at this annual Penance Service.

**Or Saturday afternoons at 3:30 pm.**

*All **MUST ARRIVE** at 3:30 pm as Confessions **MUST END** by 4:45 pm due to the 5 pm Mass!*

***Note: On Passion [Palm] Sunday eve, confessions will be at 3:30 pm and must end by 4:30 pm..***

**Or call ANY Parish Office to make an appointment with a Priest.**

***NO Confessions will be heard during the Sacred Easter Triduum -***

***so plan to come to Confession early!*** 0514.pg. 3

## ***Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion***

### ***April 9***

In Procession, with blessed palms, we honor Christ as our King and reflect on His Passion and Death. Masses are:

**Saturday: 5:00 pm**

**Sunday:**

**7:30 - 9:00 - 10:30 am - 12:00 noon**

*All children are invited to our special Children's Liturgy of the Word at ALL Masses this weekend; before Mass all children are invited to process around the Church; after the Procession they go to see a ½ hour age-appropriate video on Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection and return later than usual, during the Lord's Prayer.*

### ***Monday of Holy Week - April 10***

regular daily Mass at 8:30 am

Chrism Mass - 7:30 pm

***Saint Robert Bellarmine Co-Cathedral,  
Freehold***

Priests renew their Ordination promises and our Bishop blesses and consecrates the Holy Oils: the Oil of Catechumens used at Baptism, the Oil of the Sick used in the Anointing of the Sick, and the Sacred Chrism, used at Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders, and the blessing of new churches & altars. All are invited to our Cathedral for this ancient, moving ceremony. Pray for our Priests!

### ***Tuesday of Holy Week - April 11***

### ***Wednesday of Holy Week - April 12***

regular daily Mass at 8:30 am

### ***Holy Thursday Morning - April 13***

Morning Prayer at 9:00 am

***[no morning Mass or any other Mass permitted]***

## ***The Sacred Triduum & Paschal Fast***

*Lent ends as we begin Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper; we then enter the shortest but most central liturgical time: the three-day Easter Triduum. To more fully join in Christ's Death and Resurrection, all are strongly encouraged to join in all Triduum events and the Paschal Fast, which is even more intense than the Lenten fast: all should fast from Good Friday until the Easter Vigil "*as a way of coming to the joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection with uplifted and welcoming hearts.*" [From the Ceremonial of Bishops # 295.]*

### ***Holy Thursday - April 13***

We solemnly celebrate Jesus' parting gifts of love: His abiding Presence in the Eucharist; His care and concern for us in the Ordained Priesthood; and Christian Service, our call to continue His work. For as Jesus said after washing the Apostles' feet: "*If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.*" [John 13:14-15] In the *Mass of the Lord's Supper* we serve by: washing feet, giving alms through Operation Rice Bowl, and 'watching one hour' with the Lord in Eucharistic Adoration until Night Prayer.

### ***Holy Thursday Services***

**Morning Prayer** 9:00 am

**Mass of the Lord's Supper** 7:00 pm

**Night Prayer** 10:30 pm

### ***Good Friday - April 14***

We meditate on Christ's Passion and Death with ancient rituals and in profound silence. The church is open all day for private prayer and for public services: Morning Prayer, *Main Celebration of the Passion of the Lord* and Living Stations of the Cross. All should visit the church this day to thank God for His redeeming love!



## Good Friday Services

*Morning Prayer* 9:00 am

*The Passion of the Lord* 3:00 pm

*Stations of the Cross* 7:30 pm

## Holy Saturday - April 15

Ancient tradition prohibits Mass this day; we keep watch at the tomb in solemn prayer. Pray for those who will be baptized and welcomed into our Church during this day of prayerful reflection.

## Holy Saturday Services

Morning Prayer  
with RCIA Rites 9:00 am

Easter Food Blessing follows MP

Easter Vigil Mass 7:30 pm

## The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

April 15 - 7:30 pm

Church law strictly requires that the ONLY Masses permissible on Holy Saturday begin AFTER nightfall, in darkness, so there can be no 5:00 pm Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday. The Easter Vigil Service, the climax of the liturgical year, which begins at 7:30 pm, is a four-part ritual with roots in antiquity. The four parts are:

**SERVICE OF LIGHT.** The Paschal Candle, symbol of the Risen Christ, lit from the blessed fire, is brought into the darkened church. As all light their candle from the Christ-Light, the darkness of the tomb erupts into the warm glow of the Risen Lord's presence!

**LITURGY OF THE WORD.** We tell our scriptural story of God's marvelous, saving deeds throughout history.

**LITURGY OF BAPTISM & CONFIRMATION.** With blessed Easter Water we renew our Baptismal Promises and welcome our newest members through the Sacraments of Initiation, making God's saving deeds and the Risen Lord *truly alive* in us, His Church!

**LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST.** In the highpoint of the Great Three Days [and the entire year] we share Eucharist with our newest members for the first time. We pledge ourselves anew to become Eucharist: to become Christ's loving presence in our world.

**NOTE:** There is NO 5:00 pm Vigil Mass on Holy Saturday; the ONLY MASS is at 7:30 pm.

## Easter Sunday - April 16

### Easter Masses

Saturday Easter Vigil: 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday:

7:30 am - 9:00 am – 10:30 am –  
12:00 noon

## Whom Shall I Send

Sunday – April 30 - 4:00 pm

'*Whom Shall I Send?*' is a vibrant musical drama, similar to the '*No Greater Love*' presentation done at SJM last year. '*Whom Shall I Send?*' appropriately comes to SJM on April 30<sup>th</sup> on the Third Sunday of Easter when we read the Gospel when the two disciples met Jesus on the road to Emmaus. '*Whom Shall I Send?*' highlights how God's call has been heard, answered and lived out in key biblical persons. *The Xavier Company* or *TXC*, who performs in churches throughout the tristate area, will be at SJM **on Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm.** To learn more about *TXC* go to [www.thexaviercompany.org](http://www.thexaviercompany.org). Don't miss this captivating performance of '*Whom Shall I Send?*' that brings to life God's call to ministry and His promises to all who heed and strive to fulfill His call. There is **NO admission fee**, but there will be a freewill offering after the performance, followed by refreshments in the Parish Hall.

## Get FORMED for Lent!

This Lent, take advantage of the dynamic new online platform called FORMED. As a gift from your parish, every parishioner can have 24/7 access to the best Catholic content on any device with internet access, including your computer, smartphone and tablet - at no cost to you! If you have not yet done so, register at FORMED.org and enter our parish code: 342G7F. You will set up your profile and be able to access the material at any time.

There are many wonderful programs for Lent, with just a few of the many offerings highlighted below:

**Prayer: Finding Intimacy with God:** Enrich your prayer life using the *Lectio Divina* method by learning how to open your heart to Scripture as the means to hear from God and then respond.

**Symbolon:** The episodes that have a Lenten theme: The Story of Salvation, Who is Jesus?, The Paschal Mystery, Sacrament of Penance.

**Opening the Word:** Reflections on Sunday readings.

**Catholicism, Footprints of God:** both are wonderful programs on our great Catholic Faith.

In addition, there are many wonderful audio talks, movies and online books that are perfect for Lent. There are even programs for teens and talks for kids! Be sure to navigate around the website to see the many resources available and take advantage of this wonderful resource that our parish is offering to all members and their families! Please contact Carol Lewandowski with any feedback or questions on FORMED.

## Keep in Mind 2017 Bishop's Annual Appeal: 'One Body in Christ'

**Give alms** by pledging to the Catholic Annual Appeal or **CAA**. Our Bishop, the Most Reverend David O'Connell, moved the **CAA** to Lent and entitled it '**One Body in Christ.**' As the "Body of Christ" we are called to do our part in **BEING** the Church God calls us to be and by **SUPPORTING** every Church ministry and outreach. Our Parish goal is \$85,000. Fill out a pledge card this weekend - or any time thereafter.

Website: [www.stjustin.org](http://www.stjustin.org)

## The RCIA:

### The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Rites of Sending & Election

Two Catechumens will be Baptized, Confirmed and receive First Eucharist at the Easter Vigil:

**Leon Bennett,**  
**sponsored by Eileen MacNab**  
**Cheryl Stephens,**  
**sponsored by Louis Cilento.**

Leon and Cheryl and all Catechumens and their Sponsors in the Diocese of Trenton meet our Bishop at Saint Mary of the Assumption Cathedral in the inspiring [Rite of Election](#) on Sunday, March 5.

**Brianna DeAngelis,**

**sponsored by Zachary Ryan**

Brianna is a candidate since she has already been baptized and will complete her initiation into the Catholic Church this Easter. We rejoice in our members taking part in these ancient, sacred rites. Pray for our Catechumens [soon to be called the Elect], our Candidate and all those completing their initiation into the Catholic Church this Eastertime.

Anyone interested in becoming a Catholic or receiving the Sacraments of Eucharist and/or Confirmation, please contact the Parish Office. Your name will be forwarded to Debbie Gries, our Director of the RCIA Program. She and our RCIA team will meet with you to explain the program and to guide you on your faith journey. Parish Office is 732-270-3980.

## Is God Remembered in Your Will?

While concern for our own needs and others may keep us from tithing a full 10% now, most should be able to reach this goal in their will. Is God and your Parish remembered ... in your will?

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WEDNESDAY EVENING MASSES DURING LENT

During Lent there will be a 6:30 pm Mass on March 8, 15, 22, and 29. If you are not able to come to Mass in the morning, please come on these Wednesdays during the Lenten season.