



# The Messenger

February, 2020

## Morsels of Faith from Mr. Kuhar



At the end of the month, we will begin the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday. It will be here before we know it so it is a good idea to begin thinking about and asking the Lord how He is calling you to enter into this season of prayer, fasting, and giving alms. The purpose of Lent is to call us back to the Lord in a more focused way. When we combine prayer, fasting, and giving alms; it helps us to open our hearts, make room for God, and be more generous. All of these things provide an opportunity to step outside of ourselves and grow in our love of God and neighbor.

We may dread the season of Lent or think it is so difficult and long and thus basically begin the countdown to when Easter will be here as I did when I was a child. It seemed like it was such a long time and it was difficult to give something up for that long and I did not always like going to church for the Stations of the Cross weekly as a family. I saw Lent as a negative time or season when I was a child. I did not see the good of the season but just the challenges and difficulties. As I have grown and matured in both age and faith, I have come to appreciate the season of Lent and the more focused

approach to prayer, fasting, and giving alms. I now know and see it as a time of growth and change. It is a challenging but good season as it helps me to grow in my walk with the Lord and my kindness and love toward others. I hope this season of Lent for you and your families is one of great growth and grace. I pray you will come to know God's goodness and love for you more and more with each day.

Included in this month's envelope is a wonderful resource with some suggestions and explanations for Lent. One of the things I really like is the Lenten Calendar that has a suggestion for each day. This might be a great thing to do as a family each day. You might be able to take a look at each night for the next day and each person decide how they are going to live out the suggestions or what they might do in order to grow using that suggestion and then you can also discuss how the current day went for each person.

I also want to encourage you to consider taking advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation at some point during Lent. Fr. Tony hears confessions on Saturdays and there are other opportunities in the area at local churches. We also pray the Stations of The Cross on Friday evenings so I hope you might be able to come and pray with us at least once, but, maybe even each week as we meditate on Jesus' love shown through His suffering and death.

Please pray for me and my family that we will continue to know God's love and share it with others and know of my prayers for you and your families.



Another wonderful way to celebrate Lent is to place images in our homes that help raise our hearts and minds to Jesus. Here are some symbols that will inspire and place your thoughts on what is holy:

A bible to remind us of the desire of God's Word in our lives.

A crucifix to remind us of the powerful sign of God's love.

A bowl of water to remind us of our journey to the font; our commitment to new life in Christ.

A bowl of sand to remind us of the journey in the desert; a place of retreat to face our temptations.

A candle to remind us of the light of Christ in the midst of a darkened world.

## Cindy's Corner



Reconciliation - what does that word conjure up in your mind? I think of breaking down barriers allowing goodness to break through once again. The amazing thing (grace) about the Sacrament of Reconciliation is that not only does it heal our relationship with God (!!!) so His love can be full ON in our lives but our now “clean heart” frees us to approach others in our lives with goodness and love. The sacrament transforms us over and over again.

This barrier I envision is a brick wall, those bricks, my sins. This wall I have created blocks me from my Father who loves me just the same with each brick I pile on. Recently I experienced a health scare that caused me to line up my priorities, stat. Right front and center was my relationship with God. He was right there with me but I felt I had to remove any bricks that were tripping me up on my way to Him. I have had a strong desire to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before but never quite this strong. I felt this in my heart and in the most loving way because I it was reciprocal. God desired it as well. He always has and always will. So off I went to Saints Cyril and Methodius Church because they have the resources to offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation Monday through Saturday, good to know. The blessing of God's love and mercy strengthened me.

Afterwards, I then went about my Catholic way pursuing the gifts of our faith I have come to know

through the years. I ran to them, I had no bricks to trip me up. Through living out my faith in the various Catholic ways that we do, I can know God has helped prepare me for this.

My husband and I visited the Blessed Solanus Casey Center a couple times to attend a healing service that is offered twice a week. It was a blessing to bring our intentions and the intentions of our loved ones with us. It was also a true gift to pray with all those gathered at the healing service, many of us experiencing a similar situation, all of us held up in prayer. We will go there again soon as a piece of my heart now resides there.

I also relied on praying the rosary and when I couldn't hold my beads, I had my fingers to keep track. The prayers eased my anxiety and the meditations directed my reeling mind. I reached out to a circle of friends and family who held me close in prayer, or came to appointments or sent me a card. God placed them in my life and they gave me strength when I was weak. I arranged a Litany of hand-picked Saints and knew a few friends who would sing it with me to the familiar John Becker tune, all five verses (!), relating to our lives. Our small group usually gathers each week around the tabernacle after Faith Formation class, our time with your children fresh on our minds and your families often in our prayers. Thankfully I was anointed by Fr. Tony, right there in the church where I was Confirmed, where the Funeral Masses of many loved ones were celebrated, where I was married, my children baptized and where I witnessed many of your children receiving Jesus for the first time, where another piece of my heart resides, our parish home.

There are many other faith moments I could share that occurred over these last couple months but you know what I am getting at. I know you have beautiful stories to share as well, reminders that we are never alone. The magnificent gift of our faith and the constant love of our Father is miraculous, a glimpse of heaven on earth. A life emergency is going to hit us at one time or another, actually several times, sometimes simultaneously, in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes we might feel that just going through the ropes is all we can do, but hang on, those are the same ropes that will pull us out of the depths of despair, or anger or uncertainty, often in ways we could not imagine. God's love and mercy is like that. Sometimes it is someone else's rope we will grab to pull us out of the deep. God placed them there. Oftentimes it will be hard, not going as we hoped; do not give up, hang on tighter knowing it is okay to feel what you are feeling. God knows and loves you always.

I still have one more surgery to go at the end of February, so if you see me missing for a couple weeks or with my arm slung up once again, that is why. Sometimes I find myself wishing this was all over; I'm impatient, tired and frustrated and just want to be back to normal. It has hit me that physically I may never be quite the same again, nor spiritually either, these are certainties as I grow older. So I'll continue to keep knocking down the bricks and throwing out those ropes our faith has armed us with as I journey home to our Father. It is a beautiful journey; He is with us every step of the way, reassuring us with glimpses of heaven.

