

Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) Newsletter

Issue: February 2018 at St. Mary Magdalen Church

From the Director:

This month, Lent begins! Lent moves every year because Easter moves. In the Bible, Jesus' death and resurrection occur around the time of the Jewish Passover, which is celebrated on the first full moon after the spring equinox. That led early on to some confusion about the date, with different groups celebrating it on the day of Passover and others waiting for Sunday. Even though many councils have established the date as the first Sunday following the first full moon after the March equinox, there are still some Christian churches that follow a different calendar!

You just need to know that this year, Lent begins on Valentine's Day! Unless the Bishop gives a special dispensation (not likely in this case) it means you and your sweetheart will have to enjoy a seafood dinner as your main meal of the day, with just two smaller meatless meals and no snacking! The only days that are strict fast and abstinence (fast meaning no eating between meals, abstinence meaning no meat) are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence, meaning no meat. This used to be the rule for Fridays all year, but when people started missing the point (abstaining from meat is a sacrifice, and you enjoy a lobster dinner) they changed Fridays outside of Lent so that you could choose a different way to sacrifice that day.

Whatever you choose to do, Lent is a time to choose to turn and go in a different direction. Studies show that if you repeat a behavior for about 2 months, it becomes a habit. Since Lent is only 40 days, maybe we're being called to continue to walk with Jesus a little longer!

**NO CLASSES THIS
WEEKEND SUNDAY
JANUARY 28TH –
OPEN HOUSE FOR
SMM SCHOOL**

After our brunch this past weekend, we honored Eileen Montgomery, our preschool teacher, for 35 years teaching the children of the parish! The brunch is a time when we celebrate our catechists not only for years of service but also for their achievements in terms of certification.

After the brunch, our two 8th grade catechists, Madeline Rice and Georgia Dudley, told me that they will not be returning next year. Both have Advanced certification, and have been teaching for many years (it just wasn't a major anniversary) and both are too humble to have wanted me to make a fuss at the brunch. These women of faith will be greatly missed in our program, but will still be active in the parish – so as much as I will miss them and am sorry to see them go, I know that it is time for them to share their talents in different ways! Madeline and her sister Monica run our Ladies' Nights, and Georgia sings in the choir and is on the Diocesan Board as our representative. I know that you join me in thanking them for their many years as catechists, and wish them only good going forward!

So if anyone is interested in becoming a catechist...

5th grade Mass Re-enactment

On Sunday, February 11th, the 5th grade class will re-enact the Mass during their class time. The re-enactment will take place in the library, and their parents are welcome to attend this special program!

February Family Day

Our February Family Day will take place in the GYM on Sunday, February 18th, for all those signed up by February 11th. Besides learning more about Lent and the sacrament of Reconciliation, we will end the morning with an ash prayer service using ashes blessed on Ash Wednesday. If you have not signed up and wish to attend, please go to the signup genius at

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0c49aea82aa0f-f2-february>



Mardi Gras – literally “Fat Tuesday” in French – first became a holiday in 1582 when Pope Gregory XIII put it on his calendar the day before Ash Wednesday. The colors represent different things; gold is power, purple is justice, and green is faith. It was a day to use up all of the things that were traditionally given up in Lent that would go bad otherwise– things like butter! People from the south often buy a “King Cake” to eat on Mardi Gras; using the three colors of Mardi Gras, they celebrate the Three Kings and whoever gets a piece of cake with a plastic baby Jesus in it is meant to throw the next party! Today, Mardi Gras is a big party celebration that takes place in many cities around the world. While we traditionally think of Mardi Gras as being in New Orleans, one of the biggest party celebrations in the U.S. takes place in Galveston Texas! Many people eat donuts or pancakes this day also, since they are best when they are buttery and rich!

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

February 3rd – the 5PM youth mass and social
this is a family social opportunity for Confirmation students
Today is also the Feast of St. Blaise

February 4th – GO EAGLES! We’ll have a prayer in all the classes PRE-K THROUGH 8TH this weekend!

February 11th – regular classes grades K-8 and final training for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at 2PM in the church hall.

February 14th – ASH WEDNESDAY – day of fast for all Catholics age 14 and up and abstinence from meat for all Catholics age 18 to 59.

February 18th – regular classes grades Pre-K and K; FAMILY DAY on Lent and Reconciliation for those signed up from grades 1-8.

February 19th – parish offices closed for President’s day

February 21st – First Communion Gathering for parents at both 9:30AM and repeated at 7PM in the church hall – workbooks and banner materials will be available at this time

February 24th – First Communion Retreat in the CHURCH HALL from 8:30-11:30AM

February 25th - regular classes grades K-8

March 3rd – this is the Saturday for 3v3, a parish sports event for CYM. Student athletes are invited to attend the 5PM mass in their sports uniforms for a special blessing. There is no family social this evening because of the 3v3

March 4th – regular classes Pre-K through 8th
PARISH MISSION BEGINS TODAY
WATCH FOR NEWS ON A SPECIAL SPEAKER FOR THIS YEAR’S MISSION!