

Bulletin Letter 2-21-21 First Sunday in Lent

From the Pastor:

The Church fittingly begins the season of Lent with the story of Jesus being tempted by the devil. While the drama unfolds as if taking place at one time in the desert, it most probably summarizes the temptations Jesus faced throughout his ministry. The desert is symbolically a place of purification. Israel spent 40 years in the desert and in the end failed to keep the covenant commitments. Jesus was in the desert 40 days, tempted by the devil, but he was victorious in demonstrating that only God is worthy of our worship.

If Satan can tempt Jesus, he most certainly can and does tempt us. How we respond to Satan impacts everything we do: how we spend our time, money, and what company we keep—what we believe in, what we value, and how we treat and forgive others. It can be easy to let the devil win and harder to hold on to our primary identity as children of God, made in God's image and likeness. Let us use these desert days ahead to ask for God's help on our journey. If we fall to temptation, may we have the humility to ask God's forgiveness. God's love for us is never-ending and all-powerful. Don't let the devil let you think differently.

The liturgy committees of each parish gathered together last Monday to discuss **Holy Week** which will be celebrated at Immaculate Conception. Each parish follows the ritual, each parish has its special and unique traditions and customs, and it is a challenge to respect all of these "touches" and incorporate them into the liturgy of Holy Week. We are all called to be flexible and adaptive to whatever God is calling us to, especially at this time. All in all, I think we all respected each other's special ways, and I am certain we will have a powerful and prayerful week.

If you have not done so already, please take a Catholic Relief Service **Rice Bowl** to put on your table, counter, or your desk. This is a wonderful way to use your spare change or an extra dollar, more if you have it, to help the hungry in the world. It is a great Lenten practice and I hope you will consider being a part of it this year again, or, for the first time.

Here is a reminder of some **Lenten additions** to our usual schedule: Mass will be celebrated at IC at 6 pm on Tuesday evenings; no reservations necessary. Stations of the Cross are prayed at IC in the church at 7 pm every Friday, except for March 26, when Mary's Way of the Cross will be prayed at St. Joseph's at 7 pm. On Good Friday, Stations are prayed at Our Lady of Grace at noon and at IC at 3 pm.

Sister Death has called home **+Joanne Griffin**. She was a longtime IC parishioner and someone who was always ready to help out at the parish. Please join me in keeping her husband, Peter, and her family in your prayers.

Until next week, be well, do good deeds, and say your prayers.

Fr. Jerry

OUR PRAYER: Loving God, be present to us and grant us wisdom, so that we, who may feel anxious about change, might trust in Your love and rest in the Changelessness that is You.