



A Lenten Commentary from the desk of Fr. Tusky, Parochial Vicar

The Christmas Season is barely behind us. How wonderful it was to celebrate, again, his great love in the Incarnation, God-made-man, Emmanuel, "God with us!" But, Christmas was just the 'down-payment,' so to speak. The 'balance' of his love will be 'paid-in-full' on Good Friday.

Between these two mind-boggling events, we will walk our annual, Lenten journey. We will do this as a parish family, for we all are a member of his Mystical Body. No one can walk-the-walk for us. We, each of us, will walk the desert, sometimes holding hands with heads held high. At other times, walking alone, with heads not held so high, we will feel solitude, even loneliness. Sin creeps into every life ...the sin of pride, the sin of greed, the sin of laziness, the sin of lust, the sin of selfishness, the sin of self-righteousness. The list goes on. Regardless, sin wedges itself between us and our God. Consequently, it separates us from

one another, the family. It can be insidious and gradual. It can be sudden and earth-shattering. Sometimes we can see it coming at us like a freight train and we refuse to move. Other times, it sneaks into our lives like a snake in the grass. Either way, there is a point when we say, "Yes" to self and "No" to what we realize God would want us to do. That's sin!

I will experience the Lenten journey with you this year. Last year, I walked the journey very much alone. It was on a broken road, much of it without a parish of my own. I look forward to this walk because, this year, you will be with me. Though it will involve a goodly amount of fasting and sacrifice for each of us, it promises to be pensive, to be prayerful, and to be a 'gradual unfolding' --as the Assumption Family and the People of God we are. Acts of penance & acts of charity will be targets of self-denial & self-donation.

Christmas 'came & went' too quickly. Our Lord's journey to Jerusalem and Golgotha Hill took Him three years. In the coming weeks of Lent, we will walk in his footsteps. (Ash Wednesday is February 25th.) We will share in his Way of the Cross, the Stations, and, hopefully, in daily mass. If the mass schedule does not fit your work schedule, at least plan to attend evening mass each Wednesday at 6:30 pm. There will be a parish Mission/Retreat the 3rd week of Lent. For our convenience, there will be two Sessions a day, 11 am & 7 pm. I will be writing weekly articles in the bulletin.

With above suggestions and personal choices, we will grow 'closer' to him, together.

With Fr. Dennis as our pastor and, as a family, we will walk to Golgotha Hill and beyond!



STIGMATA

By: Kathy Moran

During Lent we often think and meditate on the holy wounds Jesus received on the cross. Many saints bore the marks of Jesus and they are referred to as stigmata. The definition of Stigmata is the bodily marks, sores or sensations of pain in locations corresponding to the crucifixion wounds of Jesus. The term comes from St. Paul's letter to the Galatians where he says, "I bear the marks of Jesus."

Reported cases of the Stigmata take different forms. Many show some or all of the five holy wounds that were inflicted on Jesus during His crucifixion, other of wounds of the forehead similar to the one caused by the crown of thorns. Still others report tears of blood, wounds to the back from scourging, or wounds to the shoulder from bearing the cross.

St. Francis of Assisi is the first recorded stigmatic in Christian history. On a Journey to Mt. Alvernia for a forty day fast, an angel appeared to St. Francis while he prayed. As the angel approached, he could see that it was crucified. When the angel departed, Francis was left with wounds in his hands, feet and side as if caused by the same lance that pierced the side of Jesus. The image of nails immediately appeared in his hands and feet, and the wound in his side often seeped blood.

St. Rita of Cassia (1381-1457) also bore the stigmata. Born in Italy, her parents arranged her marriage at the age of 12 to a quick tempered, immoral man, despite the fact she truly wanted to enter the convent. She bore her husband two sons. Towards the end of his life, St. Rita helped convert him to live a more pious life. Although her husband changed, he still had enemies who murdered him. After his death, she entered the monastery of Mary Magdalene at Cassia. During the night when the doors to the monastery were locked and the sisters were asleep. St. Rita was miraculously transported into the convent by her patron saints. While living in the convent St. Rita asked, "please let me suffer like you, Divine Savior." Suddenly the thorn from a figure of the crucifixion of Jesus fell from the crown of thorns and wounded her forehead.

There are sixty two saints blessed with the Stigmata and there were twenty stigmatics in the nineteenth century. And lastly, Zlatko Sudac, a Roman Catholic diocesan priest of Krk, Croatia, Born in January 1971 was blessed with the Stigmata.

A Chaplet of the Holy Wounds – As taught to Sr. Mary Martha Chambon by Our Lord in France, 1907. (may be said on regular Rosary Beads)

On the large beads: Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ to heal the wounds of our souls.

On the Small beads: My Jesus, pardon and mercy, through the merits of Thy Holy Wounds.

Assumption School



Lent forms us in the sharing the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. We focus on the sacraments of Baptism, where we are joined eternally to Christ's pattern of life and death, and Reconciliation, where we work together to share with joy the boundless mercy, forgiveness, and grace that God continuously extends to us in Christ Jesus.

During Lent, Assumption Catholic School guides our students, parents, and all stakeholders on a journey of life through the continuing formation of a solid and deep foundation of faith. Our children learn how their words and deeds impact the lives of others. In a weekly school liturgy, they are reminded of the dignity of the human person, their dignity as children of God, and their journey to the Kingdom of God. In essence, they learn to model the words and actions of Jesus.

We are called to forgiveness through the gospel and ministry of the Church. Through sincere repentance and through the sacrament of Reconciliation, our children learn of Jesus' continuous forgiveness and guidance every day of their lives. They profess a genuine community of faith through prayers in times of sorrow, joy, disappointment, celebration, difficulties, and successes. The sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation mark the rhythm of Assumption Catholic School's life.

As a school community, we pray the daily gospel and the *Our Father*, which at its heart is faith—faith in the love of the Father and in his genuine care and concern for us. These prayers foster a self-giving love with a focus on the life to come.

The gospel of Jesus Christ inspires and guides them in every dimension of Assumption's life and activity—its philosophy of education, its curriculum, its community life, its selections of teachers and its physical environment. From the moment a student sets foot in Assumption School, he or she has the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith. Assumption School fosters faith, family, and formation.

Continued on page 5

Our Lenten journey culminates in our knowing the depth of our Savior's love for us. We bask in the glory of the risen Lord who goes before us always and simply says, "Follow me." We go where he leads. The news of the Resurrection should enliven in us a great love of the Lord, prompting us to hasten our journey to the kingdom, all the while proclaiming the greatness of his love. We become confident in the power of the Resurrection.



What Lent Means to Me Assumption School Students

Middle Level

To me, Lent means a time of reflection and fasting in my life. It is a good opportunity to get away from my busy life and focus on God and Jesus' suffering for our sake.

--John Plazak

Lent is the period leading up to the time when Jesus died for us.

--Brenna Kennelly

Lent is more than giving up something. It is doing special deeds for others. It is a time to follow Jesus on the road to Calvary.

--Nicole Schibler

Lent is a special time to me. Lent is when I try to spend more time with my family. I enjoy Lent because it is the coming of Easter!

--Mallory Collins

What Lent Means to Me Assumption School Students

Intermediate Level

Lent means people coming together and remembering what Jesus went through as he was dying on the cross.

--Erin Halligan

Lent is the coming of Easter. It also means the time for Jesus to go back up to heaven.

--Luke Scioscia

Lent is the coming of Easter. It is the coming of Jesus' Resurrection. In Lent you fast or give up something. It means a lot to me because Jesus goes to heaven.

--Kristen Collins

Lent means a lot to me because it is a time of giving. I feel very full of faith. If there was no Lent, I would not be as happy during this time.

--Kimberly Keener

To us, Lent means waiting for Jesus to rise from the dead. Lent means improving on things and helping others. It means sharing with other people.

--Maggie More, Jocely Nagy
Tori Oberst, Olivia O'Brien



Trivia

Hot Cross Buns

Hot cross buns are reported to have first appeared on Good Friday In 1361. Fr. Thomas Rockliffe distributed the small cakes, marked by a cross, to the poor of St. Albans Abbey.

Baking hot cross buns on Good Friday is an old custom that has now extended to the whole season of Lent. The buns often have raisins or dried fruit to give some taste, but no sweet filling because Lent is a penitential season. However, white icing is placed on the top in the form of a cross as a reminder that Easter is coming.

At one time, it was believed that the buns had special miraculous power, and people hung them from their kitchen ceilings to protect their home from evil. It was also believed that hot cross buns baked on Good Friday would never get moldy.



Check us out, we've gone cyber!!!!

Past versions of "Reflections" are now located on the new and improved Assumption Church Website (www.assumptionchurch.org). Just click on the Reflections tab to download older versions, sign up for e-mail notifications for when new ones arrive, or we would love to hear your feedback and suggestions for future "Reflections" topics. If you have any time or talents you would like to share with us, we are always looking for parishioners to author articles and we can always use software expertise. If you are good at publishing software or have strong computer skills, we would love to hear from you. The group meets for 30 minutes on the first Thursday of each month in the basement of the rectory.



We are always looking for help in producing Reflections , if you have time and talent please share it with us. If you would be interested in writing an article or have suggestions on how we can improve Reflection, just give us a call or send an e-mail.

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