

**For The Bulletin of  
March 6, 2016**

**THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF  
LENT - *LAETARE***

***From Father Robert***

For those of you who were not here last weekend, I shared with the parish an excerpt on the Third Sunday of Lent in a book on Lent by my professor, Msgr. Kevin Irwin, who was my mentor while doing post-doctoral studies at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Once again today, I am sharing with you his excellent article on the Fourth Sunday of Lent. He writes:

At one period of liturgical development the Fourth Sunday of Lent Marked the beginning of a three week fast before Easter and inaugurated the reading of sections from the gospel of John at the Eucharist each day. (This custom is attested to in the present Lectionary, which assigns portions of John's gospel from tomorrow until Tuesday of Holy Week). At a later stage in the evolution of Lent, however, the six week Lenten season was preceded by a three-week period devoted to preparing the Christian community for the penitential prayers and practices that were to come. This period was marked by the Sunday of Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima. Hence, after three weeks preparing for Lent and three weeks of Lent, this Fourth Sunday came to mark a joyful respite in the midst of a very long time of preparation for Easter.

This Sunday was called *Laetare* Sunday ("rejoice), from the first word of the Latin entrance antiphon (still used in our

Roman Missal). The option of using rose-colored vestments this day as a change from the purple that had been used throughout Lent was visual reminder that this Sunday was somewhat the same and yet somehow different from the other Sundays of Lent: it offered a moment of refreshment in the midst of the arduous work of penance. Looking back, we can understand how this evolution of Lent took place. With the demise of the catechumenate and the loss of the obvious connection between initiation and the season of Lent, it was only natural that other themes and spiritual values would substitute for this relationship. Once the medieval emphasis on penance and a rigorous plan of observance evolved, it was natural that believers would look to this Sunday as a break in the regimen.

The present reform of the Lenten liturgy has brought about a return of the catechumenate and its linkage with Lent (hence, the election and scrutinies on Sunday).

The fact that "Rejoice" is still the first word of the entrance antiphon and that rose vestments may still be worn are examples of how the liturgy (even the reformed liturgy) retains its traditional and evolutionary character.

***The Cycle A Readings***

Today's verse before the gospel, while not a part of the gospel reading itself, helps bring out its main point that Jesus, Who is "the light of the world," gives sight, that is, light, to the man born blind, as well as to all who follow Jesus.

The repeated references to "light" indicate how this text is related to the scrutiny for baptism and how the season

of Lent came to be called the period of “purification and enlightenment.” Physical healing leads the man to recognize Jesus as Lord, the source of real light. That sin (either personal or collective) is the cause of this man’s blindness is denied by Jesus, Who maintains that this condition is present “to let God’s works show forth in him.” Almost immediately John emphasizes that through Jesus, so closely identified with the Father that they are one, we come to know the power of God in our midst.

Jesus’ use of saliva, a material thing, in healing the blindness symbolizes the importance of material elements as signs of God’s power at work. The man washes in the pool of Siloam, which means “one who has been sent,” referring to Jesus, the source of light and enlightenment.

It is at this point that the drama really begins, the protagonists being the man and the Pharisees. Through the dialogue with the Pharisees, the man himself grows in understanding as he commits himself to Jesus in faith. At first the blind (now seeing) man says that Jesus is a “man,” next he affirms that Jesus is a “prophet,” and finally he affirms that Jesus is “Lord.” The Pharisees, however, cannot admit that Jesus is the Messiah as this would involve a faith confession, and so they rest content to affirm who they are, disciples of Moses. Their unbelief makes the man’s profession of faith all the more significant. In the face of resolute opposition to Jesus as Messiah, the man cured of his blindness goes beyond his physical cure to its source and affirms that Jesus is not only a wonder-worker, He is Messiah and Lord.

In interpreting this text, the following motifs seem most applicable to the situation of today’s liturgy at which a scrutiny takes place. This ceremony is an act of intercession on behalf of the elect by those already committed to the faith. But this act itself required that those who believe must believe firmly and completely. It is a means whereby the already initiated reflect on what initiation means and what surrender to Jesus as Lord and Messiah really means in their lives.

To move from the darkness of sin to the light of Christ usually requires a progressive movement of allegiance to Jesus. Today’s gospel and scrutiny ask the baptized to continue in their progression to faith in the messiahship of Jesus. Similarly, the structure of the Lenten scrutinies attests to the progressive assimilation of the elect into the ranks of the faithful.

It is important to recall the design of the Lenten Lectionary to understand and interpret the first reading today from I Samuel. These Old Testament readings have been selected because they mark significant moments in the history of salvation. Today’s text, about the selection of David as king of Israel, the least likely candidate, reiterates a common (though continually confounding) theme in salvation history – the choice of the least likely for the most important positions. This youngest son of Jesse is anointed by Samuel. From now on “the Spirit of the Lord ruled upon David.”

While not wanting to impose on this text an unwarranted interpretation, we can say that just as David was chosen by God, so we are chosen by God. We

respond to His initiative as we continue from initiation to death. The anointing of David, when the Spirit of the Lord “rushed upon him,” is the anointing of the elect that will take place at Easter when the Spirit will come upon them and God will be the source of life and love.

The responsorial psalm, Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want,” is used here and will be used on Monday of the Fifth Week in Lent to remind us that it is the Lord Who chooses, elects, and sustains us in His light, even when we find ourselves in the “dark valley.”

Christ is frequently referred to in the liturgy, especially when John’s gospel is proclaimed, as a reminder of His initial and sustaining call to us, His chosen ones. In Him, we can confidently pray, “I fear no evil; for You are at my side,” and through Him we have the sure hope that we “shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.”

The second reading from Ephesians 5 reiterates the light/darkness motif of the gospel today. It reminds the initiated that there was a time when we were in darkness, but now we live in light;; hence we are to live as children of the light. The goodness, justice, and truth that we receive from Christ are to be evident in our lives, especially as they are obviously gifts that empower us to stand against the deeds of darkness.

**The Floral Arrangement at the Altar this weekend is placed to the Glory of God and in honor of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Marriage of Larry and Jeannine Ford by Dorothy Lamendola.**

### ***New Members Brunch Today***

Following the 10:00 a.m. Liturgy this morning, our Leadership (Pastoral Staff, Pastoral Council, and Finance Council) will host a Brunch to welcome 30 new families to our parish. Members will be introducing themselves as well as sharing the history of our parish and giving them information about our staffing, programs, ministries, and outreaches.

### ***Deanery Communal Penance Liturgies Begin This Week***

The schedule for our Deanery Lenten Communal Penance Liturgies is as follows:

Monday, March 7th, 7:00 p.m.  
Good Shepherd, Pittsburg

Thursday, March 10th, 7:00 p.m.  
St. Peter Martyr of Verona, Pittsburg

Monday, March 14th, 7:00 p.m.  
Holy Rosary, Antioch

Tuesday, March 15th, 7:00 p.m.  
St. Anne, Byron

Thursday, March 17th, 7:30 p.m.  
St. Ignatius of Antioch, Antioch

Monday, March 21st, 7:00 p.m.  
Our Lady, Queen of the World, Bay Point

### ***The Chrism Mass***

Each year, shortly before Holy Week, the Bishop blesses and consecrates the Holy Oils for the coming year. This liturgy is known as the Chrism Mass and this year it will be celebrated in the Cathedral on Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. The liturgy begins with a procession of representatives of the

parishes and is followed by the Blessing of the Holy Oils of Catechumens and of the Sick and the Consecration of the Sacred Chrism. The Holy Oils will be returned to the parish and presented solemnly at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. All members of the Diocese are invited to attend this liturgy. Our representatives this year will be **Frances Rojek and Harlan Young**.

### ***Palm Sunday Preparation***

This year we will be preparing the palms for Palm Sunday on **Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the kitchen**. Please bring gloves and scissors. The palm branches will be cut to create palms for the congregation as well as being washed, dried, and bundled. Please wear **RED** for the liturgies of March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> to add to the festivity of the day.

### ***St. Joseph Festival Dinner***

On Saturday evening, March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of St. Joseph, we will once again celebrate our annual St. Joseph Day Festival Dinner. Hosted by our Social Events Committee, this is a **SOLD OUT** event! We are deeply grateful to the Social Events Committee for organizing the evening's events as well as all those who are donating their services and food to make this event so special.

### ***Lenten Friday Fish Fry***

What a great job our Knights of Columbus and other parishioner volunteers have done each Friday for our Lenten Friday Fish Frys! The parish hall has been filled from beginning to end at each Friday's dinner and everyone has had such a wonderful time, enjoying the delicious fish, French fries, and coleslaw, as well as the beverages and

desserts, not to mention BINGO!!! The Fish Fry continues through Friday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, which is the last evening. You don't want to miss out on this traditional Friday Lenten event! The bulletin contains a coupon for money off the price. Bring your family, neighbors, and friends!

***Holy Week, Triduum, and Easter***  
**Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion**  
Saturday Vigil March 19, **5:00 p.m.**  
Blessing and Distribution of Palms

Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 8 and **10:30 a.m.**  
Blessing and Distribution of Palms,  
Procession (Incense at 10:30 a.m.)  
Rite of Reception of Tina Costanza  
through Profession of Faith,  
Confirmation, and First Eucharist

**Monday of Holy Week**  
March 21<sup>st</sup>, 8:00 a.m., Holy Eucharist

**Tuesday of Holy Week**  
March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 8:00 a.m. Liturgy of the  
Word and Holy Communion

**Wednesday of Holy Week**  
March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:00 a.m., Holy Eucharist

**Holy/Maundy Thursday**  
March 24<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 a.m., Sung Morning  
Prayer

**The Great Paschal Triduum**  
**Holy/Maundy Thursday,**  
**March 24<sup>th</sup> 7:30 p.m.** *Reception of the  
Holy Oils, Liturgy of the Word, Washing  
of Feet, Liturgy of the Eucharist,  
Candle-light Procession to the Altar of  
Rest, Adoration until 10:30 p.m.*  
(Incense)

**Good Friday, March 25th**

8:00 a.m. Sung Morning Prayer

12:00 Noon Outdoor Stations of the Cross at our newly-installed Stations in the northeast section of the parking lot.

**3:00 p.m. Solemn Commemoration of the Lord's Passion and Death**

*Liturgy of the Word, Veneration of the Cross, Holy Communion (No Incense)*

**Holy Saturday, March 26th**

8:00 a.m. Sung Morning Prayer

**7:30 p.m. The Great Paschal Vigil**

*Lighting of the New Fire of Easter, Lighting of the Paschal Candle, Candle-light Procession Into Church; Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of Initiation celebrating the Sacraments of Initiation for Xochi Perez; Renewal of Baptismal Promises with Newly-blessed Baptismal Water, Liturgy of the Eucharist (Incense)*

**Easter Day, The Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord, March 27th**

**8:00 a.m.** Procession, Liturgy of the Word, Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling With Newly-blessed Baptismal Water, Liturgy of the Eucharist (No Incense)

**10:30 a.m.** Procession, Liturgy of the Word, Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling Rite with Newly-blessed Baptismal Water, Liturgy of the Eucharist (Incense)

***The Easter Environment***

You are invited to be a part of a wonderful tradition here at St. Ignatius of Antioch by contributing to help the Art & Environment Committee create an environment that says "EASTER!" for

the entire 7 weeks of the Easter Season. Your generosity will help provide the panels of seasonal cloth at the Icons, the blooming plants and cut flower arrangements, the trees, and other special elements that will help us celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord for the entire 50 days. Your gifts may be given either in honor of OR in loving memory of family members and loved ones. Please make use of the envelopes provided with my Easter Letter or additional envelopes found on the credenza. Thank you!

You are also invited to join the members of the Art & Environment Committee in creating the Easter Environment on Holy Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 9:00 a.m. We hope to be finished with all the work between 2 and 3:00 p.m.

***Thank You***

...to our faithful volunteer parishioners who clean the parish hall and the church each week: **Jun Bajet, Rose Salamanca, Carole Miller, and Mency Osborne.**

...to our faithful volunteer parishioners who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall: **Robert Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Geri Abaya, Gino Ramos, and Harlan Young.**

...to our **counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections. Because of confidentiality, we do not disclose the names of the counting team members, but rest assured we are thankful for all that they do.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week: **Mary Ng, Harlan Young, Lorraine Lohmeier, Karen Oliver, Barbara Jackson,**

**Rowena Cayaban, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**  
...to our faithful weekly bulletin collating team: **Bob Carvalho, Carole Miller and Vangie Parrilla.**  
...to our facilities volunteers who assisted Rich Confetti: **Don Benson and Jose Palomino** (aka: RDJ).

*St. Ignatius of Antioch Assists with Winter Nights*

The Winter Nights Rotating Family Shelter is a project of the Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County. A warm and safe place to sleep is offered to homeless families. Case management to assist moving the families from the shelter environment to permanent housing is provided. Given the housing situation in our area, this is always a challenge. The shelter rotates every two weeks among various faith communities in central and East Contra Costa County.

For the past two weeks, Community Presbyterian Church in Pittsburg hosted the shelter. Seven east county churches partnered to provide volunteers and nourishing meals. St. Ignatius of Antioch provided meals for 3 nights along with breakfast and lunch supplies.

Our Pastoral Council provided dinner on Wednesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>. The menu included a mixed winter green salad, sweet French bread baguettes, beef stew over rice, French cut green beans with butter and orange zest, fresh strawberries, home-made cookies, and ice cream for desert. Thank you to **Will Avitabile and Catherine Vidaurri,**

**Don Benson, Kathleen and Mary Clarke, Gino Ramos, Paul Rيوفski, and Father Robert.**

Our Knights of Columbus provided dinner on Thursday night. Dinner consisted of meatloaf prepared using the Sharpe's secret recipe chili sauce, Dave Costanza's signature vegetables and rice, peas and Lorraine Lohmeier's chocolate chip cake recipe from the St. Ignatius of Antioch cookbook. As a special treat, our very own troubadour, Chip Sharpe, provided live music before and during dinner. Thank you to **Vince & Kathy Augusta, Bill & Fran Barbanica, David Costanza, Brian & Vicki McCoy, Chip & Jane Sharpe and David & Sharon Simpson.**

On Friday, the menu included barbequed tri-tip, ribs & fresh salmon, macaroni salad, fruit salad and lemon bars & chocolate squares for dessert. Thank you to **Don Benson and Rich Confetti** for preparing the outstanding tri-tips and ribs. Thank you to **Rick & Sue Howell, Donnie & Susan Fleming, Brian & Vicki McCoy and Estrella Rusk.**

On Sunday, **Bobby Zabroski** volunteered his skills as a barber and provided haircuts and trims to the shelter residents.

Since October, our parishioners have also been performing another valuable service for Winter Nights. Shelter guests are able to utilize the shower facilities at St. Vincent de Paul in Pittsburg, and we have a group of parishioners who volunteer to pick up, wash and deliver freshly laundered bath towels each week. Thank you to **Liz Carnero, Ronda & Chris DeMay, Sue & Rick Howell, Barbara Jackson, Lorraine Lohmeier,**

**Vicki & Brian McCoy and Barbara Snow** for volunteering for this project.

***Contributions from Bulletin Articles.***

Thank you to those parishioners who responded to the two articles in recent bulletins requesting gift cards and other supplies for Contra Costa Interfaith Housing (gift cards to Starbucks and Cold Stone Creamery for the homework club) and the Winter Nights Rotating Shelter (Target gift cards and duct tape). We are a generous community!

***Knights of Columbus***

This past Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, five of our brothers receive their Third Degree which took place in our parish hall. The degree was preceded by an excellent luncheon. Congratulations to: **Bob Carvalho, Dave Costanza, Cory Cook, Noel Fortez, and Mario Rizzo.**

***Barbara Roberts Memorial***

This past Tuesday afternoon, the daughter of Barbara Roberts came to see me. In the course of the conversation, she shared with me that Barbara was very clear with the family that after her Funeral Liturgy, her daughter was to present the parish with a check from her estate for the Building Fund. She so wanted to live long enough to see the new parish hall built. Her daughter presented me with a check in the amount of **\$2,200** in her mother's memory. On behalf of all of us, I want to thank Barbara for her thoughtfulness and generosity and for sharing with us the dream of completing the parish hall. From her place in heaven may she know of our gratitude and may her prayers join with ours as we continue to raise funds for the new building. – Fr. Robert

