

FROM THE PASTOR'S PRINTER

We're Over the Hump!

This Sunday puts us halfway (and a little more) through Lent. While that may put a smile on our faces because we are on the downside of our Lenten penances, it is also good for us to stop and ask ourselves how we are doing with them. Have they been totally forgotten? Are you in a slump when it comes to performing them with an attitude of hope and joy, knowing that they draw us closer to God? Are you tempted to just give up and try next year? The good news is that ***it is never too late*** to start, restart, or invigorate our resolve to do penance. God never has a deadline in which repentance, penance, and conversion are too late. If you feel you are not being successful, it may mean that you have taken on a task that is a challenge and not a piece of cake. Don't lose heart, restart! (Am I an adman or what?)

This week in the Office of Readings, part of the Liturgy of the Hours (aka the Divine Office or Breviary) which the ordained pray daily as do a number of lay people, there was a passage from St. Peter Chrysologus, (the fifth century bishop of Ravenna, Italy whose name means

golden words) which struck me as hitting the nail on the head regarding Lenten penances.

Prayer knocks at the door, fasting obtains, and mercy receives. Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy is the lifeblood of fasting. Do not try to separate them; they cannot be separated. If you have only one of them or not all together, you have nothing. So if you pray, fast; if you fast show mercy. If you want your petition to be heard, hear the petition of others. If you do not close your ear to others, you open God's ear to yourself.

If you fast, see the hunger of others. If you want God to know that you are hungry, realize that others are hungry; if you hope for mercy, show mercy. If you look for kindness, show kindness. If you want to receive, give. If you ask for yourself and deny to others, your asking is a mockery.

May we never forget that all we do or forego in our Lenten practices has two goals: to draw us closer to the Lord by love of neighbor and to transform our lives into the life of God.

Comings and Goings

This Tuesday, Deacon Don Meyer joins the parish staff two days a week – Tuesdays and Thursdays - at St. John's. Deacon Don's ministry will be a true blessing to us, as he works to develop Hispanic ministry in our parish. This will meet the needs of Spanish-speaking persons in our parish, and work to develop social ministries. He will also assist with annulments, as well as number of other ministries. If you are thinking "Oh, no, now I need to find a new lawyer," fear not! Don is still practicing law (even though, from what I hear, he's already very good at it.) Welcome, Deacon Don!

On April 1st, as she reaches her twentieth anniversary as member of the

pastoral staff at St. John's, Lynda Noel is retiring. Lynda, in so many ways, blazed a path of lay ministry in our parish, established many great ministries in which so many people have served and been served. He has been a compassionate ear and open heart to so many people with various needs. I truly think that Fr. Shine and Lynda are the key agents who developed the great and diverse spiritual and apostolic life of this parish. We will miss Lynda's presence and humble service to the Lord and us, but luckily, she will still be a member of our parish. We will celebrate her anniversary and to wish her well in retirement on April 8th at 1 PM Mass, followed by a reception. Every blessing to you, Lynda!