

REPENT AND BELIEVE, BELIEVE AND REPENT!

First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9:8-15

Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:12-15

"This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the good news."

These are the first words proclaimed by Jesus in the Gospel according to Mark. One could say that these three simple sentences embody his entire message. To be his disciple is to embrace this message, which itself involves an ongoing commitment to repent and to believe.

To repent is to allow one's heart and mind to be changed so that they reflect the infinite compassion and mercy of God. The reason why Jesus is so critical of his contemporaries is that many of them observe laws and religious practices without ever allowing their hearts to be transformed. They reduce God's offer of covenant relationship to a contract stipulating certain behaviors, and then they observe meticulously these stipulations in order to remain in good standing.

No observance, however, is as important to God as a generous and loving heart. Without such a disposition, nothing else matters. If the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of love, then it can be enjoyed only by those who embrace and embody God's compassion.

Jesus' ministry of reaching out to the dejected and befriending the wayward demonstrates this. He rightly declares the Kingdom to be at hand, because he himself is bringing it about through the divine love that he embodies and shares. Each time he touches an untouchable or invites an outcast to table, he is making the Kingdom present.

And this is the object of our faith, the good news that we are invited to believe: that God's Kingdom is a kingdom of love that is received as a gift only when we follow Jesus' example by allowing our hearts to love as God loves.

To repent, then, is to believe; and to believe is to repent. I embrace the Kingdom as Jesus preached it and in doing so my heart begins to change. I allow my heart to fill with love for God and neighbor, and already I am following Jesus in faithful discipleship.

Lent is a time for getting back to basics: the kingdom of God is at hand. Let us repent and believe the good news.

Stephen J. Sauer, S.J.

Pastor

LENTEN DAY OF REFLECTION

The bus for the **March 10** Day of Recollection at Manresa Retreat House is full. Participants are reminded to arrive at the church **before 8:15 a.m.** The bus will leave promptly at **8:30 a.m.**

St. Joseph's Altar & Mass

The parish St. Joseph altar will be erected on **March 12** at the side altar of St. Joseph and St. Ann and will remain in place until the feast of St. Joseph on **March 19**. Parishioners are invited to place petitions and special tokens of remembrance (pictures, letters, mementos, etc.) at the altar throughout the week. The Church will be open weekdays and Saturday 6:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday 6:30 a.m. - after the Noon Mass. On **March 19, following the Noon Mass**, the altar will be blessed and lunch will be served in Lenexa Hall.

FUNDRAISER DATES TO REMEMBER

Monday, March 16: 7th annual Good Shepherd School Golf Tournament at Stonebridge Golf Club. For more information or to register, please call David Nusloch at (504) 598-9399.

Saturday, April 4: 4th annual Harry Tompson Center Gala and Auction at the Student Commons of Jesuit High School. For more information, please call Suzette Herpich (504) 598-296-6698 or Indie McKay (504)

FASTING AND ABSTINENCE

The Archdiocese publishes the following guidelines concerning fasting and abstinence during Lent. Lent runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.

Fasting (on **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**) is to be observed by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59. Those who are bound to fast may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to each one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

Abstinence from meat is to be observed by all Catholics 14 years or older on **Ash Wednesday** and on **all Friday's** of Lent.

The determination of certain days as obligatory days of penance should not be understood as limiting the occasions for Christian penance. The spirit of the season of Lent should be maintained throughout the weeks of Lent. The obligation to observe penitential days of the Church is serious.

People should seek to do more rather than less, since fast and abstinence on the days prescribed should be considered a minimal response to the Lord's call to penance and conversion of life.

MASS FOR THE SICK

Archbishop Hughes will be celebrating a special liturgy for the sick at 11: a.m. On Sunday, **March 15** at St. Louis Cathedral. As usual, parking is available in the school yard at 820 Dauphine Street.

CYO BASKETBALL

The Parish would like to congratulate its CYO Basketball team for a thrilling season filled with hard-fought match-ups. The season concluded with a close loss on Monday, February 16 against St. Mary Magdalene, bringing the record for the season to 3 and 3. Special thanks to Coaches Jeremy Reuther and Donald McKay for providing their time and guidance. Thanks also to each player for representing us in such a positive way.

PRESIDER SCHEDULE**Saturday, February 28**

4:00 p.m. Fr. Fran Pistorius, S.J.

Sunday, March 1

8:00 a.m. Fr. Fran Pistorius, S.J.
 9:30 a.m. Fr. Stephen Sauer, S.J.
 11:00 a.m. Fr. Paul Osterle, S.J.
 7:30 p.m. Fr. Stephen Sauer, S.J.

Saturday, March 7

4:00 p.m. Fr. Paul Osterle, S.J.

Sunday, March 8

8:00 a.m. Fr. Paul Osterle, S.J.
 9:30 a.m. Fr. Fran Pistorius, S.J.
 11:00 a.m. Fr. Stephen Sauer, S.J.
 7:30 p.m. Fr. Raymond Fitzgerald, S.J.

WEDDING BANNES**February 28, 2009**

Katie Gonsoulin & Adam Pelliccio

March 7, 2009

Nina Singh & Kristen Radcliff

Melissa Montz & Daniel Donahoe

PRAYER LIST

Anne Accardo
 Lourdes Armbruster
 Sea Barry
 Musette Mary Buckley
 Ed Burks
 Kelsey Favrot
 Rosealie Foster
 Gina Gauthreaux
 Maggie Hebert
 Juliann Kiefer
 Tara Stoulig Monistere
 Beverly Morris
 Karen Oxmann
 Darlene Peters
 Desmond Peters
 Marie Pizzuto
 Wescoat Sandlin
 Betty Smith
 Jim Taylor
 Justin Webb
 Whitney Welsh
 Keri White

March Prayer Intentions of the Holy Father

Dignity of Women. That all nations of our world may grow in appreciation of the dignity and value of women and their roles in society.

Church Unity in China. That all the bishops, priests, consecrated persons, and laity of the Catholic Church in China may strive to be instruments of unity, communion, and peace, as enjoined by the letter sent to them by Pope Benedict XVI.

MASS INTENTIONS**Saturday, February 28**

4:00 p.m. E.J. Caruso, Nell Morris Dewhirst,
 Tommy & Eileen Enright, John
 Fitzpatrick, Jr., Jerome Sauer, Jane
 Terry

Sunday, March 1

8:00 a.m. Deceased members of Sigma
 Alpha Kappa Fraternity
 7:30 p.m. Recuperation of Lynn Combe, Robert
 S. Gilberti, Nell Mabry, Jerome
 Sauer, Mark J. Vincent, Lucille
 Yenni

Tuesday, March 3

7:30 a.m. Sheila Hawkins Dewhirst
 Noon Humphrey McCarron

Wednesday, March 4

7:30 a.m. Morel Miller Elmer, Jr.
 Noon Jerome Sauer

Thursday, March 5

7:30 a.m. Sandra Bourg
 Noon Mrs. Albin Sqizan

Friday, March 6

7:30 a.m. Banos Family
 Noon Lucille Yenni

Saturday, March 7

4:00 p.m. Sandra Bourg, Kirk Paul Melancon,
 Gwen Cooney Melancon, Mehmet
 and Nedime Rende & Family,
 Recuperation of Thomas Schafer

Sunday, March 8

8:00 a.m. Tommy Leroy Dickerson
 7:30 p.m. Deceased members of Sigma Alpha
 Kappa Fraternity, Charles Wall,
 Lucille Yenni