



# GOOD SHEPHERD

CATHOLIC CHURCH & SCHOOL

22 February 2017

*Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The season of Lent begins next Wednesday, March 1. Our School Mass that day takes place at 12:15pm. Please join us if you are able.

As Lent approaches, I'm drawn again to a favorite quote from CS Lewis. This well-known author of *The Chronicles of Narnia* is also a man of deep spiritual insight. Here's the quote:

“No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good. A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. After all, you find out the strength of an army by fighting against it, not by giving in. You find out the strength of a wind by trying to walk against it, not by lying down. A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness – they have lived a sheltered life by always giving in. We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it” (CS Lewis, *Mere Christianity*).

We enter the season of Lent trying very hard to be good. Why? Because when we try very hard to be good, we see just how hard it is to be good. And in this, we hope to recognize our weakness. We hope to see the truth in what Jesus tells us when he says, “Without me you can do nothing” (John 15:5b). We hope to see clearly our need for the grace and salvation offered by Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the savior of the world, but he can only save those who know they need him and who open their hearts to him. When we enter this season of Lent trying very hard to be good, we can see clearly that we need Jesus. We come to know our need for grace and salvation.

Catholics traditionally observe Lent by way of focused and intentional prayer, fasting, and almsgiving – ancient tools that help us to grow in holiness and virtue. On Ash Wednesday, we will pray: “Grant, O Lord, that we may begin with holy fasting this campaign of Christian service, so that, as we take up battle against spiritual evils, we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint.”

I encourage you to begin praying about how you will take up the battle this Lent. Some ideas include:

**Prayer:** attend a weekday Mass each week, pray a daily Rosary, read the Gospel for five minutes each day, pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet every day, go to Eucharistic Adoration for 30 minutes each week, pray as a family before and after every meal, go to confession two or three times during Lent, use your commute to pray instead of listening to the radio.

*Fasting:* On one or two (or even all seven) days each week, refrain from television or streaming media, social media, your favorite food or drink, meat, alcohol, sleeping with a pillow, snacking between meals, staying up past your bedtime, hitting the snooze button, or eating lunch every day.

*Almsgiving:* During Lent, give up a convenience (fast food, coffee, etc) each week and donate the money you would have spent to the poor, volunteer to serve the homeless, take somebody who seems lonely out to lunch, increase your parish contribution, visit those in nursing homes, help an elderly person with chores, or do a purge and give away your goods to a charity.

I pray that your Lent will prepare you well for the salvation offered by Christ Jesus. Additionally, I invite you to join us for the following events:

*School Mass Sunday*

- February 26 @ 10:30am
- March 12 @ 10:30am

*First Friday Parish Night of Prayer*

- March 3 @ 7:30pm (following Fish Fry and Stations)
- April 7 @ 7:30pm (following Fish Fry and Stations)

*Stations of the Cross*

- March 3 (Fish Fry begins at 5pm)
- March 10 (Soup Supper begins at 6pm)
- March 17
- March 24
- March 31
- April 7 (Fish Fry begins at 5pm)

As always, please let me know if you have questions or concerns. I am grateful you are a part of Good Shepherd.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Father Marquard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Father Luke Marquard

PS: Fasting & Abstinence During Lent

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics. In addition, Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence. The norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal. Two smaller meals may also be taken, but not to equal a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.