

Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of April 25th, 2010

My dear Parishioners,
2010 Annual Bishop's Appeal
"The Lord is my Light..."
(Psalm 27:1)

Each and every household is challenged to be a part of the life of the work of the Catholic Church. We can do this through a generous and sacrificial pledge to the Annual Bishop's Appeal. Every one of us is a beneficiary in one way or another of the ABA. There is a great satisfaction in knowing that you have had a part in the training of men for the priesthood, in reaching out to the poor, the disenfranchised, and the helpless, in sharing the light of faith through education programs, in prison ministry, in keeping Catholic presence alive for college students and the many other ways in which the Annual Bishop's Appeal serves God's Church. Please be a part of this and know the joy of joining our brother and sisters in faith across the Catholic Diocese of Norwich in building the Kingdom of God.

In the next few weeks you will be receiving a letter, brochure and pledge envelope from Bishop Cote. Please take the time to prayerfully consider what you are able give in support of our Diocesan Church.

Thank you.

Gratefully yours in the Risen Lord,
Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of April 18th, 2010

My dear Parishioners,
with the good weather finally coming our way many people are now working outside sprucing up lawns and preparing to plant gardens. As I look outside on the church and rectory grounds I see the need to rake the lawn, fill in some of the holes with soil and plant grass seed, cut back on the brush, plant flowers and maybe even develop a small garden to grow vegetables. I used to do this work a lot at my home. My father had a large garden and taught me a great deal about the joy of growing our own food. I was wondering if there is somebody out there in the parish who can give a few hours of their time and talent to do some of this maintenance work on our grounds. Having a garden is an afterthought, but the grounds work and cleaning around are a necessity for any home. If a few people could volunteer a bit of time, the work will not be a burden on any one person. Please consider, if you can help us make St. Catherine of Siena Church and Rectory look more beautiful, it would be greatly appreciated. As you know, many traveling folks look at our beautiful church as they drive to the casino and back. Shall we join in and make it a more wonderful view? Thank you!

Gratefully yours in the Risen Lord,
Fr. Joe

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Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of April 11th, 2010

My dear friends in Christ,

I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks to all who made who made our Holy Week and Easter liturgies such wonderful celebrations. It is a marvelous time of the year for the parish. We celebrate the core mystery of our faith and so many people give of their time and talent to plan and execute our liturgies. Those who come put themselves into it and truly appreciate how the church looks and feels as they come to pray together. The decorations are beautiful, and many of you commented on them. A lot of work goes into preparing the church for Easter and I thank them for their effort. Our music ministry was inspiring and uplifting at all services. We are blessed to have many dedicated and talented people in the music ministry. Our thanks go out to them. We should be appreciative of all the ministries who serve us at these worship services. Our servers came to rehearsals and prepared themselves to serve with grace and dignity. We don't often appreciate the person in the pew. The assembly is an essential part of each liturgy. They are not just passive listeners and watchers, but people of faith who actively pray together making up a dynamic assembly of the faithful who worship as one. My thanks to everyone. A special thanks to Knights of Columbus for organizing the Easter Egg Hunt for the little ones in the parish. I truly appreciate your prayers, Easter cards, gifts and food on Easter. You are in my prayers and Masses. May you have a Holy and Blessed Easter Season!

With love and Prayers in the Risen Lord,
Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of April 4th, 2010

My dear friends in Christ,

Happy Easter! This is a glorious day on the Christian calendar when Jesus Christ broke the bonds of death and rose to new life. It is an extraordinary celebration of God's love for humankind and it is a day of great hope for all who bear their own crosses. Jesus, God's own Son, has gone before us into the realm of death and triumphed over all sin and death.

Wish you a very Happy Easter!

May the Risen Lord fill you with His Peace and Joy!

May the happiness that He gave to Mary Magdalene,

The eagerness and enthusiasm with which He filled Peter and John,

The understanding and joy He gave to the disciples on the way to

Emmaus, The consolation and warmth He radiated to all His disciples,

Be yours today and the year ahead!

Wishing you all HIS blessing,

With love and Prayers in the Risen Lord,

Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of March 28th, 2010

My dear friends,

Today's celebration of Palm Sunday marks the beginning of the holiest days on the Christian Calendar. At each of the Masses this weekend, we receive blessed palms and celebrate Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem as the Messiah King. The central scripture reading is the Passion according to St. Luke. These words invite us into the solemn days of Holy week as we walk with Jesus through his passion and death. On Holy Thursday evening, we come together to celebrate the Liturgy of the Lord's Supper. This is one of the most beautiful and meaningful liturgies that the Catholic Church has. It marks the end of Lenten season and the beginning of the Triduum, the great three days of the Christian Pascha. Good Friday is a deadly serious day, but it is not to be morbid or gruesome. The celebration of the Lord's passion should be austere, but never sad. We don't pretend that Jesus is dead when we celebrate his glorious passion. The Risen Lord already reigns triumphant. On Holy Saturday, the Church waits at the Lord's tomb, meditating on his suffering and death. As sundown approaches, we prepare to celebrate the Great Vigil with blessing of the new fire that breaks through the darkness. The Easter Candle carries the new light from the fire into our church where it will spread to everyone proclaiming, "Christ is our Light". We bless our Easter Water and renew our baptismal promises. Easter Sunday! ALLELUIA!!!
Have a Holy and Prayerful Triduum.
Sincerely,

Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of March 21st, 2010
My dear friends,

Fifth Sunday of Lent: Reminding us of God's readiness to forgive sin and to restore people to His friendship, today's readings challenge us to show the same mercy to the sinners around us and to live as forgiven people actively seeking reconciliation. The central theme of all three readings is a merciful God's steadfast love. Both the psalm verses and the reading from Paul invite us to respond to such divine graciousness with joy and gratitude. The readings also encourage us to reflect seriously on the ultimate example of God's compassionate love for us. They remind us that we cannot stand self-righteously and condemn the lives of others when God is calling them tenderly to conversion. Repentance is not something we do. It is allowing the forgiving power of God to touch our lives and lead us along new paths. In the second reading, Paul presents himself as a forgiven sinner, who has been completely transformed by his faith in Christ Jesus. His life is an example of the Gospel exhortation, "Sin no more." Paul loves Christ so much as to want to share in his sufferings and even in his death so that he may share Christ's resurrection. The sinful woman's story of sin committed and sin forgiven in today's Gospel shows the inexhaustible mercy and compassion of Jesus to sinners. It invites us to recognize and experience in our lives both God's justice and His

mercy.

Have a Holy Lent,

Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator:

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of March 14th, 2010

My dear friends,

The fourth Sunday of Lent marks the midpoint in the Lenten preparation for Easter. Traditionally it is called "Laetare Sunday" (Rejoice Sunday). This Sunday is set aside for us to recall God's graciousness and to rejoice because of it. In many ways we have been dead, but through God's grace we have come to life again; we have been lost, but have now been found. We have every reason to rejoice. Hence, each of the three readings characterizes one of the many facets of Easter joy.

In the first reading, the Chosen People of God are portrayed as celebrating, for the first time, the feast of their freedom in their own land. Their joy is one of promises fulfilled. The refrain of today's psalm might be used as a response to all three readings: "Taste and see the goodness of the Lord." The second reading joyfully proclaims the effect of Jesus' saving act as the reconciliation of all peoples to the Father. In the gospel, the joy is that of a young son's "coming home" and rediscovering a father's forgiving and gratuitous love. It is also the story of a loving and forgiving father who celebrates the return of his prodigal son by throwing a big party in his honor, a banquet celebrating the reconciliation of the son with his father, his family, his community and his God. It is really the Parable of the Forgiving Father, the story of divine love and mercy for us sinners. It is almost beyond belief. The common theme of joy resulting from reconciliation with God and other human beings is announced to all of us present in this church - an assembly of sinful people, ready to receive God's forgiveness, and His Personal Presence as a forgiving God in the Holy Eucharist.

Have a Holy Lent,

Fr. Joe

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of March 7th, 2010

My dear friends,

The third Sunday of Lent - all three readings speak of God's mercy and compassion in disciplining his children and giving them a second chance in spite of their repeated sins. Although God's love for us is constant and consistent, He will not save us without our co-operation.

That is why He invites us during Lent to repent of our sins and to renew our lives by producing fruits of love, compassion, forgiveness, and faithful service. Today's gospel explains how God disciplines His people, invites them to repent of their sins, to renew their lives and to produce the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Citing two tragic events, Jesus exhorts the Jews to repent and reform their lives. With the parable of the barren fig tree, he also warns them that the merciful God will not put up with them indefinitely. Although God patiently waits for sinners to repent, giving them grace to do so, He will not

wait forever. Time may run out; therefore, timely repentance is necessary. Hence a Lent missed is a year lost from the spiritual life.

Have a Holy Lent,

Fr. Joe

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of February 28th, 2010

Reflection from the Administrator:

My dear friends,

Forty days of LENT. I want to go over a few aspects of our Liturgy that change for the Lenten season. In general, the appearance of our church reflects the penitential season. You will not find flowers adorning the sanctuary; in fact, the center piece is the Crucified Jesus. Yes, He is our center as we move toward the Easter celebration for the renewal of our baptismal vows. Because Lent is always focused on the preparation for baptism, we do not baptize during this season, unless urgency presents itself. The music of the Mass is simplified. You notice that there is not much singing, but reciting. The celebratory Alleluia acclamation before the Gospel is omitted and replaced with "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ." Let these Lenten liturgies enable us to enter into a prayerful experience as we journey together with the Lord during the 40 days.

By the way, I received a number of telephone calls and words of appreciation for getting the Original Crucifix back to the Sanctuary. In turn, on behalf of those in the parish I express my sincere gratitude to Joe and Celia Cubanski for their dedicated and professional job installing the Crucifix. Thank you so much and God bless you.

Have a Holy Lent,

Fr. Joe

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of February 14th, 2010

My dear friends,

The season of LENT begins this week with our celebration of Ash Wednesday. There is something about this 900 year old-ritual of receiving ashes on our foreheads that attract crowds of people, and it isn't even a holy day of obligation! What is it that draws such large crowds to our churches on this day? The answer may be found in the words of the Entrance Antiphon of the Mass: "Lord, you are merciful to all, and hate nothing you have created. You overlook the sins of men to bring them repentance." The season of Lent remembers the mercy God offers us and the fact that God's mercy is always available to us. Whenever we recognize our need for this mercy and ask for it, God gives it to us in abundance. In the ritual of receiving blessed ashes we enter the penance of Lent. The ashes are a sign of our sinfulness and our brokenness. The cross, the shape of the ashes on our forehead,

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proclaims that God wants to make us whole. Is it not the mercy of God that draws us in droves to the church, rather than the ashes themselves? Yes, God's mercy, freely given to those who come to know there need for it and who ask for it in faith. This year, we have two Masses at 9:00 AM and 7:00 PM, Liturgy of the Word Service at 3:30 PM. We are doing this to get everyone to the season of Lent. All are welcome to this meaningful and prayerful service of Ash Wednesday!

Have a Holy Lent,

Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of February 7th, 2010

My dear friends in Christ,

Everybody was very happy to see

Fr. Joe Finnerty last weekend. He sends his gratitude to every one of you for your cordiality and love which he experienced. For your kind information, I am trying to get all the priests who served this parish in the last 50 years either of the weekends before June 12, 2010.

You will be happy to know that we had a wonderful Celebration Committee Meeting last Monday in the rectory living room. Everyone was positive about it and formed different sub-committees to work with.

They will be contacting you for help, please give some of your time, talent and treasure toward this ongoing Golden Jubilee Celebration of the dedication of our Church. A Jubilee Events Calendar will be ready very soon. Thank you so much.

Sincerely Yours in Christ.

Fr. Joe

Reflection from the Administrator

From the Sunday Bulletin, the weekend of January 24th, 2010

My dear friends in Christ,

As we move forward in the restructuring of the Norwich Deanery, I have been warmed by the positive attitudes of our St. Catherine parishioners and by the representatives from the other parishes in our cluster. Every single person involved in our cluster has expressed strong ties to their home parishes, yet displayed strong enthusiasm for making the restructuring process work smoothly. We know that the shortage of priests and declining attendance at Mass are facts. In our Faith, however, we know that God's love will bring us through this and make us stronger. Here at St. Catherine of Siena, we have a tradition of being a supportive, active, welcoming community. As the body of the Church, we will move forward and continue to participate in the Eucharist, and we will continue to be supportive, active, and welcoming.

All parishioners are being asked to complete a survey this weekend so that their ideas, comments, and suggestions can be studied. As well, there will be an open parish meeting on Saturday, January 30, from 3:30-4:30 to discuss these questionnaires and to answer any questions about the clustering process to date. I hope that as many as possible will attend the meeting so that the recommendation forwarded to the

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Bishop will reflect the views of the parish, as a whole.

For more information, please call our Parish Representatives: Janet Clancy at 860-886-0795, Bob O'Neil at 860-889-7284, and Laura Zeppieri at 860-889-5880.

Gratefully yours in the Lord,

Fr. Joe
