

# 2013

## LENT TOGETHER SHARING CHRIST

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*Reflections and articles from Christmas as well as those looking forward to the coming season of Lent. Be sure to see the list of formational opportunities for Lent listed on the last page.*

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# Letter from the Pastor

January 21, 2013

Shalom!

Wonderful news: We're pregnant!

Before you call the newspapers or the chancery, let me explain that the "we" in question is our parish, and the "pregnant" refers to our new baptismal font that is growing in its own womb-like enclosure in the center of the gathering space.

The metaphor is particularly apt because, in the image of the liturgy, the baptismal font is itself the womb of holy mother church, from which new life is brought forth for God. Thus the intensely sexual symbolism of the blessing of the font at the Easter Vigil, when the Paschal Candle, the symbol of the Risen Christ, is immersed three times, each time deeper than before, into the water of the Font as the presider prays that the Spirit of the Lord, who made fruitful the womb of the virgin, might make fruitful the womb of his bride.

Around Easter, when the Font is completed, blessed, and put into use, we will talk in greater depth about the theology and symbolism of Baptism. But right now I would just like to add a few more comments about the symbolism of the font itself.

First, it is placed in the center of the gathering space, on the entrance axis of the church. This was a traditional place for the font ever since we stopped putting the font into a separate building called a baptistery, for the simple reason that it gives visual expression to the fundamental idea that Baptism is the entrance into the church. It just seems natural that entrance into the church community should be celebrated at the entrance of the church building.

Second it is octagonal in shape, another old traditional idea. Creation took place in six days, and on the seventh day God rested. On the eighth day, the new creation begins with the Resurrection of Christ. Surmounting the font when it is not in use will be an octagonal metal cover, with eight artistic panels, symbolizing the seven days of creation and the day of Resurrection.

We'll explain more about the symbolism as the piece unveils itself between now and Easter. If you couldn't tell, I'm as excited as any other expectant father.

Peace and Love,

*Dick*

Pastor

## PASTORAL ASSOCIATE'S NOTES

January 22, 2013

Dear Fellow St. V's Parishioners,

We have come through the Christmas season and have arrived in Ordinary Time, but not for long. On February 13<sup>th</sup> we will jump back into Lent with our Ash Wednesday Liturgy. It is quite early this year as is Easter which falls on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

And while this issue looks toward Lent, it also looks back. In this issue is a reflection by our children's director, Anne Gibson, on our Christmas Pageant. It was notable for this year's addition of the innkeeper's song and Mary's song. It is great to see so many of our kids and families participate in this great liturgy. Also included are articles on what Jesus knew which relates to our Sunday reading in the Christmas season on the finding of Jesus in the temple, as well as a reflection on our Advent Reconciliation service.

Yes, Lent will soon be upon us; a time of metanoia. I would like to highlight that Wednesdays during Lent provide great formational opportunities for all of us to help us prepare for Easter. These opportunities alternate between spiritual and educational. The spiritual ones begin on Ash Wednesday and continue with The Lenten Penance Service, Stations and Tenebrae. In between these will be educational opportunities for viewing films that relate to the theme of the Eucharist, on which our reading from Fr. Ronald Rolheiser's book Our One Great Act of Fidelity is also related.

Our Vatican II lecture series will continue after Lent. Be sure to mark your calendars for these great opportunities. At this time, we are still working with Sr. Mary Collins on a new date for her postponed December lecture.

As Fr. Dick notes in his letter, we will have a new baptismal font at Easter, which will be a great opportunity to review and revisit some theology of Baptism as well as for the placement and symbolism of the font.

Lastly it is great to see that we have some new parishioners in our pews in recent weeks. It is good and important for our life as a community to have you with us. It is my hope that our community provides the spiritual nourishment and the home that is needed for all those who come to worship with us. It is great to work with so many willing souls which do such great work on all aspects of our life at St. V's. I look forward to journeying with you all through Lent and celebrating Easter with you all.

Peace,

*Chris*

## 2012 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

BY ANNE GIBSON



At the 7:15 Mass every Christmas Eve, St. Vincent de Paul Church is transformed into Bethlehem. One of our most cherished traditions is the annual Christmas pageant which is presented by the children of the parish. Participants range in age from toddler through high school. Before Mass began, several of our young parishioners shared their gifts of song and music with us. The congregation joined in as we sang traditional Christmas Carols from 7:00 to 7:15.

The pageant replaced the Gospel reading. The children reenacted the story of the birth of Jesus. In addition to the roles of Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels and kings, several other parts were created in order to give everyone who wanted a “speaking part” an opportunity to participate. The result was several additional characters such as Mr. And Mrs. Innkeeper and their child, a drummer boy, townspeople and even a star. Once again the children shared their gifts with the congregation. Mrs. Innkeeper’s response to St. Joseph’s question about staying at the inn was a song entitled “No Vacancy”. Her delivery of the song left no doubt in anyone’s mind that the inn was totally full! Mary, after giving birth to Jesus and placing him gently in the manger, sang a beautiful hymn “Mary’s Cradle Song”. The children worked very hard memorizing their lines, remembering where to stand and passing the microphone to the next speaker. The reenactment was reverent, child-like and enjoyable, and it made all of the parents proud.

The pageant ended with a beautiful hymn “The Greatest Gift of All” in which we thanked God for sending us his son Jesus, the greatest gift.

The children were also responsible for the other parts of the liturgy such as the theme statement, Scripture readings and the Prayer of the Faithful.

After Mass, we enjoyed a brief period of fellowship in the gathering space. No one lingered, as everyone was anxious to get home and go to bed in anticipation of Santa’s visit.



# WHAT DID JESUS KNOW, AND WHEN DID HE KNOW IT?

BY AUDREY ROGERS

When I was a little girl, my mother and grandmother would gang up on my grandfather during Lent insisting that if Jesus could fast for forty days, so could he. His rejoinder was always, “Yeah, but he was God!”

Did being God give Jesus a “leg-up” as he lived out a very human life? As Christianity moved out into the Greco-Roman world where converts were familiar with stories of gods who only took human form, imaginations began to fill in the childhood blanks left by the established Gospel stories. Many other “Gospel” versions soon appeared with stories of a Baby Jesus striking down statues of idols on the flight to Egypt or a toddler Jesus whose mud-pie birds took flight. These Apocryphal Gospels never made into the Canon of the New Testament because Church Fathers saw them for what they were: the spurious exercises of curious minds. Yet the four Gospels that are part of our canon don’t paint a uniform picture of Jesus either. In Mark, the earliest written, we see Jesus who needs two attempts to heal a blind man and cannot seem to get his meaning through to his chronically confused disciples; whereas in John, the last one written, Jesus seems other-worldly and can read the hearts of the people he encounters. So did being God give Jesus a “leg-up” as he lived out a very human life?

People struggled with what it meant precisely that Jesus was *both* human and divine. Some began to teach that Jesus wasn’t really human; his body was just a shell, a form that God took. The Church said “no.” Others taught that Jesus wasn’t fully God but he was more than human, something in-between. The Church said “no.” Still others taught that in Jesus the divine will supplanted his human will. Again the Church said “no.” The Council of Chalcedon (451 CE) affirmed the traditional belief that in Christ there was *unity* (one person) and *distinction* (two natures).

Thomas Aquinas developed his theology on a classical Greek philosophical base in which the cultural ideal was *perfection*. Thus, for Thomas, since ignorance is not perfection, Jesus could not be ignorant. Therefore Thomas taught that Jesus would have the same *experimental knowledge* we have, learning things through our bodily senses as we mature. But he would also have the *infused knowledge* God gives the angels who do not have bodies through which to learn, and he would have the *beatific vision*, --for how could he be God and not know God’s self? Jesus had to be *perfect* in his knowledge. This sounds like he surely had a “leg up.”

But what if the philosophical base was a *different* one?

In the last few centuries, philosophy made a turn to the self, starting with the human experience: How do we *know anything*? Transcendental philosophy holds that we figure out what is real through thinking and therefore focuses on *how* we think and the limits of our human nature. Being human means having the capacity to ask questions; it starts with the incessant “why?” of the young child. We arrive at one understanding only to find imbedded questions that entice us deeper. The secular existentialists maintain that there is no ultimate answer to this series of questions and that human existence is therefore essentially absurd. But on the religious side, we counter that *God is the ultimate answer* to all our questioning. As Augustine said long ago, “Our hearts were made for God and they will be restless until they rest in God.”





Karl Rahner, a 20<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit theologian, fashioned a new style of theology by relating Aquinas' theology to transcendental and existentialist philosophies. As opposed to the Greek cultural ideal of *perfection*, the ideal of transcendentalism is *freedom*. Aquinas would say that for Jesus to be perfect he had to have full knowledge; but transcendental Christology says if Jesus had full knowledge; his freedom would be restricted. In Jesus, his human will, to be fully human, needed to have freedom. So paradoxically, having all the knowledge that Aquinas taught that Jesus had, including the full knowledge of himself as God, would constrain Jesus' human will in that he would not have the freedom to choose among options. He would have *known*.

So what did Jesus know, and when did he know it?

Rahner said that all humans have two kinds of self-knowledge. One is focused on the facts that we can express about ourselves as life unfolds: our relationships, our experiences, successes and failures. We all have this. Jesus did, too. The other is a self-awareness born of the spiritual encounter with the Holy Mystery. For many of us, this is an acutely underdeveloped sense of who we really are in God. For Jesus, it was an intuitive, personal grasp of his subjective self-knowledge as the Word of God. Yet because of the limitations of his humanity, it is likely that even at his death, Jesus did not have a full concrete grasp of everything about himself. His human mind could not contain such knowledge. In becoming human and accepting all that meant, the Word of God declined to “‘have a leg up.’”

Next time you hear Paul's letter to the Philippians, hear it with new ears:

Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

In becoming human, the Word of God accepted that the infinity of the Holy Mystery could not be contained in a simple human vessel. But the Word of God knew that divine love compelled living within those constraints.



## LIVING IN MARY- DARKNESS

BY JOHN HELIE

What does it mean to be fully human and fully alive? Such is an essential question in light of our human existence! As a faith seeker I have wrestled with this question most of my life. Yet, more often than not, I have found myself living the question rather than enjoying its response. In the kind of blinding speed world in which we live, we tend to pass the day with questions more mundane than the one that takes us deeply into our core as spiritual persons. Should I have that second cup of coffee? What route can I take to avoid the beltway this morning? How am I going to cope with that difficult colleague today? Can I get that tuition payment out on time? The answers to these questions may carry me through my day, but they do not offer me a sense of richness or fullness. For this reason I often find myself slogging through each day rather than embracing the day as part of my human and spiritual journey.

This past Advent I was brought back to the “fully human and fully alive” question by way of my commitment to develop an Advent Reconciliation Service for St. Vincent’s Community. As usual, I had “backed into” the commitment. Do you know what I mean? Have you ever found yourself saying “yes” because you have run out of “no”? That is how it happened. Yet, in the serendipity of life, even a weak “yes” can lead to the good.

A change came about as I listened to the words of Jessica Powers in her poem, *In Mary-Darkness*:

I live my Advent in the womb of Mary  
And on one night when a great star swings free  
From its high mooring and walks down the sky  
To be the dot above the *Christus* i,  
I shall be born of her by blessed grace.  
I wait in Mary-darkness, faith's walled place,  
With hope's expectance of nativity.  
I knew for long she carried me and fed me,  
Guarded and loved me, though I could not see,  
But only now, with inward jubilee,  
I come upon earth's most amazing knowledge:  
Someone is hidden in this dark with me.

I began taking some reflective time within my day to create a service that might possibly call me to embrace the genuine meaning of Advent—a time of stillness, quiet anticipation, a “living in the womb of Mary”, a hopeful glimpse of the divine. In conversations with my wife, and in our working together to develop the service, we began to engage in the Ignatian practice of the Examen. It led me to the realization that reflecting on my experience of self and the divine could open my day to new possibilities for feeling “fully human and fully alive”. The Examen calls us to discern, to dare search out what may be concealed or disguised, to extend our vision both outward and inward. Perhaps the change was not profound, but I did find myself becoming calmer and more centered throughout the remaining days of Advent.

Another change took hold as I explored the compassionate touch of reconciliation. What does it mean to forgive and to be forgiven? As I remember my life’s experience, I am reminded that often I have been fully human and fully alive when I have used the words “I forgive you” in a heartfelt way. Not only had those words been graciously received by its recipient, but they engraved themselves into my own heart peacefully. More powerful, however, were those grace filled moments when another person spoke those words to me. My own sense of brokenness,

embarrassment, imperfection, weakness, was somehow stitched into a wonderful quilt of newness and rebirth. Rather than worn down and beaten, I felt a new burst of the divine flow of grace.

One does not become “fully human and fully alive” alone. Only relationship with the “other,” who becomes “Other,” affords us the bridge to self- understanding and to a grasp towards what is Transcendent. In my own limited experience of faith, I have at least touched on the belief that God is a “God with skin on.” I find that incarnational theology pulses in our very veins. To “be” with other, to “touch” the other, to attend to the other, is to reach that mountain top that the mystics described as the embrace of God.

As I led the service, I looked out at the community gladly acknowledging the beauty of our relationship to each other, to the Divine Presence, to our desire for rootedness and connection, to our need to forgive and be forgiven, to our joyful anticipation of the Christ Child. Not alone, but together! Not splintered or fractured, but “fully human and fully alive”.

Now, there is the hope that, in the next celebration of Reconciliation at St. Vincent’s, more of our brothers and sisters will risk the opportunity to become “fully human and alive” by finding time in their busy and restless day to gather together in a spirit of longing for reconciliation, refreshment and renewal. Together we experience what Gerard Manley Hopkins names so beautifully as “God’s Grandeur.”

Mark your calendars for the:

## LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE



**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup>**

**7:30 – 8:30 PM**

**ST. IGNATIUS CHURCH\***

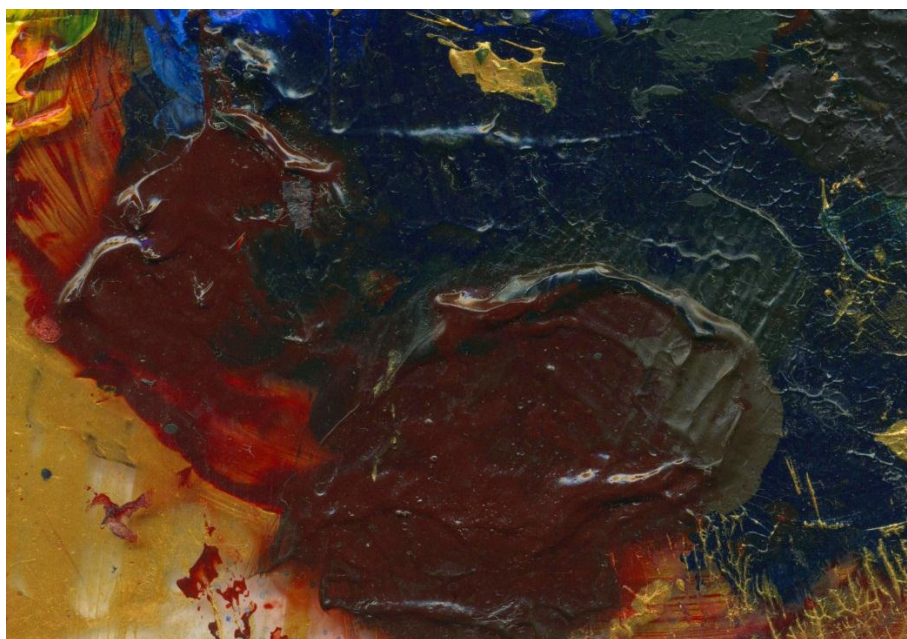
**704 N CALVERT STREET**

**\*Please Note:** The service will take place in the chapel under the main church. The Chapel can be accessed through the door on the left side of the stairs that lead to the main church.



## LENTEN THEME: METANOIA

This Lent we read from Luke's Gospel with a theme of *metanoia*, a Greek word meaning "change of heart." It is what the prophet Joel calls us to do on Ash Wednesday: *Rend your hearts*, the Lord says, *not your garments*. Dispense with the externals. Sink into your inner being. The Lord desires our hearts be open to God's new life just as the earth is open to the seed in springtime. What we are---what we offer to the Lord---is made holy and returned in hundred-fold abundance. We pray through Jesus to become Jesus. *We ourselves are Holy Ground*.



Artwork: Rend Your Heart © Jan L. Richardson. [www.janricharsonimages.com](http://www.janricharsonimages.com)

## PRAYING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

BY CHRIS MCCULLOUGH

Dear God,

1. Help me to put my relationship with you above all else and to seek you in all I do.
2. Help me to honor your name in all I do & may that be reflected in all that I say.
3. Help me to create space and time for you in my life and to make Sunday holy.
4. Help me to honor my parents & be honorable as a parent or role model in return.
5. Help me to respect life in all forms; to see the sacredness of all of your creation.
6. Help me to overcome the lust in my heart; to keep the seductive messages in our society at bay. Most of all help me not to act on those feelings of lust.
7. Help me not to steal or cheat or compromise what is right for my own gain.
8. Help me to seek the truth and to avoid lying to or deceiving others.
9. Help me to see the beauty and value of my partner and to keep from thinking about another person's partner in a way that weakens that relationship.
10. Help me to refrain from comparing what I have with others; to see my life as a gift & to avoid being jealous of the good fortune or possessions of others.

## THEOLOGY AND “REAL” LIFE

BY ANNE MAURA ENGLISH

“Does theology make a difference to you spiritually? Does it change your spiritual life?” That’s a question to which I was asked to respond in *Together Sharing Christ*. My answer is “Yes, but I don’t think that’s an automatic result.”

I don’t pray to the same God I prayed to as a child in the 1950’s—or even as an adult in the 1970’s. This should make sense. If prayer is a function of one’s relationship to God, then how I understand God will affect that. Ordinary life provides multiple examples of this on a purely human level. How many of us have had the experience of learning to like someone better after we got to know them—or know them differently than our first impression or someone else’s description. If someone’s theology of God is that God is the grand Judge keeping track of our sins and misdemeanors; that person’s prayer life is going to be different from someone who sees God as the constantly creating, God of all future and possibility, absolutely faithful love. How one turns to God, the words one uses to pray, how one feels about and experiences prayer will be affected.

Regardless of whether they pursue any formal “theology,” this growth happens for many people who pray regularly, who reflect on their experience of God or their exposure to God whether that’s Mass, the Bible, or day-to-day life. They may not call that “theology,” but it is. For me, learning deeper theological insights into who God is—whether that comes from a 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian or biblical scholar or a 3<sup>rd</sup> century one has flowed into and enriched those reflections—or become the focus of the actual reflection. If this is who God is, then what does that mean for who God is for me and for my life? What does it mean to live my life in relationship with *this* God?

I find the same thing is true of how I see myself and both my life and human life as a whole. It’s been a long while since I thought of the purpose of life as “serving” God in the sense of merely acting dutifully and avoiding sin. As I have let myself dwell on the implications of the theology I was learning, I have come to see human life as a demanding but invigorating challenge, a call to be co-creators and co-redeemers with God, enjoying the “freedom of the sons of God” and entrusted with the awesome responsibility of both creation and human history.

Culturally we in the United States tend to think of philosophy as some esoteric, highbrow activity removed from “real” life. In reality, everyone has a philosophy. It need not be explicit, or even conscious. However, over the years every individual develops basic assumptions about themselves, other people, and the purpose and meaning (or meaninglessness) of human life. This personal philosophy underlies the individual’s feelings and attitudes and shapes their priorities and choices in every aspect of life.

Can you think of someone (a media celebrity or someone whom you know personally) whose apparently subscribes to the philosophy of “Life’s a b\*\*\*\*; then you die so you might as well grab whatever you can.” What about someone whose philosophy seems to be “I want my life to make a difference; I want to make a contribution”? The impact of their personal philosophies may be very evident in those extreme cases, but the same is true perhaps in a less dramatic scale, of all of us. Our basic assumptions and values about ourselves, the meaning of our lives, the place of other people in “our” world will influence how we live our marriages, raise our children, do our jobs, vote or not vote, spend our money. . . and on and on.

For someone with any kind of faith, this implicit personal philosophy will include how they view God and God’s involvement in those other areas. And that is basically what theology is. This does not mean that a believer’s personal theology is necessarily well- articulated; it may be assumptions and attitudes that the person is hardly conscious of. And the “theology” or creed someone professes in words may in fact be different—or very

different—from the creed by which that person lives. Nevertheless, it is that deep, genuine theology that drives us as spiritual human beings.

It has been my experience that opening one's mind and psyche to formal theology can become transformative of that personal theology. However, there is no guarantee that a good "head" knowledge of theology will translate into a genuinely lived spirituality. That's hardly surprising. Many of us have known someone in education, medicine, psychology, law, government, who could speak eloquently about the ideals of their profession but were dismally limited in living it—or in recognizing that limitation.

Any avenue of knowledge (even the accumulation of trivia) can become an opportunity to bask in "knowing it all." And that's not to deny that learning "things," satisfying one's curiosity, can be interesting, even fun. I have an 11-year-old nephew who's passionately interested in animals, hopes one day to be a vet. Spending time with him I've accumulated a fascinating array of information via *Animal Planet* and the *Discovery* channels. However, I'm not tempted to believe that this information has somehow changed by life.

I personally have to be careful with biblical study. I began adult life as an English major. Textual study—the influence of history and culture on text, literary structure, the weaving of themes throughout a work—is something which excites me. For me it's right up there with watching the Ravens play or spending an evening Irish dancing. I need to keep reminding myself that although I can enjoy biblical study in exactly the same way and for the same reasons that I enjoy critical study of Shakespeare or Herman Melville or T.S. Eliot, the ultimate purpose of the biblical text is something entirely different.

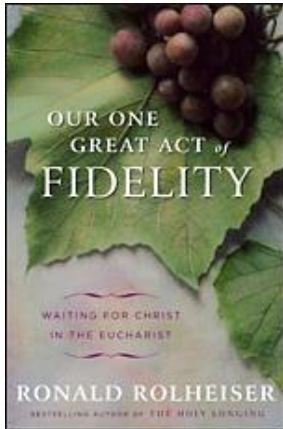
At the same time, we have probably all known folks who couldn't have passed a Theology 101 exam and yet whose living of Catholic Christianity was both inspirational to and redemptive of the People of God. I periodically remind myself of *The Gospel in Solentiname*. This records the Sunday reflections of the peasants of the Solentiname village in Nicaragua. They were similar to base communities throughout the country whose peasant populations knew nothing of historical-critical biblical scholarship but whose personal response to the power of the stories fueled the courage to bring down a dictatorship.

Ultimately our attitude to theology probably has a lot to do with the Western prioritizing of rationality over feeling or inner experience. That may be slowly changing, at least in some circles. For years, a logical, academic approach to theology has been justified by using St. Anselm's statement (echoing Augustine) that "theology is faith seeking understanding." More recently, however, theologian David Tracy has pointed out that Anselm was a Benedictine. In his century (the 11<sup>th</sup>), Benedictine spirituality was deeply imbued with daily practice of *Lectio Divina* prayer: reflecting on and savoring Scripture—not as an academic exercise but as a window on God, one's own life and relationship to God. For Anselm, "seeking understanding" would necessarily have encompassed that prayerful practice as well as academic study. It is that synthesis I strive for in my own life and study of theology. It is in hopes of fueling that in the lives of others that I continue my own writing and teaching on religious themes.

## BOOK FOR LENT:

### **OUR ONE GREAT ACT OF FIDELITY - WAITING FOR CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST**

BY RONALD ROLHEISER

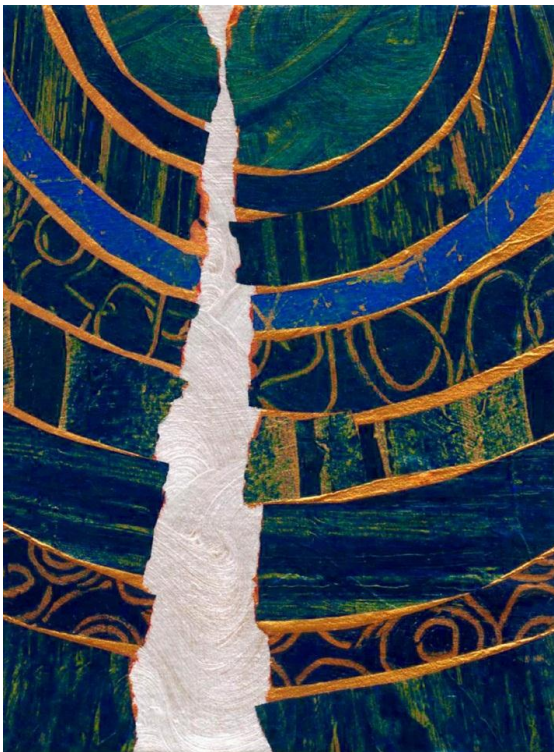


Our rootedness in Jewish ritual affirms the belief that God becomes present among the people when they keep memorial. The New Testament gives us a picture of the Lord's Last Supper that invites us into a world of symbols that place the Eucharistic celebration in the context of a history centered in the sacrifice of Jesus and unfolding now in our memory of that event.

The Education and Enrichment Committee has chosen this book for our 2013 Lenten reading. It is the text employed by the Liturgy Committee in its August 2012 Retreat. This wonderful book discusses twelve different dimensions of the Eucharist in a way that invites the reader into a deeper personal reflection. Fr. Rolheiser uses metaphor and story to weave an array of theological insights into this central of all Christian sacraments: the sign that nurtures, confirms, heals, and unites us all.

Carve out time this Lent to read the book as part of your Lenten discipline. There are reading guides to accompany you in your reading and reflection. We will continue our reflection on the book during the Easter season. Make sure to participate in a discussion group on this important book throughout Easter. It will also serve as a great preparation for our Summer Homily Series in July which will focus on the Eucharist.

## PRAYER FOR OVERCOMING INDIFFERENCE



For the sin of silence,  
 For the sin of indifference,  
 For the secret complicity of the neutral,  
 For the closing of borders,  
 For the washing of hands,  
 For the crime of indifference,  
 For the sin of silence,  
 For the closing of borders.  
 For all that was done,  
 For all that was not done,  
 Let there be no forgetfulness before the Throne of Glory;  
 Let there be remembrance within the human heart;  
 And let there at last be forgiveness  
 When your children, O God,  
 Are free and at peace. Amen.

**Text:** Chaim Stern, editor, *Gates of Repentance* (Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978).

**Artwork:** *No Between* © Jan L. Richardson.

[www.janrichardsonimages.com](http://www.janrichardsonimages.com)

## A FOLK TALE FROM INDIA ON HOW TO SPEND LENT

FROM *PRAYER WITHOUT BORDERS*, A 2004 PUBLICATION OF CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

One day a young aspirant went to see an old saint who lived beside a river in a small hut made of hemp sacks and bamboo poles. The simple atmosphere of the hut calmed the aspirant's mind and he enjoyed the company of the saint very much. When the time came to leave, the young man asked the saint if he could answer an important question.

"Of course, my son," said the saint.

"Where can I find God?"

The saint smiled. "That is not an easy question. Allow me to dwell on it. Come again tomorrow and I will answer it. Also, please bring a glass of milk."

The young man agreed and went home, excited that the next day his question would be answered. He thought it odd that the saint requested a glass of milk, but it was such a simple request to fulfill, so the next day he returned with the glass of milk.

The saint thanked him for the milk and poured it into his begging bowl. Then he put his fingers in the milk and lifted them up, but when the milk ran through them, he frowned and repeated the gesture, with the same result.

The young man watched, perplexed, but remained silent. He wished the saint would finish with his foolishness and get to his question.

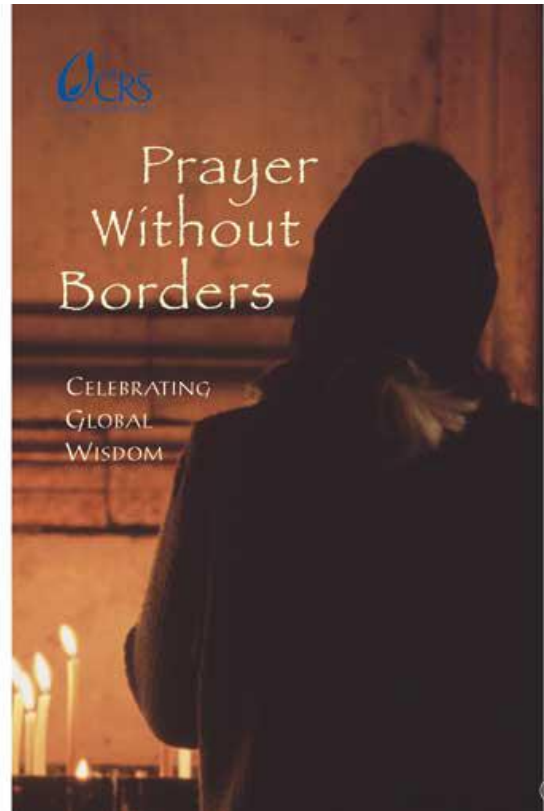
The saint began feeling through the milk with his hand, occasionally lifting his hand out and staring into his palm, but when he saw that his palm was empty he would return to fishing through the milk.

At last the young man's patience was gone and he said, "Guruji, what are you looking for?"

"I have heard that there is butter in milk," said the saint. "I am searching for the butter."

Before he could stop himself the young man laughed and said, "It is not like that. The butter is not separate from the milk, it is part of it. You have to convert the milk to yogurt and then churn it to make the butter come out."

"Very good!" said the saint. "I believe that you have the answer to your question." And he quaffed the bowl of milk in one long drink. "Now go and churn the milk of your soul until you have found God."





## NEW SAINTS FOR THE UNITED STATES

BY ANNE MAURA ENGLISH

Two new U.S. women have recently been canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. They are Sister Marianne Cope (a German immigrant) and Kateri Tekawitha (a Native American). In this issue of *TSC*, we'll introduce Sister Marianne, the 11<sup>th</sup> citizen of the United States to be declared a saint.

Born Barbara Koop (the spelling of the name also emigrated: Kopp, Kop, now officially Cope) January 23, 1838, in what is now Hessen, Germany, the future Sister Marianne emigrated with her family when she was barely a year old. Since she was still a minor when her father became a naturalized citizen in the 1850's, Barbara automatically also became a citizen at that time.

In her mid-teens, Barbara experienced a desire to become a religious sister. However, her father had become an invalid and, after completing an eighth-grade education, Barbara had gone to work in a factory to support the family, which still included four younger siblings. Only at the age of 24, once her siblings were able to manage on their own, was Barbara able to enter the Sisters of Saint Francis in Syracuse, New York.

Now Sister Marianne, the young religious was able to realize her dream of being a teacher. For a short time she taught and even served as principal of several schools in New York. Within six years of her entering the community; however, her religious congregation had already recognized her strengths and her quick intelligence — despite her lack of formal education—and she was appointed and/or elected to several administrative and governing positions in the Sisters of Saint Francis.

### Hospital Contributions

While she was on the governing councils of the congregation, S. Marianne participated in the establishment of the first two hospitals in central New York State: St Elizabeth's (Utica, 1866) and St. Joseph's (Syracuse, 1869). They were unique in serving all persons, regardless of economic status, religion, or race and thus became two of the first 50 general hospitals in the U.S. Now only 32, S. Marianne began a new career as administrator of St. Joseph's, quickly establishing herself as an able and innovative leader. She adroitly navigated the first years of keeping the hospital in existence and proved herself ahead of her time in some practices she introduced, e.g. insisting on cleanliness and frequent hand washing by all hospital personnel. Not surprising to us but very much so to her contemporaries, St. Joseph's mortality rate plummeted in comparison to other hospitals of the time. Sister Marianne's earlier love of education was not forgotten, and she instituted various educational programs for patients and their families. She also placed a high priority on beauty and strove to have the hospital environment reflect that.

It was the growing reputation of the hospital's quality care, as well as Sister Marianne's openness to having medical students accepted for clinical training at St. Joseph's, that prompted the Hospital of Medicine in Geneva, NY, to move to the newly-opened University of Syracuse. However, her negotiation letter with that institution again showed her farsightedness. Long before "patients' rights" was even in the English vocabulary, S. Marianne insisted that every single patient (regardless of social status) have the right to decide whether or not they would be seen by a medical student. Sister Marianne's idea of "hospital administration" did not involve spending her time in an office. Since nursing schools were unknown, she was free to work side by side with the doctors, most of whom were

physicians from what was becoming one of the most progressive medical schools in the country. In this way she gained hands-on knowledge of hospital procedures, medical and nursing care, and pharmaceutical treatment.

S. Marianne became a well-known and loved figure in central New York, even while she garnered a fair amount of criticism for her strangely novel ideas. One of these was her willingness to provide service to those usually shunned by medical practitioners. Chief among those were alcoholics who were not considered “medical” cases at that time.

### Leadership—in the Congregation and the Sandwich Islands



In 1877, Mother Marianne (now 39) was elected the “mother general” of the entire congregation. In that position, she received in 1883 a letter from the Sandwich Islands (later called Hawaii) pleading for sisters to staff hospitals and schools. Although Molokai was already an island colony for Hansen’s disease (leprosy), there was a processing center on Oahu where the recently diagnosed were cared for in the earlier stages of the disease. Demonstrating the sensitivity to the poorest of the poor and the “needs of the time” which were already becoming the hallmark of U.S. nuns, Mother Marianne chose six sisters from the 35 who volunteered and by November 1883 accompanied them to Honolulu to get the work started.

The next two years were crammed with activity. The Sisters’ initial work was at Kaka’ako Branch Hospital on Oahu, the processing center for anyone on the islands diagnosed with Hansen’s. Severe cases were sent on to Molokai but many patients remained at Kaka’ako for years until their conditions worsened.

A year after arriving, Mother Marianne moved to Maui at the government’s request in order to open the first general hospital on that island. The dedication of its chapel gave Mother Marianne the opportunity to meet Father Damien, the Apostle to Molokai, who attended the ceremony. Soon after, however, she was called back to Oahu to deal with the government-appointed administrator’s abuse of leprosy patients at Kaka’ako Branch. She gave the government a clear ultimatum: if it kept the abusive administrator, she would take her sisters back to the States. The sisters stayed. However, the government also turned over administration of the overcrowded hospital to Mother Marianne. In 1885, Mother Marianne brought a new need to the Hawaiian government. Because girl children had no way of making a living and because no families or orphanages would take in children of leprosy patients, female children of these patients were forced to live at the Oahu leprosy hospital. Mother Marianne succeeded in getting a facility, Kapiolani House, opened for these youngsters. By necessity it was established on the grounds of the hospital because no one but the sisters would agree to be near children whose parent had Hansen’s.

In between crises and major events, Mother Marianne continued her work to establish educational programs for patients and families. She “encouraged an interest in color harmony, needlework, and landscaping” to provide beauty to nourish the spirit as well. She prevailed upon Catholic priests to visit and minister to her patients and saw to it that non-Catholic patients had access to their spiritual ministers as well. Her attitudes and practices in giving dignity to the dying is today cited as a precursor of the hospice movement.

In 1885, Mother Marianne was awarded the medal of the Royal Order of Kapiolani by Hawaii’s King Kalahau. Her success had a price, however, both government and Church combined to thwart her plans to return to Syracuse—

she was after all the leader of the congregation—insisting that her presence in Hawaii was indispensable to the work there.

The next year Father Damien himself was diagnosed with Hansen's disease. On a visit to Oahu he was consequently refused hospitality by the government and by the Church, both of whom had formerly treated him as a celebrity. Mother Marianne welcomed him to the Sisters' facility and was instrumental in getting the king to visit him there.

### *A New Call*

In 1888, five years after the Sisters' arrival in Hawaii, there was a change in government. The new regime decided to restore the former policy of immediately and completely isolating victims of Hansen's. It closed the hospital where the sisters worked and transferred all patients to Molokai. Close on this action, came a government request to Mother Marianne to staff a women's hospital there.

Accepting this position would be no small matter. Because of both Hawaiian and U.S. policies regarding leprosy, accepting ministry on Molokai would be to accept exile. She would never be able to leave the island, either to visit elsewhere in Hawaii nor to return to the U.S. where she had not only many sister friends but family members as well. She had been away from them for five years. Now she was being asked—at the age of 50—to cut all ties with them for the rest of her life. She chose to go to Molokai, writing heartfelt good-byes to those she would never see again.

Two other Sisters of St. Francis chose to go with her. They cared for 105 patients in the women's hospital and took over the care of the men's hospital—and of Father Damien himself—as the latter's health deteriorated. Following his death, the Sisters ran the men's facility for six years until an order of religious brothers could be gotten to serve there.

Mother Marianne Cope spent the last 30 years of her life ministering with her characteristic charismatic enthusiasm, compassionate outreach, and innovative practicality to the leper patients of Molokai. In addition to high quality health care, gardens, music, educational classes, and decent clothing became the standard for patients. Neither Mother Marianne or, in fact, any of the other Franciscan sisters working on Molokai ever contracted leprosy, and this woman, whom CNN would one day call an American health care pioneer, died peacefully in August of her 80th year.

### References:

[www.mariannecop.org](http://www.mariannecop.org)

[www.cnn.com/2012/12/20/health/saint-marianne-cope/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2012/12/20/health/saint-marianne-cope/index.html)

[www.nps.gov/kala/historyculture/marianne.htm](http://www.nps.gov/kala/historyculture/marianne.htm) [nps = Nat'l Park Service]

# **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH JANUARY 8TH, 2013**

The meeting was brought to order by the Council President, Jim Casey, at 7:31pm and prayer was offered by Peggy Meyer.

In attendance: Fr. Richard Lawrence, Pastor; Chris McCullough, Pastoral Associate; Jim Casey, President and 9:30 Mass Rep.; Jack Bonner, Vice President and 9:30 Mass Rep.; John Kober, Jr., 7:15 Mass Rep.; Sara Kelley, 9:30 Mass Rep.; Rosie Graf, 9:30 Mass Rep.; Graham Yearley, Secretary, 12:15 Mass Rep., and Corporator; Laureen Brunelli, Communications and Outreach Committee Chair, Kathi Jeffra, Education and Enrichment Committee Chair; Audrey Rogers, Liturgy Committee Chair; Dennis Flynn, Finance Committee Vice-Chair; Pat Ball, Facilities Committee Chair; Peggy Meyer, Social Action Committee Co-Chair; Anne Marie Freeburger, Corporator. Absent: Pete McDowell.

## **Pastor's Report**

1. As of today, Fr. Lawrence is under contract to purchase an apartment at Scarlett Place which is within canonical boundaries of our parish.
2. The Christmas season's liturgies and celebrations went well. Fr. Lawrence did note that the only problem was that the children at the 7pm Christmas Eve Mass were uncharacteristically well behaved.
3. S.S. James and John School Campaign: \$12,000.00 to \$15,000.00 was pledged in the last month, bringing the number of donors to around 100. Some \$700 was donated in cash gifts recently which will be given to the school directly in the near future. The total raised for the campaign is about \$594,000.00, an amount, the Pastor added, we can be proud of as a parish.

## **Finance Committee Report**

Dennis Flynn reported that the collections from the Christmas Masses totaled \$3,249.07, down from last year's \$7,297. However, the general financial state of the parish is sound.

## **Jesuit Volunteer Corps**

In the seeking of a volunteer from the Jesuit Volunteer Corps to serve our parish, the news is both good and bad. The good news is that we are first on the list should another project be launched; the bad news is that no new initiatives will be undertaken while the J.V.C. is re-structuring. However, they have said that the re-structuring should be finished in March of this year. Sara Kelley added that there are other volunteer groups we could consider.

## **Clean-Up Day**

Chris McCullough proposed that an annual Clean Up day be established as a parish event. The next clean-up will be held on March 16. Currently, work is being done to clean the upper sacristy. Medical equipment collected by the Pastoral Care Committee and kept in the stairwell of the Education Building needs to be sorted and decisions made about what to keep and what to give away.

**Vatican II Series**

Chris called Sister Mary about re-scheduling her lecture to May 13<sup>th</sup> or June 10<sup>th</sup>. There are plans to have a follow-up lecture to the series by Arthur Jones.

**HVAC System**

The Hartford Company has finally sent us a service contract proposal to consider. For \$7,560.00 a year, they will provide maintenance on the heating/cooling system with four inspections a year as part of the package. For around four thousand more, they will provide emergency service between inspections at no additional charge. Fr. Lawrence suggested that two inspections a year would probably be sufficient but Dennis Flynn pointed out that quarterly maintenance of the filter system cannot be neglected. Peggy Meyer suggested we should seek another bid from another company. Several on the council thought further clarification of the terms of the proposed contract would be useful. Audrey Rogers thought a review of what we spent in the last fiscal year on repairs would be helpful in determining if we should accept the proposed contract. John Kober recommended that we solicit proposals from other companies and Jim Casey wondered if the Archdiocese had a databank on this kind of information since all parishes face it. The Hartford Company was called in last week to repair the heating system. They found dirty coils and cleaned them, but, within hours, the system was still not functioning optimally (the temperature in the church was 55 degrees although the thermostat said it was 70 degrees). They will be called in again to address the problem.

Action Item: Chris will explore these ideas on the service contract and bring Hartford back.

**Rectory Transition and Parish Town Hall Meeting Planning**

The Archbishop has asked Fr. Lawrence to continue as Pastor and therefore Chris McCullough will continue as Pastoral Associate. Discussions are going on between Fr. Lawrence and Chris about how the parish will function as Fr. Lawrence moves out of the rectory at the end of June. The expected 'retirement party' will now become a '40<sup>th</sup> anniversary party' to celebrate Fr. Lawrence's tenure as pastor. Barbara Hodnett will retire from parish administrative duties on April 30 but continue as sacristan and archivist thereafter. Chris will be submitting a facilities use plan and a staffing plan to Council members for discussion next month. When these have been totally vetted, they will be presented to the parish for comment at a Town Meeting scheduled for Sunday, April 14.

Action Item: Fr. Lawrence and Chris McCullough will draft a proposal for content and format for the Town Meeting.

**Pictures and Registration**

Rosie Graf will be sending out a letter to those in the parish who have not been photographed for the parish directory and those who have not re-registered urging them to be photographed and to re-register. She asked that parish council members speak to their respective masses about re-registering. Paper registration forms will also be available in the Gathering Space. New photo sessions have been planned for February 15 and 16<sup>th</sup>. The Council offered its thanks for Rosie's hard work on this project.

Action Item: Committee chairs should ask committee members for pictures of parish events to place in the upcoming directory.

**New Business**

1. Rosie Graf received a complaint from Joe Hamilton about the door from the rectory to the church being left open during Sunday morning mass. While having the door open facilitates the use of both bathrooms, it creates a security



risk. Chris McCullough added that it was disturbing to watch people who have come for mass wait in line while non-worshippers occupy the bathroom. Chris asked if the bathrooms could be opened downstairs for the use of those not here for mass. The answer was 'yes', but only if the bathrooms would be monitored so toilet paper and soap don't disappear. Peggy Meyer suggested asking the woman who monitors the bathroom for the Friday evening meal if she could be available from 9:30 to 11:15 on Sunday mornings. She is paid \$10 for her service on Friday evenings and would require the same reimbursement on Sunday. The Council agreed to this.

Action Item: Peggy will determine feasibility and report back. Update: Peggy reports that Ellen has agreed to assume this task and started on January 13.

2. Rosie also mentioned several complaints about the absence of announcements after Communion during Advent since these had been moved to before Mass for the season.

3. Graham Yearley announced that the Baltimore Men's Chorus would be giving a free concert with refreshments on Saturday, January 26 at 3pm in the church.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Facilities Committee (Pat Ball)**

See discussion above regarding HVAC contract and clean-up day.

- 1.) The church boiler passed inspection.
- 2.) The baptismal font project is moving forward. The A&A committee continues to work with the architect and contractor. Construction will begin on the project later in the month of January. The completion date is scheduled for March 1.
- 3.) The church roof painters reported that the gutters on the south side of the church are fine. They leaked because of leaves that kept them from properly functioning. Cleaning of the gutters, more frequently, will need to occur to avoid future water problems.
- 4.) Chris met with Anderson regarding the sacristy windows and will have a bid for them by next meeting.
- 5.) The office that Anne Maura has been using is now vacated. That office will be cleaned and opened to general use for part time employees and volunteers.
- 6.) Chris will be meeting with contractors in the upcoming months to get bids on painting the Church bldg. It is hoped that this work can be done in the 2013-14 budget year.

#### **Education and Enrichment (Kathi Jeffra)**

No report as the committee had not met recently; next meeting is Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Communications and Outreach (Laureen Brunelli)**

No report; Last meeting was September 23, 2012. Meeting date from December was rescheduled for January 20 after 9:30 Mass. At the Council meeting, it was suggested that short highlights of parish life be listed on home page of our website. Laureen will add this to the upcoming meeting agenda.

#### **Liturgy Committee (Audrey Rogers)**

Last meeting was on November 17; our next meeting is on January 28.

#### **Advent and Christmas:**

Went well overall. Moving announcements prior to Mass was not received well and, while we have not yet discussed, it will probably not be attempted again.

Lenten Planning

This is well underway and will have to be finalized at the next meeting since Lent starts on February 13.

Eastertide Theme

The committee accepted Fr. Dick's suggestion that we conduct a baptismal exegesis to celebrate the installation of the Baptismal font during Eastertide in April. An *ad hoc* planning group will be identified in January.

2013 and 2014 Summer Series

Theme will be on the *Dimensions of the Eucharist* (the subject of our summer retreat and the focus of the book chosen for Lenten small group parish-wide discussion.) An *ad hoc* planning group will be identified in January.

**Social Action Committee (Peggy Meyer)**Homelessness:

We invited Youth Empowered Society (YES) to explain their program at our last meeting. They have a Drop-In Center for youth between 14-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to get their needs met and connect to resources.

Winter Mitten Christmas Tree:

We delivered many gloves and hats to St. James & John school children in time for Christmas and have more to deliver when school resumes.

The Resource Exchange:

We picked up a lot of furniture as a result of our announcement in other parish bulletins and the Archdiocesan Bulletin. We are staying very busy now with moves and packing starter kits.

The Peace & Justice Subcommittee:

We meet next week so no updates.

Jonestown Planning Council:

We did not meet on 1/1/13 so our next meeting will be in February.

Emergency Services:

We gave Christmas turkeys and groceries to about 110 families and spent about \$300 in December. The men's program gave clothing to 67 men in December and spent about \$1500.

Friday Dinner for the Hungry:

We continue to serve 150-250 guests each Friday evening.

Park Cleaning:

*Helping Up Mission* men continue to clean the park the first Saturday of each month so parishioners don't have to cover that day.

The Parish Council meeting was adjourned at 9:21pm with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by the secretary of the Council,

Graham G. Yearley

## TRUTH, VIOLENCE AND CONSEQUENCES



What a long and strange war it is where violence tries to crush truth!

Hard as it may struggle, violence cannot weaken truth, and its efforts only make truth stand out more clearly.

Truth, however brightly it may shine, can do nothing to stop violence, and its light only irritates violence even more.

When might is ranged against might, the stronger defeats the weaker.

When discourse is ranged against discourse, what is true and convincing confounds and dissipates what is based only on vanity and lies.

But violence and truth can do nothing, the one against the other.

Nevertheless, don't be fooled by that into thinking that they are at the same level as each other. For there is this extreme difference between them:

That violence only has a course marked out for it by God's command, such that its effects redound to the glory of the truth which it is attacking,

While truth subsists eternally, and triumphs in the end over its enemies.

Because it is as eternal and powerful as God himself.

Text:

Pascal

Image From:

Blue Eyed Ennis: <http://blueeyedennis-siempre.blogspot.com/2012/03/violence-truth-and-consequences.html>



## FORMATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



### ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY

Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>

12:00 Noon & 7:30 PM

### FAITH IN FILM SERIES

*Mostly Martha\**

Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>

Basement Classrooms

6:30 PM - Soup and Salad Served

7:00 – 9:30 PM Movie and Discussion

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>

7:30 PM - St. Vincent's Church

### FAITH IN FILM SERIES

*Spitfire Grill\**

Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>

Basement Classrooms

6:30 PM - Soup and Salad Served

7:00 – 9:30 PM Movie and Discussion

### RECONCILIATION SERVICE

Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>

7:30 PM - St. Ignatius Church

### FAITH IN FILM SERIES

*Babette's Feast\**

Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>

Basement Classrooms

6:30 PM - Soup and Salad Served

7:00 – 9:30 PM Movie and Discussion

### HOLY WEEK

#### TENEBRAE SERVICE

Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>

7:30 PM St. Vincent's Church

#### HOLY THURSDAY

March 28<sup>th</sup>

6:00 PM Jewish Seder Meal (Ticket required)

8:00 PM Celebration of the Lord's Last Supper

#### GOOD FRIDAY

March 29<sup>th</sup>

7:30 PM Passion and Veneration of the Cross

#### HOLY SATURDAY - MARCH 30<sup>TH</sup>

#### VIGIL OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

9:30 PM Lighting of the Easter Fire & Exultet

10:00 PM - 8:30 AM Vigil of the Lord: Salvation  
Story through the Jewish Scriptures

#### EASTER SUNDAY - MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup>

8:30 AM Epistle and Gospel, Homily  
Liturgy of the Water  
Liturgy of the Eucharist Easter  
Breakfast for all follows the Service

11:45 AM Easter Sunday Mass (for late risers)

*\*Movies still under consideration by E & E Committee at the time of publication and may be subject to change.*