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NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY

2018



SINCE WE HAVE THESE PROMISES, BELOVED, LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES FROM EVERY DEFILEMENT OF BODY AND SPIRIT, BRINGING HOLINESS TO COMPLETION IN THE FEAR OF GOD.

This year we enter into the Great and Holy Lent on Valentine's Day. The last time this happened was in 1945.

This presents us with a whole bunch of dilemmas. Can I celebrate Valentine's Day? Which celebration is the greater obligation? Do I have to fast and abstain from meat?

The answers are simple and straightforward:

- Yes, we can celebrate spiritual and secular Valentine's Day. We can honor St. Valentine's sacrifice and honor those we love in a special way (we should do this everyday).
- Ash Wednesday is the greater obligation.
- Yes, we are required to fast and abstain.

The underlying question is: Does God's love motivate us? Paul, in speaking to the Corinthians, recounts the great promises God has given us in Jesus. Among the great promises: That God will walk among us and live with us (He is not

in a long distance relationship). That we are God's people; He receives us in His fatherly love. We are His sons and daughters; co-heirs with Jesus to the resurrection and eternal life in heaven. That we have communion with Him, His protection and blessings that are absolute and unconditional.

Does God's love motivate us? Yes, if we work to improve externally and internally; to live in purity of heart and to train to avoid all sin - the killer of love. Lent is the time to discipline ourselves and cleanse ourselves so that we live up to the love we have received from God. That is what Lent is about - living up to the love and promises we own.

Lent is an opportunity to live up to love - to cleanse ourselves, achieve deep-seated changes in our lives, and align ourselves with God's love. It is a happy coincidence that Valentine's Day marks the start of Lent because Lent is about the change real and honest love brings, the good love motivates, and the happiness and holiness love attains.

Ash Wednesday



Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 14th. Holy Mass with the blessing

and distribution of ashes will take place at 7pm on the 14th. Please join us.

Lenten Retreat - Right Here



Our Seniorate Lenten Retreat will be held in our parish on Saturday, March 10th.

We will begin with a continental breakfast at 10am followed by a Lenten reflection and Holy Mass at noon with a Lenten penitential service. Lunch will follow.

The theme for this year's Lenten retreat will be Celebration of Lent as a Family.

Please join us for this special retreat and time together with our Seniorate family of faith.

Our Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 4th. There will be one Holy Mass that day at 10am. Breakfast will be served. Please make an effort to attend and share your thoughts on our parish, the Diocese, and our Holy Church.

The Outrageous Valentine's Raffle

February 2018 – the month of love. Thank you to all who purchased and donated tickets for our Outrageous Valentine's Raffle. Your generosity and support helps our young people attend the annual KURS summer encampment and CONVO 2018.

We wish you the best of luck this month. We will send winners their checks right away and will announce all the winners in March's newsletter.

Our Annual Financial Meeting - March 11th

Our annual financial meeting will be held on Sunday, March 11th. There will be one Holy Mass that day at 10am. Breakfast will be served. Please attend and help decide on our financial matters.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

For the 17th year in a row, our parish is participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Through the Souper Bowl of Caring we are providing food help for those in need in our local community. We ask for your support and deeply appreciate your generosity!

Your monetary and food donations in church on Super Bowl Sunday – February 4th will support the work of Schenectady Inner City Ministry.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. — Matthew 25:35

Directed Giving for Lent

Use the guide below in donating items for those in need in our local area. Your donations may be left by the Mary altar.

Ash Wednesday Week, Feb. 14-18, LET'S DO LUNCH Tuna and Mayonnaise, Peanut Butter and Jelly, Soup and Crackers.

1st Week of Lent, Feb. 19-25, FEELING FRUITY Canned Peaches, Pears, Fruit Cocktail, Pineapple or Applesauce, 100% Juice in Cans.

2nd Week of Lent, Feb. 26-Mar. 4, VEGGIE MANIA Canned Corn, Canned Peas, Canned Beans, Canned Potatoes, Canned Sweet Potatoes.

3rd Week of Lent, Mar. 5-11, DINNER IS SERVED Canned Beef Stew, Canned Pork and Beans, Instant Potatoes/Stuffing Mix, Macaroni and Cheese, Spaghetti or other Pasta, Canned Spaghetti Sauce.

4th Week of Lent, Mar. 12-18, SCHOOL NEEDS Pencils and Pens, Folders and Notebooks, Crayons, Tape and Elmer's Glue.

Passion Week, Mar 19-25, BABY MAKES THREE Disposable Diapers, Baby Wipes, Liquid Formula, Jars of Baby Food.

Holy Week, Mar. 26-31, SPECIAL NEEDS DIET Low Sodium Soups, Canned Fruit in Juice (not in syrup), Canned Tuna in Water, Low Sodium Crackers, Organic Applesauce.

Milestones to Celebrate:

Birthdays

2 Christine Spooner, Jean Martin
5 Suzanne Heins
9 Christine Caden
11 Bob Shufelt, Justice Smith, Joseph Ruchalski
12 Kristen Smith-Prusky
16 Celina Maliszewski
18 Paul Podkulski
20 Kelly Supinski, Lisa Kaminski
21 Casey Carroll
28 Patrick Clas

Wedding Anniversaries

17 Tom & Kelly Supinski
18 Stefan & Elizabeth Węglinski
26 Michael & Kimberly DonVito

Wishing you all many years!

**Thank you, Merci, Dziękuję,
Āčiū, Gracias, Mahalo, Grazie!**



To Joanne and her family for preparing and running a wonderful Spaghetti dinner. Thank you so much.

To all who assisted in the taking down of our Christmas decorations.

To our wonderful altar servers, our organist and choir director Liz Battaglia, and to all who supplied our ministry of hospitality.

To all who have welcomed me to their homes for Epiphany visitations/Kolęda. Your hospitality and graciousness are greatly appreciated. You are a blessing.

To all who continue to pray, sacrifice, and serve in Christian love and charity on behalf of our parish.

To every parishioner, visitor, and member -- you are a blessing, a treasure, and a joy!

Epiphany Visitations - Kolęda - House Blessings

Fr. Jim is available to come to your homes for the traditional Epiphany home blessing. Please see him to make an appointment. Blessing appointments are available through February 13th (prior to Ash Wednesday).

To prepare your home for the blessing please have the blessed

chalk and incense available as well as your blessed candle (gromnica).

Please Help Basket Social - April 15th

It is time to get ready for our annual basket social. We really need your help to make this year's Social a success. Can you donate a basket, or two, or three? They don't have to be huge - anything will do. Through your love and charity we are able to touch the lives of others and maintain a vibrant faith community. Need ideas - check out Pinterest: <http://pinterest.com/cm1953/basket-party-ideas/>

SOCL News, Confirmation, first Communion

Be sure to bring your children for School of Christian living classes every week. We are starting a First Communion and are continuing a Confirmation class. Class is also available for adults who have not made confirmation.

Planning For —

- Feb. 2: Solemnity of the Presentation. Holy Mass at 7pm with Blessing of Candles.
- Feb. 4: Sexagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 10am with Blessing of

Throats. Breakfast and Annual Meeting.

- Feb. 11: Quinquagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am.
- Feb. 14: Ash Wednesday. Holy Mass, Blessing and Distribution of Ashes at 7pm. Valentine's Day
- Feb. 16: 65th Anniversary of the death of S+P Prime Bishop Francis Hodur. Stations of the Cross at 7pm.
- Feb. 18: First Sunday of Lent. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am.
- Feb. 19: President's Day. Holy Mass for Healing at 6:15pm. Parish Committee Meeting.
- Feb. 23: Stations of the Cross at 7pm.
- Feb. 24: Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle.
- Feb. 25: Second Sunday of Lent. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am.
- Mar. 2: NO Stations of the Cross.
- Mar. 4: Third Sunday of Lent. Holy Mass at 11:30am ONLY. Commemoration of St. Casimir.
- Mar. 9: Stations of the Cross at 7pm.
- Mar 10: Lenten Retreat starting at 10am.
- Mar. 11: Solemnity - Institution of the PNCC. Holy Mass at 10am ONLY. Breakfast and Annual Financial Meeting

Also stay tuned for the schedule of our Holy week observances.

FOR LOVE

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." — John 13:34-35

Prayer for St. Valentine's Day

Most Gracious Heavenly Father, You gave Saint Valentine the courage to witness to the gospel of Christ, even to the point of giving his life for it. Help us to endure all suffering for love of you, and to seek you with all our hearts; for you alone are the source of life and love. Grant that we may have the courage and love to be strong witnesses of your truth to our friends and family and to the whole world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Financial Security?

The PNUA and Spójnia Credit Union offer great tools for financial management. If you are considering getting your financial house in order in 2018 contract the PNUA and SCU. Remember too that PNUA policies make great gifts for newlyweds and infants. Call the PNUA office at 1-800-724- 6352 or see Fr. Jim.

Music Scholarship Applications

A special collection was accepted on January 28th to benefit the National United Choir's Music Scholarship Fund. These scholarships are available to any parishioner of our denomination who is taking music lessons. This is with the hope that as these musicians continue to advance they will share their musical talent with the church. If any parishioner is studying music, consider applying for a scholarship. Applications and information are available through Cathy Bilinski at nucscholarship@gmail.com or online at <http://nucmusicscholarship.weebly.com>. The Church has provided 1,085 scholarships totaling over \$310,835. 2018 Scholarships applications must be submitted no later than May 1, 2018.

Does Church Make You Healthy?

Studies show that churchgoers live longer.

Non-attendees live to an average age of 75 while churchgoers reach 80 and regular weekly attendees live to an average age of 82.

Why? Because attending church promotes healthy lifestyles. Churchgoers are more likely to

make positive healthy changes. They are 131% less depressed, 78% more likely to give up smoking, 54% more apt to exercise, and 39% more likely to refrain from drinking.

Embracing healthy lifestyles and attitudes, learning to effectively resolve emotional distress, and moving toward greater gratitude and joy all impact our health.

Christians know that God heals and He heals in three unique ways:

1. Miraculously, like those healed by Jesus, the apostles by their faith in Jesus, and throughout Church history.
2. By altering nature. Scientists cannot explain or prove it was a miracle, but they occur.
3. Through our relationship with Him. Our prayer life activates the immune system to speed healing and recovery.

God's closeness to us is just a prayer and a relationship away. "Our Father" is there for us in every moment and stands ready to give us life to the fullest.

Living the Christian Family Starts in Church

We live in a time when Christian life—Church life, life of a parish community—is unnatural. However, the life of the first Christian communities was different: *And all that believed were together, and had all things common* (Acts 2:44).

Of course, today it is inconceivable that members of a modern community could hold all their things in common. But, on the other hand, it is quite unnatural when members of a church community only attend services but otherwise spend all their time outside the church or even the community altogether. Yes, all things that we come in contact with are spaces for our Christian ministry, but it begins with our parish, our church. So we should start with the most basic and natural things—getting to know other parishioners better, trying to find common interests, so that a kind of common life might result. It goes beyond helping each other and participating in the destinies of the needy, but first of all—of forming one, real, big family.

However, in reality we see that even at a church level it turns out either not very successful or totally unsuccessful. This is why any priest or rector of a church has to think how to form at least the heart of this community, to gather active and concerned Christians around himself, so that they, like Christians of the first centuries, could bring other people to church and help them integrate into Church life.

Here are some ideas for building the parish family:

- Introduce yourself to someone new or unfamiliar.
- Invite them to coffee hour after the Liturgy.
- Introduce them to other people

and invite them to sit with you at coffee hour.

- Chat with parishioners who may not be part of your social circle. Sit at a different table and visit.
- Assist in the preparation and cleaning up of the hall after each coffee hour, even if only in a small way.
- Thank guests for being with us, and invite them to be with us again at their earliest convenience.

Year of the Family Update



As we continue this Year of the Family across our Holy Polish National

Catholic Church we focus this month on **Unconditional Family Love**. A special thanks to Rev. Fr. Scott Lill for preparing the message this month.

The family was the crowning accomplishment of God's initial work of Creation. In creating man and women, the Lord established the family as the foundation of all human society, and He endowed it with a profound dignity that far surpassed that of all other creatures. Bearing his own image and likeness and being commissioned together to rule and serve the rest of creation, that first family, however, cooperatively chose to disobey God's command and strayed from the path of

righteousness, thus incurring the consequences of sin, many of the worst of which are glaringly demonstrated today in the collective brokenness of families.

But God did not give up on the family! To the contrary, it was through the cooperation of a particular family—the Holy Family of Nazareth—that God enacted his plan for our Salvation. God redeemed the family unit by becoming a member of one and, in doing so, elevated it to a graced status far greater than it had had in the beginning and bestowing on it a new and exalted mission.

Just as the Holy Family was the instrument by which our Redeemer entered the world and was prepared for his saving mission, so now for Christians, each family is the instrument for the sanctification of its members, who all recognize that they have a need for something that none of the others can provide and a destiny that reaches beyond the bounds of their earthly union. In truth, the family is the first means we are given to help us get to heaven. Therefore, every aspect of family life must focus on this. It is within this context that any consideration of unconditional family love must be considered.

Many people think that unconditional love means that family members must accept and support whatever the others choose to do. If what we have already stated is true, however, then this clearly cannot be the case.

Unconditional love between family members does not mean that I must stand idly by as you are tempted to sin or start becoming enamored by the ways of the fallen world. It does not mean that I will passively allow you to turn your back on the Gospel of Jesus and the teachings of his Church to wander off into the fog of falsehood. It does not mean that I am bound to let you walk away from God and his Church by straying into a life of habitual sin. It does not mean that I must remain silent should you, even unknowingly or under the power of some external influence, forsake your baptismal dignity. In truth, none of this would be love at all.

Unconditional family love does mean that I will willingly overlook your imperfections even as I continue to challenge you to grow in holiness a little more each day. It does mean that I will always forgive your sinful failings from yesterday while helping you repent today and calling you to even greater virtue tomorrow. It does mean that I will always seek you when you go astray and do my best to gently lead you back to God in the Church, reminding you that you are a child of the Eternal Father, a living temple of the Holy Spirit and an heir to the Kingdom of Heaven through Jesus.

Each family member must have a humble awareness of the mission entrusted to them by God. Each must be willing to embrace their unique roles in offering proper love unconditionally.

February

2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Solemnity of the Presentation – Holy Mass at 7pm with Blessing of Candles	3 Commemoration of St. Blaise
4 Sexagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 10am with Blessing of Throats. Lector: Marilyn Hietala. Breakfast and Annual Meeting	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Quinquagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Joe Kaczynski and Claudia Bertasso	12	13 Last day for Epiphany Home Blessings	14 Ash Wednesday. Holy Mass at 7pm. Commemoration of St. Valentine	15	16 65th Anniversary of the death of S+P Prime Bishop Franczisek Hodur. Stations of the Cross at 7pm.	17
18 1st Sunday in Lent. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Larry Panfil and Claudia Bertasso	19 President's Day Holy Mass for Healing with Anointing at 6:15pm. Parish Committee Meets.	20	21	22	23 Stations of the Cross at 7pm.	24 Feast – St. Matthias
25 2nd Sunday in Lent. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Marilyn Hietala and Claudia Bertasso	26	27	28			

March Upcoming:

- Mar. 2: NO Stations of the Cross.
- Mar. 4: Third Sunday of Lent. Holy Mass at 11:30am ONLY.
- Mar 10: Lenten Retreat starting at 10am.
- Mar. 11: Solemnity - Institution of the PNCC. Holy Mass at 10am ONLY. Breakfast and Annual Financial Meeting.