

CHURCH *of the* HOLY CROSS

631 South State Street
Dover, Delaware

302 674 5787
holycrossdover.org

522 Main Street
Marydel, Maryland

410 482 7687
iccmarydel.org



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

February 18, 2024

First Sunday of Lent

holycross

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

School Year, Monday-Friday, 8:30 am-3:30 pm
Summer, Monday-Thursday, 9 am-1 pm

SCHOOLS OFFICE HOURS

School Year, Monday-Friday, 8 am-3:30 pm
Summer, Monday-Thursday, 9 am-1 pm

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday, Vigil, 5 pm
Sunday, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 am Spanish

DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

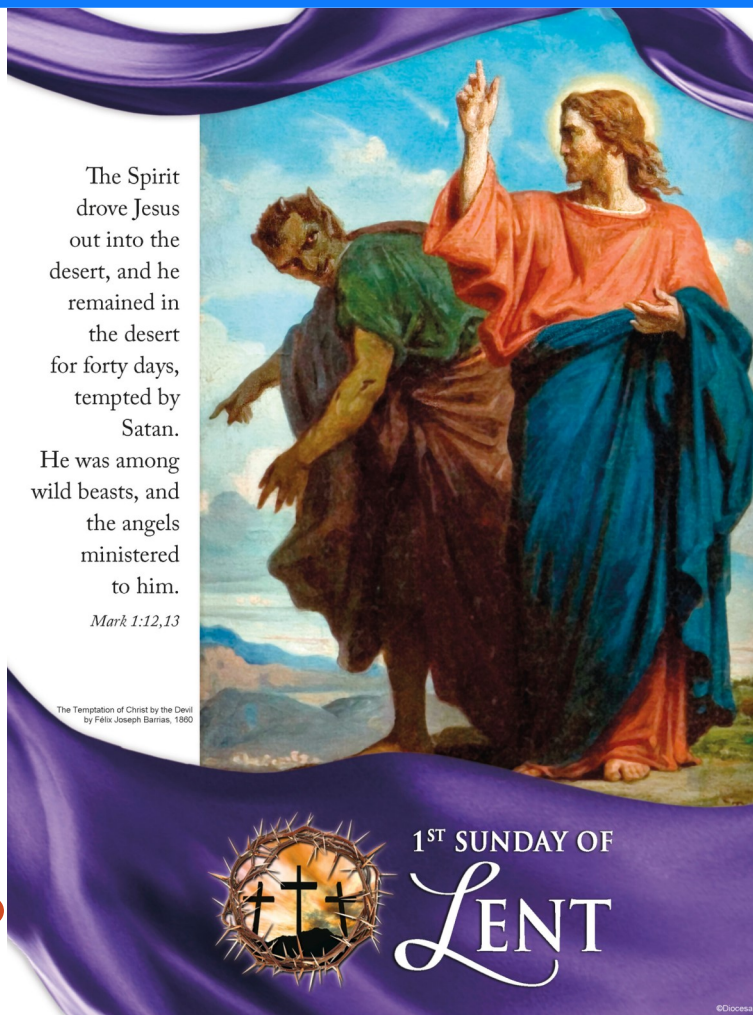
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 8 am
Wednesday – 8:15 am
Federal Holidays, 9 am only (Presidents Day, MLK Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day)

CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Saturday, 8:30 am – 10:00 am,
Fridays in Lent, 5:30 pm

ADORATION CHAPEL HOURS

Daily, 5 am – 9 pm



The Spirit
drove Jesus
out into the
desert, and he
remained in
the desert
for forty days,
tempted by
Satan.

He was among
wild beasts, and
the angels
ministered
to him.

Mark 1:12,13

The Temptation of Christ by the Devil
by Felix Joseph Bamias, 1900

icc

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9 am-5 pm
Closed Wednesday and Friday

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Sunday, 8:30, 11 am
Sunday, 1 pm, Spanish

DAILY MASS SCHEDULE

Thursday, 6 pm, Spanish

HOLY DAY SCHEDULE (HC AND ICC)

Mary, Mother of God, January 1
Assumption, August 15
All Saints' Day, November 1
Immaculate Conception, December 8
Christmas, December 25

Mass schedules for Holy Days of Obligation and other special days will be printed in the bulletin as each one draws near

RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS

*The seven Sacraments of the Church
were instituted by Christ to confer grace.*

Sacrament of Baptism. Call the office to register for Parent Pre-Baptismal Instruction. For adults seeking to enter the Church and be Baptized, contact our Religious Education Office.

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). Children in our religious education program and school are prepared for Confession at age seven as part of First Communion preparation.

Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Children in our religious education program and school are prepared for First Communion at age seven. Adults seeking First Communion should contact our Religious Education Office. To request a visitation for Holy Communion to the Sick, contact our parish office.

Sacrament of Confirmation. Young people in our


parish are prepared for reception of Confirmation in the ninth grade (age 14). Adults seeking Confirmation should contact our Religious Education Office.

Sacrament of Marriage. Couples planning for Marriage are to contact a parish priest or deacon one year in advance to set the wedding date and plan for pre-Cana instruction.

Sacrament of Holy Orders. If you believe you have, or someone you know has, a vocation to the Priesthood or Diaconate, please contact one of our parish priests.

Anointing of the Sick. For the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, which is administered by a Priest, a person or an immediate family member must make the request. Late night requests may not be able to be answered until the next day.

Make Plans Now to Attend on February 28 in the Parish Hall at Holy Cross:



Mark's Gospel LIVE
A FIRST CENTURY STORY OF LOVE AND HEALING
SOLO PERFORMANCE BY REV. JOSEPH MORRIS

WED., FEBRUARY 28, 7 PM
CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
631 SOUTH STATE STREET
DOVER, DE 19901
302-674-5787

"...a profound experience"
—REV. MARK LANGHAM, WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL, LONDON

ADMISSION: FREE-WILL OFFERING

www.gospelofmark.us

WEEKLY OFFERING (HC)

Ending February 4, 2024

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED	BUDGETED/ NEEDED	DIFFERENCE
Regular	\$27,720	\$26,180	\$1,540
YTD	\$859,269	\$868,840	(\$9,571)
Needs	\$1,631	\$1,712	(\$81)

WEEKLY OFFERING (ICC)

Ending February 4, 2024

OFFERTORY TYPE	RECEIVED
Regular	\$4,876
Second Collection	\$256

TAX STATEMENTS

The **HC Parish Office** has sent out tax information to all those who we have an email on file.

If we do not have your email or you want a hard copy sent to you, please email mdornberger@holycrossdover.org. Thank you.

For ICC please contact the ICC parish office to pick one up or have it mailed to you.

Dear Parishioners,

In 1973, the American movie-going public was treated to the likes of a dystopian future in the movie "Soylent Green." The film, starring Charlton Heston and Edward G. Robinson, told the future of an earth dealing with a host of problems that were topped off by food shortages. To address the food shortages, the Soylent Corporation began producing a nutritious, tasty product that was able to feed the masses — it took the form of a wafer-like food called "Soylent Green." It proved popular with the people and was in demand.

It's People! During the course of the movie, we find that perhaps to limit population or quash riots, people are rounded up (literally scooped up in trash-like vehicles). Also, people who are older are encouraged to allow themselves to be euthanized. The big revelation, however, comes at the end of the movie when we find that "Soylent green" is made of people — the people scooped-up, those who were euthanized, and those who die in any way. People are eating other people. Or, as the lead character in the movie declared: "Soylent Green is people!" The rationale for the product Soylent Green would be that these people are dead anyway — this makes the dead useful. They can be processed into food to feed other people.

It's History. During the era of Nazi Germany's tyrannical overrunning of Europe, Jews and others were rounded-up, and millions upon millions were put to death in Concentration Camps and similar facilities. With a plethora of dead bodies around, the Nazis, like the powers-that-be in "Soylent Green," decided that the dead could be made useful — i.e., a utilitarian philosophy was put into morbid practice. Thus, the dead bodies of victims of the Holocaust (mostly Jewish people) had hair and gold teeth/fillings removed. The gold was melted down and enriched German finances, while the hair was sold to businesses to make many products, including rope and mattresses. Additionally, in 2006, the Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation found that human fat removed from victims of the Holocaust was used to make soap.

Sinful Utilitarianism. Why was this done? To reiterate my comments about "Soylent Green:" the rationale would be that these people are dead anyway — let's make the dead useful. They can be processed into soap, mattresses, rope, etc.

Story and History. Above, I just gave two examples of using the bodies of the dead, by way of a utilitarian nightmare, in a way that made them "useful." The logic would be that the body of a person has no intrinsic worth; it only has worth when it can be made "useful" — and indeed, to the sick mind, should be made "useful." The two examples I used are distinct in that one came from fiction, and the other, sadly, comes from the sad but real history of man's inhumanity to man.

Right Here. There is a new example of this urge to make the dead "useful" by way of another utilitarian nightmare. This one doesn't come from fiction, it doesn't come from history — it comes from the Delaware legislature, from your representatives, your "leaders." This new example is known as human composting. (This bill, House Bill 162, allowing human composting, has passed the Delaware House of Representatives and at this writing is awaiting consideration in the State Senate.)

Human Composting. Basically, what human composting means is that when a person dies, instead of having their body buried or cremated and then interred, it can be composted. It can be put through a several weeks-long process that turns the human body into soil. The soil can then be put into the ground to provide nutrients to the existing soil (kind of like a fertilizer). Thus, the human body has worth, not because God created it, but because it is useful. Those who support this horror show refer to it being "green," those who see how this process treats human life as garbage realize that this "human composting" is not a "green" initiative — it is a "Soylent Green" initiative.

Concerns. Human Composting presents several problems for us — not just as Catholics — but as human beings, as human beings who believe that each person has a dignity imbued on them by the Creator.

People Aren't Products. Thus, when it comes to the human body, we cannot be utilitarian. We fought a Civil War in this country to make clear that human beings can never be reckoned as a "product" or "property." Human beings and their remains have worth because they are given life, given a rational soul, and given the image and likeness of God by God. The human body is not precious because it is useful; it is precious because of its Creator, and it is precious because it reflects God. Human composting seeks to make the bodies of men and women "useful" by rendering them as products to be used rather than seen as creations made in the image and likeness of God to be treated with dignity.

People Have Innate Dignity. Mankind, which is able to come to know, love, and serve God, is the greatest of God's creation. Man is created to subdue nature, to be a good steward of nature, and to master nature. We are not called to worship nature or see nature as an end in and of itself. Thus, human remains — unlike the remains of dead animals, insects, trees, and plants — are to be treated in a manner reflective of their innate dignity

Do Whatever You Want? I would imagine those who support "Human Composting" might argue: can't one do whatever he or she wants with his/her body in death? The answer to that is no. For exam-

HC & ICC CLERGY

Vy. Rev. James S. Lentini, V. F.
Rev. Brennan Ferris
Rev. John Hynes

Pastor
Parochial Vicar
In Residence

HC CLERGY

Mr. Philip Belt
Mr. John Harvey
Mr. Richard Kosior
Mr. Robert McMullen
Mr. Vincent Pisano

Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon
Deacon

ICC CLERGY

Mr. Sherman Mitchell

Deacon

HC STAFF

Parish Office 302 674 5787
Jane Green Receptionist, ext. 110
Diane Belt Assistant to the Pastor, ext. 113
Kenneth Trojan Business Manager, ext. 119
Michele Dornberger Records/Asst. Bus. Mgr., ext. 116
Arline Dosman Dir. of Hispanic Ministry, ext. 118
Tammy Korosec CRE Religious Ed, ext. 122
Linda Darling Youth Ministry, ext. 123
Justin Wurzel Maintenance Director
Len Dornberger Cemetery Administrator, ext. 135
Michael Perza Dir. of Music Ministry, 302 698 9302

MAILING ADDRESS

Church of the Holy Cross
631 S. State St.
Dover, DE 19901

ICC STAFF

Parish Office 410 482 7687
Marilyn Dixon Office Manager
Alicia Poppiti DRE Religious Ed.
Susan Venezia Bookkeeper
Arline Dosman Dir. of Hispanic Ministry

MAILING ADDRESS

Immaculate Conception Church
P. O. Box 399
Marydel, MD 21649-0399

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

Catholic Education Pre-K3 to Grade 8
302 674 5787
holycrossdover.org/school

Linda Pollitt Principal, ext. 111

MAILING ADDRESS

Holy Cross School
631 S. State St.
Dover, DE 19901

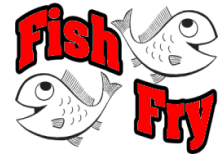
LENT

The rules for fasting and abstinence for Lent are as follows:

- Every person 14 years of age or older must abstain from meat (and items made with meat) on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and all the Fridays of Lent.
- Every person between the age of 18 and 60 must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
- Every person 14 years of age or older must abstain from meat (and items made with meat) on all other Fridays of the year, unless he or she substitutes some other form of penance for abstinence.

FISH FRYS AT HC

Fish Frys will take place each Friday during Lent in the Parish Hall hosted by the Knights of Columbus.



Dinners will be served in the Parish Hall from 4 pm to 6:30 pm. On Friday, February 16, the menu will be breaded cod, baked flounder, fish sticks, mac & cheese, vegetable, cole slaw, coffee, tea, and dessert. Cost is \$15 a plate/ family \$40.00. Eat in or take out available.

EXTRA RECONCILIATION TIME DURING LENT

During the Fridays in Lent, reconciliation will be available from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm at Holy Cross. One priest will be available each week during that time to hear confessions.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Holy Cross and Immaculate Conception will each offer the Stations of the Cross each Friday during Lent at 7 pm.

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT (FEB 25)

FIRST READING: GENESIS 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18

Abraham is willing to offer his only son to God, But God spares him.

SECOND READING: ROMANS 8:31-34

Since God gave up his only Son for love of us, what else will he not do?

GOSPEL: MARK 9:2-10

Transfigured with heavenly light, Jesus reveals his divinity to the disciples.

HOLY CROSS RESPECT LIFE MINISTRY

Holy Cross Respect Life group is in need of volunteers, will you join us? It involves creating ways to promote a pro-life, pro-love message to the community around events and special days. If you are creative and have a heart of love, please call me. Let's chat! Donna 862-266-1099 or email me dlatteri86@gmail.com

"**Cabrini**" the new movie about Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, the first woman in America to be canonized, will be coming to Dover AMC 14 this March. A group will be attending Sunday March 10 at 1:00 showing. (See trailers on YouTube.) Join us! Ticket pre-orders are 50% off! \$4 a ticket via Angel Studios, see link on YouTube. Pay it forward or pay for someone else. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02S9IcBPefw>

DE Right to Life Rally - March 27th Dover
Will you join us at the Delaware March for Life to Legislative Hall this year? We march for the legal protection of pre-born children. Are you aware that abortion is "legal" in Delaware throughout all 9 months? As Catholics, it is our duty to protect life at all stages, through both prayer and action. See <https://delawarefamilies.org/deforlife/> for more resources and get involved.

QUARTER AUCTION

The Delaware State Columbiettes will be hosting a Quarter Auction at the Holy Cross Parish Hall on Sunday, February 25 beginning at 1 pm. Ticket prices are \$25 which includes a hot lunch from Mission BBQ. All in paddles may be purchased for \$25. Quarter paddles are \$8, and items will range from \$.25 to \$1. Please contact Linda Darling at 302-233-2246 for more information and to reserve a ticket.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Learn tools to revitalize romance and deepen communication in your marriage!!! No group sharing required. The next weekend is March 1-3, 2024 at the Brighton Suites in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. For information or to register visit our website <http://www.wwme.org> or call Tony and Linda Massino at 302-648-2228.

RETRouvaille:

Rediscover the love in your marriage. Tens of thousands of couples have healed their marriages through Retrouvaille (pronounced Retro-vy). If you know anyone who could benefit from this program, please pass this on. Couples

MASS INTENTIONS FEBRUARY

19 MONDAY

HC 9:00 am Thomas Masino

20 TUESDAY

HC 8:00 am Carol Castiglione

21 WEDNESDAY

HC 8:15 am Michael Graziano

22 THURSDAY

HC 8:00 am David J. Kaltenbaugh
ICC 6:00 pm For the People

23 FRIDAY

HC 8:00 am Anna Krowiranda

24 SATURDAY

HC 8:00 am William Pruitt
HC 5:00 pm DM Dornberger Family

25 SUNDAY

HC 7:30 am Bill and Joan Wade
ICC 8:30 am Helen Bevenour
HC 9:30 am Joseph McLaughlin
ICC 11:00 am Crumlish & Brady Families
HC 11:30 am Msgr. Daniel J. McGlynn
ICC 1:00 pm For the People

The Sanctuary Candle in the Church is lit during the week of Feb 18-24 in memory of Msgr. Dan McGlynn.

The Sanctuary Candle in the Adoration Chapel is lit during the week of Feb 18-24 in memory of John Deighton.

learn to build communication skills and to increase intimacy. It provides help for marriage problems, difficulties, or crises. The next program will be held February 16 - 18, 2024 at the Family Life Center in Malvern, PA. For more information, or to register, visit www.HelpOurMarriage.org or call 215-766-3944 or 800-470-2230. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

MOM AND BABY GROUP AT HC

Our Mom and Baby Group is intended for mothers with babies ages 0-2 years of age. Siblings are welcome to join! This group is for our mothers to connect with each other and our babies to enjoy themselves. We would love if you join us for prayer, discussion, and play time! If you have any small toys you would like to donate to the group, please contact Megan MacCormac. 302 535 9913 or email megs.farl@gmail.com.

MARCH 2/3, 2024			
EMHC		SERVERS	
5:00 PM	J. Bieker D. Darling	L. Darling P. Sheldon	L. Curley N. Klaus Z. Klaus
	LECTORS		
			D. Dixon F. Urick
7:30 AM	C. Brown J. Chandler	T. Dinan W. Thomas	T. Catipay L. Thomas
	LECTORS		
			K. Meire
9:30 AM	B. Richards G. Richards	N. West B. Whitworth	A. Wilk C. Wilk
	LECTORS		
			M. Sherlock S. Winfrey
11:30 AM	T. Hernandez E. Pastoriza	M. Richard	TBD
	LECTORS		
			TBD
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION			
	TBD		
8:30 AM	LECTORS		
	T. Woodeshick		
	TBF		
11:00 AM	LECTORS		
	L. Soule		
1:00 PM	TBD		

If you or someone from your family is going to be in one of our local rehabilitation facilities or nursing homes, our Extra-Ordinary ministers of Holy Communion serve all of these facilities. If you are going to be in one of these facilities, even for a short time, please be sure to register yourself as a Catholic so that you will be on their list for our ministers to bring you the Eucharist on the weekend. All the facilities are very cooperative and will gladly add the name to the list for our ministers each week.

If you are in the hospital make sure you are on their Catholic list so we can have our ministers bring you communion daily. You must inform the hospital to put you on the Catholic list otherwise we do not know you are there.

ADORATION CHAPEL (HC)

Can you spare an hour to spend with Jesus? Our Adoration Chapel is open from 5 am to 9 pm Monday through Sunday. We have openings. Call John Murphy at 302-233-1779 or email him at jkm2015@verizon.net to schedule.



SUNDAY	7 am, 4 pm, 5pm
MONDAY	5 pm
WEDNESDAY	7 am, 4 pm, 5 pm
THURSDAY	4 pm
FRIDAY	6 am
SATURDAY	5 am, 9 am, 10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm

This is the year of the Eucharistic Revival. What better time is there to select an open hour in our Adoration Chapel and spend some time with Jesus weekly. Please consider taking some time each week out of your busy schedule to sit in silence and prayer before Our Lord. Call today to reserve your hour. You will be so blessed and glad you did.

PURSE BINGO

Mark your calendars! Our annual purse bingo to raise money to assist our teens attending Catholic Heart Work Camp this summer will take place on Saturday, **March 9**. Please contact Linda Darling in the parish office for tickets. Cost is \$35 per ticket—tables of 8. Tickets are going quickly so get yours today!



You can reach Linda by email at: ldarling@holycrossdover.org.

Please plan on joining us for a fun evening.



- **Cuaresma: Tiempo de Conversión,** El lema de este año «A través del desierto Dios nos guía a la libertad». El papa Francisco plantea un “paralelismo entre el pueblo de Israel en el desierto y el pueblo de Dios en la actualidad, que también lleva dentro de sí “ataduras opresoras que debe decidirse a abandonar”. “Nos damos cuenta de ello cuando nos falta esperanza y vagamos por la vida como en un páramo desolado, sin una tierra prometida hacia la cual encaminarnos juntos”, plantea. En este sentido, recuerda además que “la Cuaresma es el tiempo de gracia en el que el desierto vuelve a ser, como anuncia el profeta Oseas, el lugar del primer amor” (cf. Os 2,16-17). A detenernos ante la presencia de Dios, en la carne del prójimo. Por eso la oración, la limosna y el ayuno no son tres ejercicios independientes, sino un único movimiento”. El Papa “Invita a todos los cristianos a reflexionar sobre los estilos de vida” para evaluar y mejorar su contribución en la sociedad.
- **Retiro de Cuaresma:** En la parroquia de la Inmaculada Concepción, el sábado, 2 de marzo, 8am-4pm en el salón parroquial. Donación \$15 que cubrirá el desayuno y el almuerzo.
- **El Foro Cristiano** Todos los viernes a las 6 de la tarde a 8 de la noche. El tema es: El Misterio Eucarístico” Venga y fórmese para poder defender su Fe Católica, esto será un curso de formación que termina el día 2 de junio 2024. Peregrinación Diocesana: Nuevamente la diócesis nos ha pedido que participemos en la Vía Crucis como parte de uno de los eventos de la peregrinación con nuestro obispo Koenig, el sábado, 23 de marzo, 2024 en Wilmington. Los Jóvenes y adolescentes que desean participar por favor comuníquese con la Sra. Arline Dosman. Tendremos los ensayos todos los miércoles a de 7-8:30PM en el salón de nuestra parroquia hermana de la Inmaculada Concepción en Marydel . Este mismo elenco también presentará la Vía Crucis en Holy Cross el viernes santo a las 9:00 de la noche en la iglesia.

ICC

Clases de Preparación Sacramental:

- **Para la preparación Sacramental de la Confirmación Sesión #5** el domingo 10, de marzo 3:00 – 5:30PM en el salón.
- **No Habrá clases de Educación Religiosa el 18 de febrero.**
- Clase de Preparación para La Primera Comunión: Tercera Sesión el martes, 20 de febrero a las 6:30pm en el salón.
- **Clase de Preparación para la Confirmación : Sesión # 6,** domingo, 10 de marzo, 3:00pm a 5:30pm en el salón

CYM Peregrinación: Acompáñenos el 23 de marzo de 2024, para la 13.^a Peregrinación de CYM. Esperamos reunir a mil jóvenes, adultos jóvenes y familias mientras caminamos por las calles de la ciudad de Wilmington con el obispo Koenig, llevando la Cruz de Peregrinación de parroquia en parroquia. El Itinerario es: Oración de apertura y entretenimiento a las 10:00 am en la iglesia St. Elizabeth, pasar por el Hospital St. Francis para una bendición especial a los pacientes, la oportunidad de celebrar la Reconciliación en San Antonio de Padua ,experimentar las Estaciones de la Cruz en la Academia de Padua. Seguir a la iglesia de San Pablo para arrodillarse ante el Santísimo Sacramento y regresar a St. Elizabeth para la Bendición de las Palmas y la Misa de las 4:00 pm. El día termina después de la Misa (alrededor de las 5:15 pm). El costo es de \$15 por persona (\$45 por familia) y contamos con autobús, por \$10 adicionales/persona mayor de 10 años (debes registrarte para tener un asiento). Deberíamos regresar a ICC alrededor de las 7:00 p.m. Hay que llevar su almuerzo. El evento del día es de 9:30 am a 5:15 pm. Comuníquese con Alicia Poppiti para obtener más información y formularios de registro para ICC y detalles del autobús, 410-482-8939.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (HC)

Next Class: February 18th at 3:00 pm-5:00pm

Save the Date!

February 28th at 7pm in the Parish Hall "Mark's Gospel" presented by the Reverend Joseph Morris from the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

"The one-person performance is not a "reading" or a "talk" but the entire Gospel of St. Mark memorized and performed as storytelling. It's fast paced, energetic, up close and personal."

All are welcome!

The families of all Holy Cross students LAFF, and Religious Education Students are encouraged to attend.

LAFF (LIVING AS A FAMILY OF FAITH CATECHESIS)

LAFF class is February 25 at 10:30 am. Come out and join us; families gathering for prayer, communion with one another, sharing our Faith Life experiences. See above for a special Lent formation opportunity.

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY (HC)

Mark your Calendars for these upcoming formation opportunities!

The Monday Morning Spiritual Support Group will be doing Liturgy and Life: Unveiling the Mystical Movement of the Mass, from Matthew Leonard's The Science of Sainthood. Come for video and discussion Monday mornings, beginning 2/19/24 at 9 am in St. Luke's room in the ELC. All are welcome!

Tuesday offerings:

February 13th-March 19th No Greater Love: A Biblical Walk Through Christ's Passion.

"Filmed on location in the Holy Land, No Greater Love is a biblical pilgrimage that reveals Christ's amazing love for us. Best selling author Edward Sri guides you through the last hours of Christ's life."

Special Lent offering:

February 28th at 7pm in the Parish Hall "Mark's Gospel" presented by the Reverend Joseph Morris from the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

"The one-person performance is not a "reading" or a "talk" but the entire Gospel of St. Mark memorized and performed as storytelling. It's fast paced, energetic, up close and personal."

For more information, please contact tkorosec@holycrossdover.org or call Tammy Korosec at (302) 674-5787 X 122.

YOUTH PROGRAMS AT HOLY CROSS

Confirmation Class:

Sunday, February 18 or Wednesday, February 21 Please return your Sponsor Form and have your Confirmation name ready at this class.

Parent Meeting:

Sunday, March 3 at 5:15 pm or Monday, March 4 at 7 pm in the Matthew/Mark room of the ELC building 2nd floor. Final instructions for the Sacrament of Confirmation and schedule for interviews will be discussed.

Youth Group:

Our next meeting will take place on Monday, Feb. 26 from 6:30-8:30 pm. We will meet in the Luke room of the ELC building 2nd floor. Please join us for Faith, Music, Food and Fellowship. A great place to meet some great people. Friends welcome.

SRE AT IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

No SRE on February 18th. Classes will resume on February 25th .

Sacramental Preparation Classes:

First Communion: Prep Session #3 on Tuesday, February 20th, at 6:30pm promptly in parish hall.

Confirmation Prep: Session #6, Sunday March 10, 3pm-5:30pm in the Parish Hall.

CYM Pilgrimage: Now in its thirteenth year, and better than ever. Plan today to join us on March 23, 2024, for the 13th CYM Pilgrimage. We hope to gather one thousand youth, young adults, and families as we walk the city streets of Wilmington with Bishop Koenig, carrying the Pilgrimage Cross from parish to parish. Plans include opening prayer and entertainment at 10:00 am at St. Elizabeth, stopping by St. Francis Hospital for a special blessing of the patients, the chance to celebrate Reconciliation at St. Anthony of Padua, experiencing the Stations of the Cross at Padua Academy, to kneel before the Blessed Sacrament at St. Paul, and return to St. Elizabeth for Blessing of Palms and 4:00 pm Mass. The day ends after Mass (around 5:15pm). The cost is \$15 per person (\$45 for a family) and we have a bus, for an additional \$10/person over 10 years old (you must register to have a seat). We should be returning to ICC at around 7:00pm. I will have the youth contact you as we leave Wilmington, we may make a short stop for fast food. The day's event is from 9:30am-5:15 pm. Please contact Alicia Poppiti for more information and registration forms for ICC and bus details, 410-482-8939.

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen." It is the formal introduction to prayer. When done reverently and appropriately, this invocation can be a beautiful and peaceful way of centering oneself prior to entering into prayer. To center one's focus on the intent of the prayer, to bring one's heart AND mind into the moment, shutting out all that surrounds us both physically and mentally. More than likely, it's the reason we close our eyes as we initiate or enter into prayerful experience. To be truthful, I sit through most of Mass with my eyes closed.

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." The three persons of the Holy Trinity. One of the great mysteries of our faith. I enjoy reading *The Pastor's Message*, a posting written by Fr. Michael who is the Pastor of St. Peter's Church in Toronto Canada. I particularly enjoy the manner in which he makes the abstract concrete. To roughly paraphrase his explanation of the Holy Trinity, Father Michael explains that God loves us so much, that he needs a little bit of help in dispersing his love and passion for humanity. That's an easy message for children to understand.

This discussion is a little off the beaten path of my initial intent for this week's column, but as I digress, I do so with good purpose as we are now in the first days of Lent. For reasons of my own, it is my preferred forty-day expanse of the 365-day calendar year; of the Liturgical Year. This year, more than ever, as the country navigates its way through the murky waters toward defining the end time of the global pandemic, and not knowing what lies ahead, it is prayer that will sustain us then as it always has in the past.

Prayer. Traditionally, prayer can be classified, if you will, into four categories. They are: Adoration, Contrition, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. We teach the acronym ACTS as a method for remembering the four types of prayer.

"We **adore** You; O Christ and we praise You." We will pray these words during Lent as we contemplate Christ's walk along the Via Dolorosa to His crucifixion. "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who is **adored** and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets." Let the knowledge that God loves and adores us more than we can possibly know be the impetus for us to adore and glorify Him in our Lenten prayers.

We learn in the Book of Romans that we all fall short of the glory of God when we sin. We are all sinners. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we have the golden opportunity to confess what we have done wrong and fallen short of God's grace. Our students have this golden opportunity twice during the school year when we participate in the Sacrament during Advent and Lent. It is important that they learn that entering the confessional with a contrite and penitent heart that our God is ever loving and forgiving and that once absolved from sin can go forth happily with a clean heart and (hopefully) renewed spirit.

It is of equal importance that we pause to give thanks. With each day and blessings ever new, we should feel bound to thank our God for his goodness and mercy. "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!" [Psalm 9:1] I remember a couple of years ago there was a campaign of sorts that was behind the display of a different type of signage. These signs didn't promote any politician or political ideal. The stick-in-the-ground type of sign could be found alongside the roads, and in front yards. Each one bore a very simple message. *Thank you, Jesus.* I loved those signs. I loved them because each time I saw one, just the mere reading of the words was a prayer. I don't know what happened to them. But on the rare occasion that I see a straggler left behind, I know in my heart that am sending up a prayer of thanksgiving, and it makes me happy. Our children need to know that thanksgiving doesn't just mean turkey, and doesn't only happen in November.

I'm not sure about anyone else, but as for me, every time I fall to my knees or find myself driving along and begin to pray, I feel I should begin my prayers with "it's me again Lord..." I feel a little ashamed that many of my prayers are prayers of supplication. St. Paul tells us in Philippians 4:6 to "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." I have never verified it, but I find great comfort in the claim that there are 365 occurrences of God's assurance to us to "be not afraid" written throughout all of scripture. It might appear in a different variation, but that's one comforting assurance for each day of the year.

Leaving Mass this morning, I came upon an acquaintance. Walking to our cars, we made polite chit-chat regarding family members, etc. Seeming a trifle sad, she remarked that all she could do was pray. I agreed. It's all we really have. Prayer, and the faith that our prayers are heard by a loving God.

Pray for anything, and if you have faith, you will receive it.

ple, one cannot take the body of a deceased person, hack it up, and spread the body parts on a lawn. Or, in the name of “being green,” we can’t hang it on a tree in front of our house and let the birds feed off of it. Thus, today, and throughout history, authorities have regulated and limited the manner in which a body may be laid to rest.

Primary Effect, Secondary Effect. Another argument, perhaps made in favor of human composting, might be: shouldn’t people return to the earth in death? When a person dies and is, for example, buried — yes, eventually, that person will decompose (naturally), but the purpose of that “return to dust” is not to unite the deceased with nature. While that might happen eventually, in the physical sense, this is a secondary effect. The primary effect of what we do in burial is to create a resting place for the remains of a child of God, treating the bodily remains with respect and a place for them to be remembered and memorialized by future generations.

A Word on Cremation. It might also be asked: Human composting isn’t really any different than cremation, right? Well, yes, it is different. Cremation, while not exhorted but rather allowed by the Church, is permitted (preferably after a funeral) for the bodies of the dead. But those created remains are to be treated like bodily remains; that is, they are to be interred — not scattered like dirt or stored in a house like a souvenir. People’s remains are not to be treated like trinkets or products. These remains are the remains of God’s special creation, humankind.

The Voice of the Church. Over time, the Church has weighed in — in a universal manner — on the topic of the special importance of humankind — of people. Making clear, that special care must be taken with human life — from conception to natural death. And making clear the manner in which we must treat the remains of a human being. In this, the Church has been a prolific writer.

- **Humanae Vitae.** In the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, Pope St. Paul VI, propounded some key insights into the way we deal with human beings: (HV #23:) *“No statement of a problem and no solution to it is acceptable which does violence to man’s essential dignity”* He also wrote, (HV #17) *“We must accept that there are certain limits, beyond which it is wrong to go, to the power of man over his own body ..., which no one, whether as a private individual or as a public authority, can lawfully exceed.”*
- **The Catechism.** The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in more explicit terms, states that (CCC #2300) *“The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection. the burial of the dead is a corporal work of mercy; it honors the children of God, who are temples of the Holy Spirit.”*
- **Ad Resurgendum cum Christo.** In the 2020 Instruction, *Ad Resurgendum cum Christo* (a document regarding the treatment of human remains) it was that the Church (#4) *“cannot, therefore, condone attitudes or permit rites that involve erroneous ideas about death, such as considering death as the definitive annihilation of the person, or the moment of fusion with Mother Nature or the universe...Furthermore, burial in a cemetery or another sacred place adequately corresponds to the piety and respect owed to the bodies of the faithful departed...”*
- **Fratelli Tutti.** In *Fratelli Tutti*, (#213) Pope Francis wrote that *“[The] human being possesses an inalienable dignity is a truth that corresponds to human nature apart from all cultural change. For this reason, human beings have the same inviolable dignity in every age of history and no one can consider himself or herself authorized by particular situations to deny this conviction or to act against it.”*
- **Scripture.** Scripture affirms man’s unique place in creation: *“God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female* he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth.”* (Genesis 1:27-28)

Lamenting. With this in mind, I lament, with the heart of the Church, the promotion of human composting — the promotion of rendering our beloved departed into products. Human composting, a degrading (literally) of the dignity and worth of the remains of a child of God, is yet another way our society says, ‘we don’t believe in the resurrection of the body... so there!’ It is a move to say that the best thing we can do in death is become mulch.

Not Green, Soyilent Green. We must pray, long and hard, that hearts and minds can be changed on this move toward legalizing human composting in Delaware (or anywhere). I commend you to speak to your neighbors, your legislators, your friends in other faiths, and above all, your family. Right now, only six states and the nation of Sweden (in a different manner) allow this practice — and that’s already too many. Remember the Divine image and likeness that we bear, and see to it that it is treated with the dignity it deserves. And to reiterate: This initiative isn’t green, it is Soyilent Green — it’s people! Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

Yours in Christ,
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Pastor