

## SECOND Sunday of Lent



News You Can Use...from Fr. Steve

Pope Benedict's 09 Lenten message focused on the penitential practice of fasting. He offered Catholics around the world the opportunity to revisit this ancient practice that both sacred scripture and Christian tradition hold out as a powerful spiritual activity to help us fight the temptation of sin. The Holy Father suggests that sin entered the human condition precisely because the first human being, Adam, did not obey the precept of fasting imposed by God, "...but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat." [Gen 2:16-17]. One of the many meanings of fasting then is that it can help us to reverse our own sinful turning away from God's precepts and restore friendship with Christ. Perhaps the greatest witness of the meaning and power of fasting is Jesus Himself, who began his mission of preaching the kingdom by fasting in the desert for 40 days and 40 nights; again a clear symbol of reversing the sinful actions of the Israelites in the desert who exhibited their lack of faith by grumbling against God and His ways. It is Jesus who gives us the true motivation and meaning for spiritual fasting when he answers the devil, "man does not live by bread alone but in every word that comes from the mouth of God." [Matthew 4:4]. So the true fast is directed to eating the "true food," which is to do the Father's will. Our bodily hunger reminds us of our spiritual hunger and helps to direct our mind and heart to God's purpose in our lives and to open us to God's grace. Of course, the obvious social justice dimension of fasting is to invite us to experience solidarity with the poor of the world, many of whom must go to bed hungry.

### Lenten Scripture Study Sharing Group

Come join the Scripture Study Sharing Group which meets weekly during the Wednesdays of Lent. We spend a comfortable, fruitful hour reflecting upon and faith-sharing on scripture readings of the up-coming Sunday. The group is open to all, students and parishioners, and meets in the Penn Newman Center, 7:30 to 8:30 PM. The session concludes with the Church's Liturgy of the Hours Office of Night Prayer (Compline).

### Stations of the Cross – in Church

The traditional devotion of Stations of the Cross will be celebrated on the Fridays of Lent at 5:15 pm in Church.

### Next week: SECOND COLLECTION for Drexel Newman Spring Service Trip

As you know the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection on the third week of the month is given to the two Newman Centers to help with their maintenance and programming. However, it is our tradition to dedicate the March 15th collection exclusively to assist Drexel Newman's alternative spring break. This year students from Drexel Newman, accompanied by Fr. Vince Morabito, will again travel to the mission of Christ the King in Shiprock, New Mexico and St. Michael's Native School in Arizona, where they will be engaged in service to the local native peoples and to share worship and prayer with them. Both missions were founded by St. Katherine Drexel and are currently staffed by Blessed Sacrament Sisters. Please pray for them as they go about their good works.

{Next month's 2<sup>nd</sup> collection will be given exclusively to Penn Newman}

### This Week at St. AJ

#### **Saturday, March 7, 2009**

4:00PM Confessions

5:30PM Vigil Mass *People of the Parish*

#### **Sunday, March 8** **Second Sunday of Lent**

10:00AM Mass *Intentions of Baby Riley*

11:30AM Mass *Julia McLaughlin*

5:00PM Mass *Raffaella Evangelista*

10:00PM Mass *Students of area universities*

#### **Friday, March 13**

1:00PM

5:15PM Stations of the Cross *All are welcome.*

#### **Saturday, March 14**

5:30PM Vigil Mass

### FAST AND ABSTINENCE AND OTHER LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES

The Bishops of the United States prescribe as minimal obligations that all persons who are fourteen years of age and older are bound to abstain from eating meat on all the Fridays of Lent and Good Friday. All persons 18 yrs of age and older, up to and including their 59th birthday, are bound to fast by limiting themselves to a single full meal on Good Friday. All the faithful are encouraged, when possible, to participate daily at Mass and receive the Holy Eucharist and to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

### Archdiocese officially launches Campaign: Heritage of Faith-Vision of Hope

In the Fall of 2008, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia announced its intentions to launch a capital and endowment campaign: *Heritage of Faith ~ Vision of Hope*, designed to meet the spiritual and material demands of today, while addressing the pastoral, educational, and charitable needs of tomorrow. The goal of the campaign is high - 200 million dollars, made higher still by these unexpected economic conditions. Monies raised will be deposited into a separately incorporated 501 (c) (3) charitable fund and enable the Church of Philadelphia to meet six goals:

- Revitalizing and renewing parish life as the center of our faith
- Ensuring access to a high-quality Catholic education
- Restoring the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul
- Investing in priestly formation and campus infrastructure at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary
- Ensuring a dignified retirement and healthcare for retired clergy
- Ministering to the needy in our region by providing vital human services

Cardinal Justin Rigali announced at a press conference Monday, Feb. 23 at 1:30 p.m. in the parish hall of St. Barnabas in Southwest Philadelphia, that Heritage of Faith — Vision of Hope will begin for all parishes. Parishes participate in the campaign on a track schedule in three-month increments. After a pilot group of 12 parishes started their respective campaigns last September, parishes in the first track officially embarked on the effort this past January. The final track of parishes begins the campaign in January 2010. The campaign is under way in more than 50 parishes, the Cardinal said in his letter. To date, more than \$40 million has been received in gifts and pledges. Here at St. AJ's, we have been earmarking the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection every week for this campaign [i.e. when the 2<sup>nd</sup> collection is not already dedicated to a specific purpose.]