

A Note from the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners,

The season of Lent is upon us. On Ash Wednesday this week, the whole Church will begin a time of penance and preparation for the Triduum and the Easter Celebrations. If we take Lent seriously, it can be a time of renewal and strength of our life of faith. It is sad to say that many people are too busy or preoccupied with distractions to the spiritual life to take much advantage of the penitential focus of the 40 days. It is not that we are supposed to live in gloom or misery for the six weeks, but we are asked to recognize our need for repentance, forgiveness and renewal. We are encouraged to make sacrifices either by giving up or taking on something or both. Our Lenten practices should help us focus our hearts on God.

We can make sacrifices by giving up some favorite things. The absence of certain comforts or treats helps us to think of much greater sacrifices that were made for us by Christ himself, or the difficult conditions many people are forced to live under. We can thank Jesus for His love for us and we can seek to follow His example. We can also resolve to pray for those who are persecuted or who are less fortunate than we are.

We should also resolve to turn away from sin each and every day with the help of God's grace. We should be trying to pray more and help those around us. Most certainly, we should stay close to the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. There are extra times of prayer during Lent such as the Friday Stations of the Cross and a noon weekday Mass. As mentioned once before, we will have a Mission from April 1 to 5. Fr. Bisignano arranged the Mission about 1 year ago, and it is my prayer that Fr. Collins (who is giving the retreat) will inspire us and lead us into greater holiness.

When Ash Wednesday comes, let us be ready to turn to God with all our heart.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monsignor Giandurco". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the "o" at the end.