

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT NEWSLETTER

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ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT BISHOP'S APOSTOLATE • 4900 RIALTO ROAD • WEST CHESTER, OHIO 45069
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FROM BISHOP DOLAN

My dear Friends,

We are now in our annual forty day fast, but there is an abundant feast to be had at St. Gertrude the Great during Lent. Several Holy Masses are offered daily, and most days both high Mass and sermon are available. These are webcast. Tune in as you can.

We generally solemnize Sunday, the Lord's Day, all of it, not only by four Masses, but also by the evening solemn Vespers with Benediction. During the week the Fathers recite Vespers as well, as the schedule permits. But during Lent the Vespers take on a special importance. The Church anticipates her Vespers at the noon hour on fast days, thus symbolically maintaining the old fast until evening, when the one meal of the day used to be taken, but only after Vespers. These early Vespers are one of the many ancient customs, full of meaning, which we maintain.

Our Lenten fast is considerably mitigated today, but sacrifices are still to be seen. Our school boys stay after Mass during Lent and chant the early Vespers with us, thus giving up much of their lunch period for the divine praise. But how well they pick up the Latin and the Psalms. Only afterwards do they hurry back to the classroom for a sandwich before classes resume.

The school children, of course, sing Mass each day, and very well. On Wednesdays during Lent they have their Stations of the Cross at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. A special Children's Day of Recollection is offered each year during Lent.

On Sundays both adults and children have classes in our Faith, more than just a little catechism to prepare for First Holy Communion. Our children must grow up knowing their Faith, and be able to defend it, if they are to live it and pass it on. The daily and Sunday sermons, of course, play a major role in this.

Friday is traditionally "Devotions Day" at St. Gertrude, and this is true most of all during Lent, when as many as three novenas are being prayed. Each Friday evening is structured as an Evening of Recollection, and starts with Rosary, followed by Low Mass with sermon.



Following the solemn blessing of ashes on Ash Wednesday His Excellency Bishop Dolan distributed the them to the faithful at St. Gertrude the Great Church. (Above) One of the postulants of the Sisters of Our Lady of Reparation receives her ashes.

The Mass is accompanied by beautiful music offered by one of our devoted choirs. Afterwards we pool our resources to have a potluck supper. I generally make some soup. But after 45 minutes, we're back in church for a Lenten Holy Hour, which starts with Stations of the Cross. In order to promote devotion we vary the meditations each week, following one of the many available, the Holy Face, the Sacred Heart, St. Alphonsus, St. Leonard of Port Maurice, etc.

After Stations the lights are dimmed for the Lenten Sermon. It was once very long, but is now just a short but moving meditation. The Sorrowful Mother Novena follows, during which the names of the sick are read out, and the Blessing of the Sick is given. Benediction with our Perpetual Novena to the Sacred Heart concludes the Holy Hour. Holy Communion is distributed at the end, both on Friday, and after Wednesday Stations.

The sacristan and some servers stay after Benediction

to put things away and to arrange the sanctuary for Saturday's high Mass, but most of the faithful go home, for soon we will be back in church as we continue our blessed observance of the Church's annual retreat.

We are always happy to welcome visitors, especially at Lent and Holy Week. You could easily do a private retreat, just spending a few days in church. But even if there are only a few in attendance here, we know that nothing is wasted as we are able to share these spiritual treasures with souls throughout the Church via the internet. But most of all, it is all done for God's glory.

May Our Lady bless you for a good Lent.

– **Most Rev. Daniel L. Dolan**



On February 2nd we bade farewell to the Christmas season with the blessing of candles, procession, and a solemn high Mass offered by Father Lehtoranta. Fathers McGuire and McKenna served as the other sacred ministers. Our annual Soup Supper/early Mardi Gras followed Mass in the social hall.



The Church's Christmas season had barely come to a close just the week before the solemn opening of the penitential season of Lent on Ash Wednesday. This year Father Cekada was the celebrant of Ash Wednesday's blessing of ashes and the solemn high Mass that followed. We were fortunate to have a very nice turn out on this day despite the return of winter's snow on Mardi Gras (the second time in as many years!) along with much colder temperatures. (Below) Father Cekada imposes the blessed ashes on the tonsure of Father McGuire,



During Lent our school children attend the Stations of the Cross at the close of each Wednesday's school day. (Above) Father Lehtoranta leads the student body in making this devotion with prayers geared to their age group. On Friday nights the traditional "adult" Stations are conducted for our faithful.



Easter Novena of Masses

Remember your loved ones
during Easter Week in a
Novena of Masses beginning
Easter Sunday, March 27th, at
St. Gertrude the Great Church.

Please use the enclosed form to list your intentions and return it to us so that it can be placed on the altar.

