

BULLETIN -- MARCH 20

Holy Week confessions. We are happy to provide, for your convenience, the following opportunities for Holy Week confessions. We shall have at least one confessor available at the following times:

Mon., March 21	9-11 a.m.
Tues., March 22	3-5 p.m.
Wed., March 23	7-9 p.m.

There will be no confessions scheduled during the Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday-Good Friday-Holy Saturday).

Confessional etiquette. We've been noticing that our penitents, eager as they are to confess and receive the grace of absolution, seem to be moving closer and closer to the confessional while waiting their turn. We shall be getting some signage up; but may we ask, please, that while you are waiting to go into the confessional, you wait no closer than the ends of the pews along the center aisle, rather than in the side aisle. My preference has always been to have the confessionals closer to the sanctuary, since there is less space for people to gather, and a better view of when someone is coming out and the priest is available. But we are constrained by architecture, so we ask your patience with this little adjustment. This will continue to be our procedure after Easter and into the future.

Rice Bowl offerings. If your household had a Lenten Rice Bowl as we suggested, you may bring the offerings to church in a container of any kind at the time of any service during Holy Week and Easter Week. We shall see to it that your generosity is combined with that of others throughout the Diocese to make a difference in the lives and bellies of those most in need throughout the world.

Holy Thursday. Please join us for our Holy Thursday potluck in the parish center, beginning at 5 p.m. After dinner, we shall proceed to church for the solemn liturgy of the Lord's Supper at 7 p.m., followed by adoration until midnight. During the liturgy, we shall "wash the feet" of the poor of our community by taking up our offering for Capitol Lunch, to feed those who form block-long lines down at Division & Bartlett each afternoon to enjoy what is for many their one nourishing, hot meal of the day. Our Holy Thursday check often provides at least two days of meals for those who come to eat.

Good Friday collection. Pope Francis has asked the members of every parish to support Christians in the Holy Land. Through the Good Friday collection, you stand in solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land as a witness of peace. Your support means that our Church will conduct parish ministry, provide Catholic education, feed the hungry, build houses for Christians, maintain shrines, and operate refugee centers in the Holy Land. Like Simon of Cyrene, you can help carry the cross under very difficult circumstances in the Holy Land. Christians, along with all of the clergy and religious who serve in the Holy Land, will deeply appreciate your prayers and financial help.

Please be generous. Baskets will be placed at the corners of the sanctuary to receive your gifts on Good Friday afternoon, especially after you venerate the cross during the solemn Liturgy.

CROSSWALK, is a West Side community event on Good Friday, March 25. It will highlight places of suffering in our neighborhood where we can join Christ to pray for healing, justice and wholeness. The 2½-mile walk will start at 5 p.m. at Trinity Reformed Church, 1224 Davis N.W., and stop at several locations, including Stocking School, Matthew's House, Steepletown Ministries, West Grand Neighborhood Organization, and Oasis of Hope. All are welcome. Cars will be available for those who aren't able to walk the route, but would like to accompany the walkers. For more information, contact Glenn Swier at 456-1739 or at glennswier@gmail.com.

Honoring marriage. At Pope Francis' direction, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in November, 2014, sponsored an international colloquium across religious lines on the complementarity of man and woman in marriage, co-hosted by several pontifical councils. One of the presenters was Rick Warren, the well-known author and pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, CA. Among other points he made, he said:

“In Hebrews 13:4 we are given this clear command: ‘Marriage is to be honored by everyone.’ . . . Today marriage is ridiculed, resented, rejected, and redefined. What are we going to do about this? The church cannot cower in silence! . . . As Saint Peter has said, ‘We must obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5:29).

“The only way to always be relevant is to be eternal. What is in style goes out of style; no revolution lasts. Every lie eventually crumbles under its own deception. Cultures rise and fall, cultures come and go, but the Word of God and the church of God continues. It isn't necessary to be on the right side of culture or the right side of history. It is just necessary to be on the right side!

“In many ways, the debate over the definition of life, of sex, and of marriage is, in reality, a question of leadership. Who is going to lead? Will the church *follow* the crowd, or will the church *lead* the crowd? In Exodus 23:2 God says ‘Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong.’ Why? Because history shows that the majority is often wrong. The dustbins of history are stuffed with the conventional wisdom of cultures that proved false. Truth is not decided by a popularity contest.”

And to that we add: Do not be swayed in your moral decision-making by the results of polls. Remember, 100% of us are sinners. How reliable are we in making the right moral choices? If the choice of the majority is at variance with the Word of God and the teaching of the Church, it is up to the majority to attempt to prove the righteousness of its cause. Theological explanations are helpful, but ultimately God's Word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit need no demonstration of proofs in order to be right. God bless you!

Fr. Den

Complaint of a senior citizen: My body has gotten totally out of shape from a lack of physical exercise during these winter months, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But by the time I got my gym gear on, the darned class was over.