

Reach Cathedral

April 2023

newsletter



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Contrition: the Greatest Act of the Penitent!



Msgr. Fucinaro
Pastor

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the election of Pope Francis, we do well to recall his papal motto: *He looked on him with mercy, and He chose him* (“Miserando atque eligendo”). Taking place in an instant, in the blinking of an eye, the Lord extends His mercy to heal and to share His abundant new life with the penitent. It is an invasion of grace setting us truly free. Approaching Holy Week and Easter we cannot but be drawn to greater sorrow for our sins and the consequences of them, but for the Lord, His mercy and His abiding call to us sinners are as one!

We are taught that the greatest action of the penitent – indeed even greater than his or her confession of sins – is his/her sorrow for sins (contrition). Perhaps never was this more eloquently on display than in the conversion of the Samaritan woman at the well. (cf. *John* 4: 4-42)

The woman arrives to the well without any thought that this would be the moment that would set her on a new course for the rest of her life. She comes, as would have been her daily habit of life, to draw water for the day. The Lord often uses the events of daily life to enter into our hearts in a more profound way! And so it is that Jesus comes into this

woman’s life with His irreplaceable gift for her!

So profound is this moment that: The woman left her water jar – sign of the very motive for her having come to the well – and instead she returns to the town saying to the people, “Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?” (*John* 4: 29)

In the face of such an encounter with Jesus all her earthly needs and desires must fade away to nothingness, for *you have something greater here* (cf. *Matthew* 12: 6), and this is no less true for our own encounters with Jesus!

The Lord’s pursuit after humanity – each and every one of us – is relentless, so much does he love us, and not one of us is ever so far away from Him as to be beyond the reach of His grace of conversion and salvation. For this woman and for all of us sinners on the pathway to holiness, and indeed sanctity, salvation has come to our household. The litany of these accounts is breathtaking (indeed, a study of the lives of the saints is for this reason refreshing and a joy to discover; to throw out just one name for your consideration, have a look at the remarkable life of Blessed Bartolo Longo of Pompeii!).

Once embraced, the Lord Jesus in fulfillment of His divine mission, efforts to fill us more and more completely with His very self, to dwell within us and to make us truly God-like in every way – and He did so gratuitously, while we were yet sinners. “In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins.” (1 *John* 4: 10)

Of course, the cost of embracing the Lord comes at no little price to us. As we



of faith already know, *love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all* (cf. Hymn *When I survey the wondrous Cross* by Isaac Watts, 1707). Yet, for the woman at the well, and for all the Holy Ones, “the sufferings of the present are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us.” (*Romans* 8: 18)

It is hence that the woman at the well, formerly known only as a public sinner, now becomes an evangelist to her own nation. Within the complex of this encounter with the Divine Mercy, Jesus Christ our Lord looks on *her* and has mercy, and at the same time He summons her to work on His behalf. All this is done for the greater glory of God, and so that she might truly fulfill the calling that God her Creator, from the very beginning, had intended for her. Against all odds, this magnificent woman, through her remarkable act of faith, would lead many others to faith. Indeed, to her eternal glory, it was said of her that, “We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world!” (*John* 4:42)



Something Strange is Happening

“*Something strange is happening.*” These peculiar words begin an ancient homily prayed by the Church every Holy Saturday. This ancient homily is read Holy Saturday morning during a portion of the Church’s Liturgy referred to as the “Office of Readings.”

The ancient homily depicts in graphic imagery the descent of Christ into the realm of the dead, namely, hell. Not the hell of the damned, but the hell of those in wait. The waiting room, we could say, of those who long for the Divine Physician to heal the division between God and man. This hell of waiting is also referred to as the Bosom of Abraham.

Few works of literature capture the depths of sorrow for sin and the longing for salvation quite as well as these short verses.

The waiting room was filled with the righteous men and women of the world who needed the Gates of Heaven to be open by the Savior. For without Christ, no man is saved. The scene depicts Christ coming face-to-face with Adam and Eve. The Savior

comes to heal mankind at the very root of our lineage all the way back to our first parents. The words of Jesus to Adam are profoundly moving as Jesus describes the victory of His crucifixion.

The ancient homily is just one part of a unique liturgy the Church calls *Tenebrae*, taken from the Latin word for “darkness.” *Tenebrae* is one of the most cherished liturgies for me throughout the entire year.

The tone and gravity of the prayers of *Tenebrae* are penetrating. Impacting the Christian spirit with a sense of reverence, anticipation, and wonder at the Paschal Mystery in progress. Another highlight of the liturgy includes the ominous lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah from the Old Testament. Few works of literature capture the depths of sorrow for sin and the longing for salvation quite as well as these short verses.

The verses are chanted in a tone not usually found within the Roman Catholic Tradition. The verses are typically chanted in a style descending

Fr. Hile
Parochial Vicar



from the ancient Mozarabic Rite of the Catholic Liturgy. A Rite of the Catholic Liturgy celebrated in early medieval Spain.

If you are interested in participating in the Liturgy of *Tenebrae*, Cathedral is going to celebrate this most sacred liturgy at 8:30am on Holy Saturday morning, April 8th, with the seminarians from Saint Gregory the Great Seminary.



Photos: The Chosen, Season 1 Episode 8, available on Formed.org. All parishioners have a free subscription through Cathedral.

Fifth Grade Confirmation Preparation

Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Rose Walsh
Fifth Grade Teacher



News to others. Along with this textbook, we have the 92 Questions which address the truths of the Catholic faith and have been used in our diocese for many years. Of course, we also use Sacred Scripture and many of the beautiful prayers and songs to the Holy Spirit.

Q: What is the origin of the 92 questions?

A: The tradition of the 92 Questions goes back to Bishop Flavin. He would ask the students a variety of questions and then it was Fr. Divis who over time recorded the questions that Bishop Flavin would ask the students. They are used to review and teach the basic truths of our Faith so that the students have a deeper awareness and understanding of the Faith they will profess when they renew their baptismal promises at Confirmation.

Q: Can you share more about inviting outside speakers to come talk to the students?

A: We have been so blessed with our speakers in the past! As the students prepare to be fully initiated into the life of the Church, we believe it is important for them to encounter people who can share what it means to live in relationship with God and work with the Holy Spirit in his mission to save souls. Teresa Raun always visits our students to share the story of her son, Nathan, who died as a young man but who deeply loved Jesus. Logan Burda has come to share about his experience of praying with others and teaches the students to do the same. We were so fortunate this year to have the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal at Cathedral during our Confirmation week to speak to our kids as well.

Q: How can or how does their preparation flow into their home life? Do you have things you recommend the students and families do outside of the classroom as preparation?

A: Families are a huge part of a student's spiritual journey and preparation! Often the Confirmation sponsors are family members or important role models of Faith in the student's life. We encourage parents and/or sponsors to take part in our diocesan Confirmation retreats and to be praying together as a family leading up to Confirmation. Since what happened at Pentecost in the Acts of the Apostles is extended to the one being confirmed, we encourage families to pray a novena (nine days of prayer) just like the disciples and Mary did at Pentecost. Confirmation is also a great time for families to refocus on their faith practices and learn more about the saints and the Bible as we talk about them in class.

Q: What are some of your favorite memories of 5th grade sacrament prep?

A: I love to see the students interacting with their parents or sponsor on the Confirmation retreat. I think it's really important for kids to see adults in their life praying or taking part in their sacramental preparation. One of my favorite activities is to lead the students in praying with the story of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). I play audio of a strong wind and we place ourselves there in the Upper Room as the Holy Spirit comes and pours grace into their hearts. The students can imagine what it would look, smell, and feel like to be there and then invite the Holy Spirit to come into our classroom, school, and hearts.

Q: What is Confirmation?

A: Confirmation, one of the seven sacraments, deepens the graces of Baptism and strengthens one in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit so that they can be witnesses of Christ in the world. During Confirmation, the Bishop anoints a person with chrism oil and says the words, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

Q: What is the purpose of fifth grade sacrament preparation?

A: The purpose is to walk with our students as they prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit in a special way at Confirmation. We are lucky in the Diocese of Lincoln because we have our own textbooks written especially for fifth graders. This book helps each student to have a good knowledge and understanding of the sacrament. Additionally, we encourage our students to sign up for the diocesan Confirmation retreats, organize special confession times, provide time for lectio divina and other forms of prayer in order to help them prepare spiritually. Finally, since they will be called to be witnesses, we invite speakers/members of the community to come and share about their spiritual journey as well.

Q: What does the preparation look like in the classroom?

A: Our own Diocese of Lincoln textbook for fifth graders (*Confirmed for Mission: An Evangelical Catechesis on Confirmation*) comes with activities and worksheets which can be used to help students reflect on their relationship with God and their mission to spread the Good



Photos from top left counter-clockwise (all Spring 2022): Sr. Maria Meza speaking to fifth graders, Teresa Raun speaking to fifth graders, Fifth graders at their Confirmation retreat, Confirmation at Cathedral, Fifth graders and their sponsors at Confirmation, Confirmation at Cathedral.



The Vulnerability of Love



Pietà by Franz Von Stuck, 1891

As we prepare to enter into the Passion of Christ this Holy Week, let us consider Mary's heart pierced with sorrow. She who loves Jesus with her whole heart, shows us the vulnerability of love. Mary experienced the ultimate grief witnessing her own son, the Son of God, mocked, beaten, spit on, flogged, and crucified. Her "yes" at the Annunciation led not only to our salvation, but also to her own pain.

What comes to mind when you think of the vulnerability of love? Keep your answer in mind as you read this excerpt from C.S. Lewis's *The Four Loves*:

To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable.

To love can lead to pain or sorrow, but it doesn't end there. Mary's grief did not end at the Crucifixion, but rather in the joy of the Resurrection. "The sufferings of this present time simply do not compare with the glory to come that will be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18).

Questions to Pray With:



1. Have you experienced the vulnerability of love in your life? Have you ever avoided giving of yourself, your time, your love for fear of vulnerability?
2. Has fear prevented you from opening up your heart to Christ's love? Do you trust that the Lord desires your good?
3. Are there areas of your life where you choose comfort over selfless love?
4. How can you challenge yourself to bring these fears or areas of selfishness to Christ? What graces can you ask for this week (patience, strength, joy, etc.) as we enter into Christ's passion and death, the ultimate act of love?



Photos: Parent Night with Dr. Boucher, 2023, Kathryn Mullin

Mental Health in Children



This school year, Cathedral School began planning and hosting quarterly parent nights. Each quarter, a relevant topic is chosen and a speaker is brought in to present on that topic to all school parents. In the fall, Cathedral welcomed Stephanie Olson of The Set Me Free Project to give prevention education on human trafficking.

For the third and most recent parent night of the year (March 9, 2023) Dr. Phil Boucher, a Cathedral School alum, spoke about the topic of mental health in children. Equipped with his experience as a pediatrician, he put together a presentation covering three case studies titled, "3 Things Our Children Must Hear, See, and Believe in 2023 and Beyond." These three studies depicted the most common child personas that come into his practice.

Dr. Boucher shared what each of these three personas would be at risk for; signs to watch for; and how to protect, support, and encourage the children. In every example, the emphasis was placed on the dialogue that takes place between children and their parents. More than that, he highlighted that what parents say should be backed up by their actions. This way children not only hear their parents supporting them, but see it and come to believe it too.

Due to the increase in expectations, demands, stimulation, etc. in our society, Dr. Boucher stated, "It's really hard to be a parent and it's really hard to be a child in 2023." The conversations, decisions, and boundaries present in a family today are vastly different from prior generations.

The event concluded with a Q&A session and brief explanation of Dr. Boucher's practice, Frontier Pediatric Care in Lincoln.

CATHEDRAL OF THE RISEN CHRIST

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Photo: 2nd Grade First Confession, 2023, Kathryn Mullin

April 2023 Dates & Events

Saturday, April 1, 10:30am

Easter Egg Hunt
Cathedral front lawn

Wednesday, April 5

No CCD

Thursday, April 6 – Monday, April 10

Parish Office Closed

Thursday, April 6 – Tuesday, April 11

Cathedral School Closed

Friday, April 14, 6pm

Risen
Pla Mor

Sunday, April 16, 2pm

First Holy Communion
Cathedral Church

Sunday, April 23, 11am

Children's Choir Mass
Cathedral Church

Sunday, April 23, 8am-12:30pm

Knights Spring Breakfast
Rector's Hall

Holy Week Schedule

April 3

Monday of Holy Week

5pm Chrism Mass

April 7

Good Friday

Noon Stations of
the Cross

3pm Good Friday
Service

5-6pm Outdoor
Stations of the Cross
(Runs every 15 minutes)

April 8

Holy Saturday



8:30am Tenebrae

8:30pm Easter
Vigil Mass

April 9

Easter Sunday



**6am, 7:30am, 9am,
11am, 6pm**
Easter Sunday
Masses

April 6

Holy Thursday

7pm Mass of the
Lord's Supper