

## Intentions for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

### Saturday, February 27, II Sunday of Lent (Vigil)

5:00 pm Robert Imbornoni

### Sunday, February 28, II Sunday of Lent

9:00 am Jane Leonard (Birthday)

12:00 pm Alice Stuart (26th Anniversary)

### Monday, March 1, Lenten weekday

12:00 pm Nancy & Knobby Tietjen

### Tuesday, March 2, Lenten weekday

12:00 pm Francis W. Casey, Sr. (24th Anniversary)

### Wednesday, March 3, St. Katherine Drexel

12:00 pm Ernest & Winnie Phillips

### Thursday, March 4, St. Casimir

12:00 pm Anthony Zuvich, Sr. (46th Anniversary)

### Friday, March 5, Lenten weekday

12:00 pm For Priests in the Year of Priests

6:30 pm Tridentine Latin Mass—Sacred Heart  
(No Stations of the Cross this Friday)

### Saturday, March 6, III Sunday of Lent

(Vigil)

5:00 pm Helen Murray

### Sunday, March 7, III Sunday of Lent

9:00 am For the Unborn and Their Parents

12:00 pm Deceased Members of the Betts, Henry  
& Vickers Families

### Attendance and Collections for the Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (February 21)

Our attendance was 190; the collection was \$1901; our second collection for Peter's Pence was \$373. The collection for February 17, Ash Wednesday, was \$383. Thank you for your generosity.

### Please Pray for the Sick of Our Parish

Please pray for our sick parishioners: Patti Adcroft, Mary Barone, Mary Billings, Johnathan Caban, Anne Cahill, Kara Jean Fleming, Margaret Flynn, Sister Eileen McCabe, Carol Mohler, Jacqueline O'Grady, Clara Rancier, Fred Serafini. If you know of a parishioner who is sick, please contact the Rectory.

### Visit to the Sick, Homebound, or Hospitalized

If you or someone you know is sick, homebound, or hospitalized and would like a visit from a priest for Confession, Communion, or Anointing of the Sick, please call the Rectory.

## Stations of the Cross for Lent

There will be Stations of the Cross on the Fridays of Lent at 7:00 pm. The object of the Stations is to make in spirit, as it were, a pilgrimage to the chief scenes of Christ's Passion, by passing from Station to Station, with prayers at each and devout meditations on the scenes, with the singing of a stanza of the *Stabat Mater* while passing from one Station to the next. (N.B.: There are no Stations on Friday, February 26, because of the Latin Mass at 6:30 for the Sacred Heart and First Friday.)

### Use our Catholic Nuns' Bookstore for Lent

Lent starts on Ash Wednesday, February 17, and invites us to a deeper following of the Lord. The Sisters and Staff of Pauline Books and Media, 64 West 38th Street, offer a great service and a wide selection of books, DVDs, and CDs to enrich our living of Lent. The Blessed Sacrament Chapel at the Center provides a welcome space for quiet time with the Lord as well. For more information, please call 212-754-1110.

### The Archdiocesan Stewardship Appeal

This weekend marks the start of the 2010 Archdiocesan Stewardship Appeal. You should already have received a letter from Archbishop Dolan asking your support for the vital ministries, programs, and services provided through the Appeal each year. Please fill out your pledge card and send it in. This week will show the DVD for the Appeal in lieu of the sermon at all the Masses. As Lent begins, we are reminded of our obligation to pray, to fast, and to give alms. Part of giving alms is to live out our vocation of Stewardship, which is the responsibility of all those baptized into Christ.

### Lent and Baptism

A key to understanding the meaning of Lent is Baptism. Preparation for Baptism and for renewing our baptismal commitment lies at the heart of the season. Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has reemphasized the baptismal character of Lent. Why is Baptism so important in our Lenten understanding? Lent as a forty day season developed in the fourth century from three merging sources. The first was the ancient paschal fast that began as a two-day observance before Easter but was gradually lengthened to forty days. The second was the catechumenate, a process of preparation for Baptism, including an intense period of preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation to be celebrated at Easter. The third was the Order of Penitents, which was modeled on the catechumenate and sought a second conversion for those who had fallen back into serious sin after Baptism. As the catechumens or candidates for Baptism entered their final period of preparation for Baptism, the penitents and the rest of the community accompanied them on their journey and prepared to renew their baptismal vows at Easter.

## Prayer and the Spiritual Life

Msgr. Michael F. Hull, S.T.D.

Lent is a time for prayer above all things. St. John Damascene says, “Prayer is the ascent of the mind to God or the beseeching of good from him” (*De Fide Orthodoxa* 3.24; cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 83). Prayer is our response to God’s love; it is an act of the virtue of religion wherewith we acknowledge the omniscience and omnipotence of God vis-à-vis the First Commandment (*ST*, II-II, q. 81).

Prayer is the foundation of the spiritual life, because it is in prayer that we raise our minds to the Father in the goodly aspiration to lead a life on this earth in imitation of the Son, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we might enjoy eternity in the company of that same Holy Trinity and the saints.

Prayer is vocal (common or individual) or mental (affective or contemplative) in adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise. The model of prayer is the Lord’s Prayer, the “Our Father” (Matthew 6:9–13 and Luke 11:2–4), which is the perfect balance of our recognition of and dependence upon God; the model of the spiritual life is the Lord’s life, which is the perfect example of virtue and holiness.

St. Paul reminds us: “Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Insofar as prayer is the lifting of the mind and heart in response to God, the spiritual life is the constant and consistent life of prayer that has as its end union with God. Such a union is begun in this life and continues into the afterlife. The Church teaches us “all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of love” (*Lumen Gentium*, no. 40).

The bedrock and irreplaceable foundation of the “fullness of Christian life and the perfection of love” is prayer. Thus, it behooves each of us to inculcate a life of prayer in order to lead a spiritual life. That is, there is no such thing as a spiritual life that does not begin and end in prayer, “in the ascent of the mind to God or the beseeching of good from him.” What better time is there than Lent to focus on prayer and the spiritual life?

St. Paul reminds us: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). The spiritual life is a participation in the Love that proceeds from the Father and the Son, namely, the Holy Spirit (cf. John 14:16, 23). The art of prayer, first introduced by the Lord in his own prayer, and careful attention to the things of God, inaugurate the spiritual life. Imitating the virtue and the

holiness of the Lord and begging for the indwelling of the Spirit, we are enabled to offer fitting praise and acts of charity in the spiritual life. This spiritual life has its impetus and its fruits in the spiritual works of mercy.

It is precisely by the indwelling of the Spirit that we enjoy sanctifying grace, that the soul is lifted above the natural to the supernatural, and that are brought closer to union with God, whose “love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us” (Romans 5:5). So long as we remain in the Spirit in this life, physical death (and any concomitant suffering) can be gain only, as it brings us to the beatific vision where all that remains is love.

Prayer is the hallmark of our spiritual life, because it was the hallmark of Jesus’ earthly life. “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear” (Hebrews 5:7).

Prayer is our response to the Father’s grace in imitation of the Son through the Spirit. In the spiritual life, we seek to know Christ, to experience the power of his resurrection, to share in his suffering, and to become like him in his death, so that we may attain “the resurrection from the dead” (Phil 3:10–11). Let us be sure that prayer, the hallmark of any spiritual life, is the hallmark of our Lenten journey.

### **Pope Blessed John XXIII’s Prayer of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

This Friday, March 5, is the First Friday of the month. It is a longstanding Catholic tradition to recall Jesus’ Sacred Heart, that is, His love for us on Friday, the day when he suffered his Passion. Please remember to keep this Catholic custom, by attending Mass, making the Stations of the Cross, of dropping by a church on First Friday to prayer to Jesus.

*Lord Jesus, Whose Heart was once pierced for love of us, we renew our baptismal promises to reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises to live only for You. Although we are already united to You through the Sacrament of Baptism, and this union is constantly perfected by the Eucharist, we give ourselves to You again today to fix more deeply in our hearts this resolve to live for You and to serve You more faithfully. Give us the grace to love and serve You always. Amen.*