

PARISH FAMILY OF ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 3, 2008

2510 Middle Road
Glenshaw, PA 15116
Founded 1834

PARISH STAFF

Mrs. Barbara Belski, Dir. of Youth Ministries
Mr. Francis Dadowski, Deacon
Mr. James Finn, Pastoral Associate
Mr. Robert Kardasz, Dir. of Music Ministries
Father John Marcucci, Pastor
Ms. Antoinette Pilarski, Principal
Father Edward Schleicher, Parochial Vicar
Sr. Lois Spinnenweber, CDP, Apostolate Minister
Miss Rose Stegman, Dir. of Faith Formation



Web Site: stmaryglenshaw.org

E-Mail: rectory@stmaryglenshaw.org

Parish Family Administration Office: 412-486-4100

Religious Formation Office - 412-486-5521

Youth Ministry Office - 412-492-9344

Social Ministry Office - 412-486-4021

Parochial School - 412-486-7611

Marian Hall - 412-684-1112

Fax: 412-486-4150



SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

DAILY LITURGY SCHEDULE

Monday through Friday at 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
Saturday at 8:00 a.m.

RECONCILIATION

Saturday at 11:00 a.m. until final penitent is finished

BAPTISM

On Sunday twice a month after parental interview

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Twice a year in a communal celebration
Individually upon request

MATRIMONY

Saturday weddings at 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m.
Notification at least 6 months in advance

BULLETIN DEADLINE

Monday at 12:00 noon

PARISH SHARE PROGRAM

We welcome the member of the Finance Council who will speak at each of the liturgies today concerning our 2008 Parish Share assessment. The actual second collection for the Parish Share Program will be taken up NEXT WEEK at all the liturgies. We hope that every wage earner will take seriously the responsibility to contribute to the *Parish Share Program*. Each registered family will receive in this coming week a pledge card in the mail from our Office Staff. This card allows each of us to make a pledge or offer a one-time contribution. We ask that you return this card next weekend to place in the second collection, or send it back to the Office some time during this next week. The assessment of our Parish Family for this year is \$135,491. If we do not achieve this assessment, then we must take the difference from the regular Sunday collection and thus jeopardize the many needs of our Parish Family.

OLD PALM NOW BEING COLLECTED

Those parishioners who still have their palm from last year are asked to bring it by Tuesday of this week and place it in the receptacle provided in the foyer of the church. This palm will be burned and provide the ashes for this year's Ash Wednesday celebration. This burning process emphasizes the triumph of last year's Passion (Palm) Sunday now becomes the suffering of this year's Lenten season.

"PITTSBURGH CATHOLIC" SENT HOME

Please note that there are no copies of the "Pittsburgh Catholic" available at the church doors this week. This is another one of those times when the "Pittsburgh Catholic" is sent home to every registered member of the Parish Family. All are asked to note that the daily calendar for Lent has also been included in that mailing to each home.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL WEEK

A special thank-you to those who contributed to this year's Catholic School Week celebration as we once more recognize what an asset the parochial school is to our entire Parish Family! We remind all parishioners that our parochial school begins with a three-year old program and extends all the way to the eighth grade and is open to children of all faiths.

SCOUT SUNDAY: TODAY

We offer a warm welcome to all those who gather at today's 9:00 a.m. liturgy to celebrate *Scout Sunday*. We recognize all of the young people of our Parish Family who participate in the scouting program, and most especially thank all of the adults and parents who give of themselves so generously to form these young people into dedicated Americans who realize the importance of God. Congratulations to those receiving their religious award as we invite all parents and guardians to encourage their children to participate in future religious award programs of the scouts. The many scout programs that use our facilities during the course of the year offer great service to our Parish Family in many ways, and today's 9:00 a.m. liturgy recognizes them for it.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS EVENING

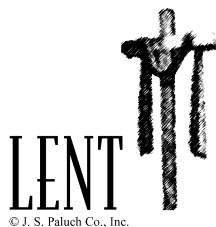
All adult extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, greeters, lectors, ushers and music ministers, including the choirs, contemporary groups, bell choir, cantors and instrumentalists, are invited to gather with us for our Mardi Gras celebration on Tuesday, February 5th, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in Marian Hall. We hope to create a socially friendly atmosphere during which we might meet and greet other ministers who are leaders of the many liturgical celebrations of our Parish Family.

PASTORAL COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

The Parish Pastoral Council will gather on Monday of this week, February 4th at 7:30 p.m. in the rectory to set in motion the goals and objectives of the Parish Family for the year 2008. Each of the goals established by the Council will adhere to one of the four pillars of our Parish Vision Statement, published on the front cover of the bulletin weekly.

"FAREWELL," FATHER LUTZ

Father Jerry Lutz took up residence in our rectory back in October of 2006 and has been a great asset to our parish life ever since. However, in his retiring years, he was been called to South Carolina to work among those of Spanish descent since Father is bilingual and speaks the language very well. We will miss his presence among us and pray that he continues to serve the People of God with his many talents and gifts of proclaiming the Gospel!



Liturgies for the Week

Sunday, February 3, 2008 - Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 4:00 p.m. Clair Rihn - Balestrino Family
- 6:00 p.m. Joseph Wagner - Family
- 7:30 a.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
- 9:00 a.m. Leonard Lang - M/M Stanley Butarva
- 11:00 a.m. Clarence Bittner - Harold & Libby Pernisek

Monday, February 4, 2008 - Weekday in Ordinary Time

- 7:00 a.m. Catherin Lazzaro - Gregorio Malta
- 10:00 a.m. Joseph Martin - M/M Joseph Basco

Tuesday, February 5, 2008 - St. Agatha

- 7:00 a.m. In Honor of the Holy Face of Jesus
- 10:00 a.m. Donna & Bill Kelsh - Family

Wednesday, February 6, 2008 - Ash Wednesday

- 7:00 a.m. John Abrams - Harold & Libby Pernisek
- 10:00 a.m. Elma Spinnenweber - Sr. Lois & Joan
- 12:00 p.m. Liturgy of the Word
- 4:30 p.m. Liturgy of the Word
- 7:00 p.m. Jim & Elsie Keenan - Daughter

Thursday, February 7, 2008 - Chinese New Year 4706

- 7:00 a.m. Agnes Bernas - Butler Family
- 10:00 a.m. Sally Ann Nolnar - Family

Friday, February 8, 2008 - Ss. Jerome Emiliani & Josephine Bakhita

- 7:00 a.m. Frances Klaber - Edna DeLeone
- 10:00 a.m. Lucy Sasinoski - St. Mary Students - Room #15
- 2:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross
- 7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Saturday, February 9, 2008 - Weekday in Ordinary Time

- 8:00 a.m. Danny Kawka - Mom & Dad
- 4:00 p.m. Anna Ferber - Family
- 6:00 p.m. Matthew Guardalabene - Wife

Sunday, February 10, 2008 - Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

- 7:30 a.m. Francis Werling - Family
- 9:00 a.m. Living & Deceased of Our Parish Family
- 11:00 a.m. Clarence Bittner - Elliott Family

Offertory Collection

January 13, 2007	Envelopes	Contributions
Offertory	722	\$14,397.50
Cash/Loose Cks.	-	\$882.00
Children's Offertory	-	\$64.00
Catholic Schools	29	\$383.00
St. Anthony	25	\$280.00
Parish Share 2007	4	\$210.00
Parish Needy	28	\$392.00
Total	808	\$16,608.50

Weekly Activities at a Glance

- Sunday (Marian Hall) 7:30AM - Hospitality Sunday
(Church) 9:00AM - Scout Sunday
- February 3 (Church) 12:00PM - R.C.I.A.
(Marian Hall) 11:00AM - Sunday Preschool
(Marian Hall) 6:30PM - CYM T-Roc
- Monday (School) 6:30PM - CCD Program
February 4 (Marian Hall) 7:00PM - Fish Fry Meeting
- Tuesday (Marian Hall) 8:00AM - School Band
February 5 (Marian Hall) 3:00PM - Girl Scout Troop #205
(Marian Hall) 7:00PM - Mardi Gras
- Wednesday (Marian Hall) 1:30PM - 55 Specials - Bingo/Cards
February 6 (Church) 2:45PM - Children's Choir Practice
(Church) 7:30PM - Adult Choir Practice
- Thursday (Marian Hall) 6:30PM - CYM Drama Club Practice
February 7 (Church) 8:00PM - Adult Hand Bell Practice
- Friday (Marian Hall) 4:30PM - Fish Dinners
February 8
- Saturday (School) 9:30AM - CCD Program
February 9
- Sunday (Church) 9:00AM - Liturgy of the Word for Children
February 10 (Church) 9:00AM - CCD Family Program

Flowers at the altar given by Tom & Martha Garasic.

Flowers at the tabernacle in loving memory of Mary Clare requested by Gino & Sharon Arlotti.

R. I. P. Please pray for the repose of the soul of Theresa J. Sokach and Richard Kusmierski.

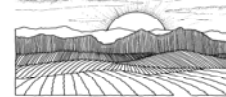


Please pray for all the sick and those recovering from illness. Family and friends have requested prayers for following:

Anna Marie Belch, Renae Vivaldi Breskovich, Martha Hornak, John Hoehn, Richard Hornick, Olivia Hutchenson, Regis & Kitty Murphy, Jack & Margie Nist, Judy Ranalli, Courtney Ryce, Frankie Seiler, Joshua Stanek, Mark Thimons, James Wilson.

Daily Readings

Blessed are the peacemakers



- Monday, Feb. 4: 2 Sm 15:13-14, 30; 16:5-13; Mk 5:1-20
- Tuesday, Feb. 5: 2 Sm 18:9-10, 14b, 24-25a, 30-19:3; Mk 5:21-43
- Wednesday, Feb. 6: Jl 2:12-18; 2 Cor 5:20 - 6:2; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18
- Thursday, Feb 7: Dt 30:15-20; Lk 9:22-25
- Friday, Feb 8: Is 58:1-9a; Mt 9:14-15
- Saturday, Feb. 9: Is 58:9b-14; Lk 5:27-32
- Sunday, Feb. 10: Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Rom 5:12-19 [12,17-19]; Mt 4:1-11

SACRAMENTAL LIFE



Baptized in Christ

**Fiona Elizabeth Engel
John Patrick Britt**

Congratulations to their parents, godparents, and grandparents. Please join us in welcoming them into our *Parish Family!*

LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME TO ME- a post-baptism ministry for children age birth to five years of age offers programs geared to be spiritually supportive to parents. All are welcome. Call Monica Hoehler at (412)492-0242 for more information. Our next time together will be Ash Wednesday for the 10am Mass followed by lunch and playtime.

ANNUAL GENESIS OUTREACH- Genesis is an organization that assists women who have made the choice to keep their baby and not abort it. Please place your donation in the box marked: GENESIS in the Children's Liturgy Room. Top items in most need are infant layette items, diapers, new and gently used boy/girl clothing through 6 months. Thank you for your donation.

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE by Bud Ozar

It is in our family where we learn to be merciful and comforting to others. The Beatitudes of the Kingdom of God begin at home and depend on you.

REMEMBER THOSE WHO ARE SERVING IN THE MILITARY ALL OVER THE WORLD. PRAY FOR PEACE!

RCIA- Instead of meeting in the rectory dining room, catechumens and candidates will meet in church following the 11:00am Mass for a church tour led by Father Ed. All are welcome to join in! Next week we will discuss the Sacrament of Penance at the usual time in the rectory dining room following the 9:00am Mass. For more information, call Fr. Ed or Jim Finn at the rectory(412)486-4100.

A Vocation View

Seek to follow Jesus, the humble servant. You will be blessed! Discover the grace to the gospel.



Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3

RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Faith Sharing for 4th Sunday Ordinary Time

The teaching and actions of Jesus as expressed in the "beatitudes" are not compatible with the shrewdness of this world. We are challenged to accept and live with these up-side-down values. Which of the beatitudes do YOU find the most challenging? Which, the most interesting?

Confirmation Candidates Retreat, Monday, February 18 at Kearns Spirituality Center.

Please return the YELLOW retreat form to the Faith Formation Office. It was to be distributed at the January Cluster meeting.

Confirmation Candidate Volunteers will gather Friday, Feb. 8, 6:45 PM, to serve as leaders and walk the way of the Cross with our parish assembly at the 7:00 PM service..ALL families welcome.

150th Anniversary of Blessed Mother's Appearance February 11, 1858, Mary

appeared to Bernadette Soubirous, a 14 year old girl, near Lourdes, France. She was asked to dig in the dirt, from which water began to flow and continues to flow, at 32,000 gallons a day. Mary told the girl, "I am the Immaculate Conception." This event is **depicted in the stained glass window** of our church, closest to the back door toward the cemetery. **Take a few moments to stop at the window** and thank MARY for her love, protection, and many miracles of healing that have occurred at the waters in Lourdes.

A 30 minute film "**Bernadette, Princess of Lourdes**" will be shown on Sat, Feb. 9, 9:45 AM in Marian Hall, and Monday, Feb. 11, 6:45 PM in Church. **All parishioners welcome to attend.**

Catholic Vision of Love catechesis and reflection on the beauty and sanctity of human sexuality Grades 5-6-7-8 of **Family Program** are welcome to participate Monday, February 4, 6:30-8 PM, or Saturday, Feb. 9, 9:30-11:00 AM. Call 412-486-5521 to arrange in which room to go.

LOVE WALK FOR THE POOR, Sunday, February 10, begins with 2:00 PM Liturgy at Sacred Heart, Shady-side, then walk about one mile to the East End Cooperative Ministries with non-perishable item(s) to donate for the needy. Refreshments, activities, and social time at the end of the walk. **FAMILIES** are welcome to come. Deacon Fran will take our scout bus with as many as willing to participate. **Call 412-486-5521 to sign up NOW.**

LIGHTWEIGHT BLANKETS needed for our activity at the **Lovewalk**. These will be donated for the homeless. Leave any contributions of blankets on the last pew of the Children Liturgy Room with a note "for the homeless." Liturgy Room with a note "for the homeless."

YOUTH MINISTRY

Comin' Up:

SOUPER BOWL
ASK WEDNESDAY
LOVEWALK
CYM BASKETBALL PLAYER RECOGNITION
CYM DRAMA "PLAY ON"
HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP RETREAT
SIGN UPS FOR GOOD FRIDAY CROSSWALK

NO T-ROC TONIGHT DUE TO THE FOOTBALL GAME BUT WE ASK ALL TEENS TO **SUPPORT OUR CYM BASKETBALL TEAM**. THE TEENS WILL BE COLLECTING AT ALL OF THE LITURGIES THIS WEEKEND FOR THE **SOUPER BOWL** - ALL DONATIONS WILL GO TO OUR AFRICAN MISSION FUND FOR UGANDA.

What is the SOUPER BOWL? Every year churches around the country empower teens to make a statement for charity by collecting money at weekend church services during the football Super Bowl weekend.

Weekend Leadership Training for Teens

What is a weekend filled with learning, spiritual growth and leadership training worth to you? The Diocese of Pittsburgh is offering a **Peer Leadership Training** for youth in **Grades 9 - 12** from Feb. 22-24. Cost is \$75 and grants are available but **please register soon**. Call the CYM office at 412-486-4100, ext. 409.

CYM BASKETBALL PLAYER RECOGNITION

Please come out to support our new high school CYM basketball teams on **Sunday, February 10** at the Parish Activity Center (PAC). Girl's Varsity plays at 6:15 PM, Boy's Varsity plays at 7:45 PM. All three teams, including Boy's JV, will be recognized between 7:15 and 7:45 PM.

KOCH, UGANDA IS IT!

We now know the location of our first of many trips to Africa to render aid. Koch is a community of 5,000 to 10,000 people that has lost all infrastructure because of the war in Uganda. Peace has been restored to this area and our team will focus on rebuilding the school, creating a medical clinic, establishing a place of worship for the town and assessing for ongoing medical and educational needs.

CYM CALENDAR

<u>Sat., Feb. 2</u>	Girl Varsity B'ball 7:30 PM at PAC
<u>Sun. Feb. 3</u>	SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY Boy JV game at 1 PM in PAC
<u>Tues., Feb. 5</u>	Play practice Providence Hall 6:30-8:30PM
<u>Wed., Feb. 6</u>	Drop In Grade 6-12 3-6 PM NO BOYS BASKETBALL PRACTICE
<u>Thur., Feb. 7</u>	Play practice Providence Hall 6:30-8:30 PM

ST. MARY SCHOOL

RECYCLING - The school is still collecting empty ink cartridges and old cell phones for recycling. Please feel free to drop them off in the school office or in the back of church. Thank you!

MAGAZINE SALE - It is still not too late to renew your subscriptions or purchase new magazines through any student who attends St. Mary School. We will accept orders through Wednesday, February 6, 2008.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS - Please join the school community for Stations of the Cross during Lent at 2:00 PM in the church. They will be prayed every Friday beginning February 8th through March 14th.



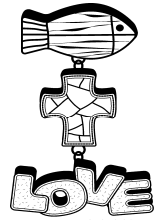
CYM DRAMA

Mark your calendars. From the same people who brought you "The Night of the Stars" the CYM drama troupe brings you their next comedy "Play On", directed by young adult, Josh DeFilippo. Proceeds will benefit our parish Uganda mission efforts. Saturday, February 16 performance begins at 8 PM. Food will be sold in Marian Hall after the 6 PM liturgy. Sunday, February 17 performance begins at 1 PM; food will also be sold after the 11 AM liturgy on Sunday. Both shows will be performed on our new stage in the Parish Activity Center. Admission is a Free Will donations toward our African mission project.

Hawaiian Luau

to raise money for our mission trip to Africa!

Get ready for the St. Mary's Luau on April 12, 2007 to raise money for the medical mission to Uganda. The Vincentian Academy Hawaiian Hula Dance Troupe will be performing. Dr. Lillian Cavanaugh is the chairperson for this upscale event that will include dinner at \$25 per ticket and entertainment provided by her group of dancers. We are looking for volunteers to join Mrs. Cheryl Sciuлло to help with this major event. Please call 412-486-4100, ext. 409 if you are willing to help Dr. Cavanaugh and Cheryl Sciuлло.



MARKET DAY orders now being taken for pick up on February 25. Go to www.marketday.com or call Lee, 724-443-1147. Pick up will be Monday, February 25, 6:30 till 7:30 PM in Marian Hall. Our proceeds go to continue updating our Marian Hall equipment. Thanks to all Market Day patrons.

GENERAL PARISH NEWS

The next Sunday Family CCD Session will be held on **February 10th** beginning with the 9:00 am Liturgy. Sessions follow for children/youth faith formation and adults until 12:00 noon. **Liturgy: Grade 6-5 serves. Closing Prayer: Grade 2-Scapulars/ Mrs. Goeller & Mrs. Kelly.**

The **“St. Vincent dePaul Pantry”** is the Special Family Project for February. The Pantry is in great need of non-perishable food items. Please bring any food donations of this type, which is for local families in need, and place on the table in back of Marian Hall before the session begins.

Reminder: C.V.O.L. “Catholic Vision of Love” Grades 5-6-7-8 Lessons 1 & 2. Child may attend either session – Monday, Feb. 4th at 6:30 pm *or* Saturday, Feb 9th at 9:30 am. Thanks to all in the Sunday Family CCD Program for your continued support and generosity!

ADULT CONFIRMATION-Those eighteen years of age or older who have not been confirmed are invited to prepare to receive this sacrament when Bishop Zubik comes to St. Mary’s on May 6, 2008 at 7:00pm. Call Jim Finn at (412)486-4100 to register for the preparation sessions that will begin shortly.

SECOND SATURDAY MENS GROUP ALERT

We will meet on Saturday, Feb. 9th but not at St. Mary’s. Come to the parking lot at St. Mary’s at 7:30am. Car pools will leave at 7:45am for St. Paul’s Seminary where Bishop David Zubik will lead a Holy Hour beginning at 8:30am. All should be over no later than 10:30am. All are welcome. Call Jim Finn (412)486-4100 if you need a ride or would be able to drive.

St. Mary of the Assumption Parish

We are in need of a grounds keeper during the summer months. Applicants must be at least 16 years of age. Please call our rectory at 412-486-4100. Thank you.

Assumption Cemetery of St. Mary

Please remove all Christmas wreaths and decorations in our cemetery before March 1, 2008. If you are unable to do so, our maintenance crew will remove and discard. Thank you.

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL TEENS! St. Mary’s Family Program Parents are starting a new once-a-month program just for teens. You are invited to come alone or with friends, join in a basketball or volleyball game or other activity, and/or hangout and listen to music and meet new people at our new Youth Gatherings Program. We promise you will not be preached to! In fact, we hope to hear more from you about what you want, and most of all we want you to have fun! Our next gathering will be held on Sunday, February 10th, after the 9 AM Mass from 10 AM to Noon, in the Parish Activity Center. Plan to attend and enjoy a good time!

LENTEN FISH DINNERS: Our first Lenten Fish Dinner will be served on February 8th, from 4:30PM - 7:00PM.

Adults - 8.00, Seniors - \$7.00,
Children - \$3.00 and Children under age 3 - \$1.00.

Please remember to drop off your desserts. Families with the last name beginning with A-D, please drop off your treats by Friday, Feb. 8th, by 4:00PM. Thank you and see you at the “Fish Fry.”



Around Our Town

Women’s Lenten Conference- The 11th Annual Women’s Lenten Conference will be held on Sat. March 1, 2008 at St. John Neumann Parish in Franklin Park from 10:30am until 2:30pm. Donation: \$15.00 per person. Make check payable to: TASH, Inc. Confirmation will be sent via email. The deadline for registering is Feb. 25th. Send to: Fr. Scott Seethaler, OFMCap. 221 36th Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15201

MEN’S RETREAT- March 7-8-9 at St. Paul’s Retreat House on the Southside. Call Charlie Fischer (412)487-4667 or Carl Lichvarchik (412)903-7607 to register or find out more! All are welcome; especially “first timers.” For more information see the insert in today’s bulletin.

WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE- This Sunday we celebrate *World Day for Consecrated Life*. We recognize and give thanks to those who have consecrated their lives to God and the Church through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Some join a religious congregation or a secular institute. Others remain single and make profession to God through the local bishop and are known as consecrated virgins. The consecrated life is one way that men and women live out their baptismal commitment as followers of Jesus. We are grateful for the Sisters of Divine Providence who have served our parish for over eighty years.

Rectory Cook is needed three to four days a week for the dinner meal planning preparation, shopping and general work associated with the kitchen. Occasional lunch prep and some major event, i.e. Confirmation dinner for the Bishop. Call Fr. Ed for an interview at 412-486-4100. This is a part-time position/hourly salary.

Donations Sought for Eagle Scout Project

Work will continue this Spring on refurbishing the pavilion behind St. Mary School with updated electrical work, four new picnic tables, and possible permanent outdoor grill. Zack Mancini, BSA Troop 17, is leading the project. Your kind generosity is needed for the purchase of the supplies that are still necessary for completion. Contributions can be made out to Zack Mancini at 3918 Farmview Dr., Glenshaw, PA 15116. Contact Zack at krspyzman16@aim.com or Mancini_17@hotmail.com or 412-487-3037. Thank you to those who have contributed to making the first phase possible (including paint and drainage supplies).

BODIES...THE EXHIBITION, is a booklet of questions and answers prepared by our diocesan Dept. for Religious Education. Several copies are available on the pamphlet rack at the rear of church and may be borrowed for your reading.

PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN Workshop, is a 3 hour mandatory session for any adults who volunteer in any of our church programs with children or youth. This will be held at All Saints, Etna, Sat., Feb. 9, 9:00AM till Noon. Call Sharon, **NOW**, at 412-781-5183 to register.

PASTORAL IMPRESSIONS from Father John

LENT begins on Wednesday with the distribution of ashes on the foreheads of us as penitents! The entire atmosphere of the Church creates for us a time of reflection and meditation. The liturgical spotlight shines directly upon the Cross of the Lord Jesus. During the course of the year, the Cross sometimes is placed in the background, or merely looms almost surreptitiously on the back wall of the church. Not so during Lent! During Lent, the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus is front and foremost. Suffering catches us in its web. It stings some in every fiber of their being. It haunts others with each of their waking days. It is all around us.

A day does not go by without someone in our Parish Family needing our prayers because of untold suffering in their lives. Cancerous tumors are robbing this person of life, heart disease is confining that person to an unwanted hospital stay, and viral dysentery seems to be touching everyone with uncomfortable moments. Pain cries out for relief! But suffering is not confined simply to our bodies. For some of us, our hearts and minds are full of agony and torment. Our prayers are also sought for all those persons who experience the torturous distress of the mind. For some, it becomes a mental disease that makes every day a struggle; for others days no longer have meaning because they have lost the only one they love; while others simply find all their days filled with worry and concern about every issue in life from the bombing of terrorists to the fluctuation of the stock market.

The Cross of Lent reminds all of us that suffering was also integral to the life of Jesus of Nazareth. This divine Son of God took on every feature of human life, except sinfulness. Suffering was as much a part of His life, as it is ours. His ignominious death on the Cross was simply a final reminder that His life too experienced pain. Not only was His body poured out in a martyr's death; but also His heart felt the pain of being rejected, unloved and misunderstood. Lent centers out reflection upon the Cross of the Lord Jesus. It is the season when dying in Jesus' name becomes the hallmark of our discipleship. Suffering is to be avoided at all cost; we must do everything in our power to eliminate it from the face of the earth; it must not have rule over us. Someday it WILL end. And when that day arrives, we will enter into the glorious kingdom of the one who died on the Cross where there will be no more suffering, no more pain, no more death!