

February 2016

Peer Connections

St. Mary Star of the Sea Youth Ministry



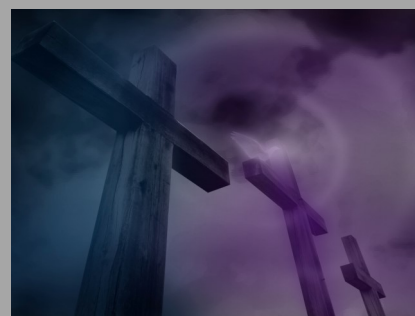
Lent 2016

It seems like Christmas just ended and Lent is already here. We as a church community tend to focus of the holiday at the end of Advent or Lent more than the time given to us to prepare. Easter is the most important day of the year for Christians, but most of us fail to properly prepare. This year instead of giving up something, try adding something to your life. Pray daily, read a religious book, read the bible, join a bible study or faith ministry, or spend more time with your family. Invite God to be with you everyday, instead of just during the holidays.



Best Lent Ever

"Don't give up chocolate this Lent"
Create a new habit this Lent. Each day you can spend time with God in reflection and prayer. It's so simple! By signing up for the Best Lent Ever program, Dynamic Catholic will email you a short video, reflection and prayer every day during Lent. Go to their website, dynamiccatholic.com/bestlentever, enter your name and email, and each day you will have the opportunity to spend a few minutes in prayer. Why not try something new this Lent?



Parent Lenten Series

Parents have you sign up yet? Don't miss the opportunity created just for you. Here are your options:

Thursday @ 7PM (snacks)
2/18, 3/3, 3/17

Sunday @ 12PM (lunch & childcare)
2/21, 3/6, 3/20

Please let us know your plans by February 8th. If you know anyone else that would like to attend please pass this along. This is meant for all parents (who have kids of all ages), this is also a great way to bring a friend that might not attend our church!

Upcoming Events

- Ash Wednesday — 2/10, Church
- College Weekend Retreat — 2/21- 14, Holy Family Retreat Center
- Lenten Series for Parents — 2/18 @ 7pm or 2/21 at 12pm, Church
- Middle & High School Night — 2/27 @ 5:30pm, Church
- Lenten Series for Parents — 3/3 @ 7pm or 3/6 at 12pm, Church

Jubilee Year of Mercy

Pope Francis has declared a Jubilee Year of Mercy! It is really amazing but what does it mean? Here is an excerpt from a Q&A session with Archbishop Leonard P. Blair In Celebration of the Jubilee Year of Mercy:

Question: What is the "Jubilee Year of Mercy" proclaimed by Pope Francis and when does it begin?

Archbishop Blair: A Holy Year is essentially a year during which the Pope grants a special indulgence, called the Jubilee, to all the faithful who participate by certain devotional acts, especially by making a pilgrimage to the Rome basilicas or to local cathedrals and their symbolic "holy doors," and doing so with a true spirit of faith and repentance, of charity and prayer. On December 8, 2015, Pope Francis will inaugurate a "Jubilee Year of Mercy" by opening the traditional Holy Year door of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The Bishops of the world will do the same in their cathedrals the following Sunday. In the words of Pope Francis, it is the opening of a "Door of Mercy through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God who consoles, pardons and instills hope" (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 3). In addition to celebrating the gift of divine mercy that we receive, Pope Francis also challenges us to be agents of mercy toward others.

Q: When and why did the Holy Father declare a Jubilee Year of Mercy?

A: Pope Francis announced his intention to proclaim a Jubilee Year of Mercy during a Lenten penance service in March, 2015. His stated purpose was for the Church to "make more evident her mission to be a witness of mercy."

Q: What is expected of individuals and the Church during the Holy Year of Mercy?

A: Pope Francis encourages us to go out of ourselves and our comfort zones, individually and as a Church, to address the misery of others – those who are suffering spiritually, morally and materially. The Holy Father has placed special emphasis on what the Church has traditionally called "works of mercy," both corporal and spiritual. The corporal works of mercy are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs. These include feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and prisoners, burying the dead and giving alms to the poor. The spiritual works of mercy are actions that help our neighbors in their spiritual needs. These include counseling the doubtful, instructing the ignorant, admonishing the sinner, comforting the sorrowful, forgiving injuries, bearing wrongs patiently and praying for the living and the dead. Remember that the three "T's" of Christian stewardship include giving time, talent and treasure.

For more information from Archbishop Blair visit the archdiocese website archdioceseofhartford.org.

Pope Francis' Prayer for Jubilee Year of Mercy



JUBILEE OF MERCY

Lord Jesus Christ, you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father, and you have told us that whoever sees you sees Him. Show us your face and we will be saved.

Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money; the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things; made Peter weep after his betrayal, and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.

Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke to the Samaritan woman: "If you knew the gift of God!"

You are the visible face of the invisible Father, of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy: let the

Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.

You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error: let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing, so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord, and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed, and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

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