

THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

A NEWSLETTER OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER IN THE PHILADELPHIA AREA

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Dear Parishioners and Friends,

Since this is the last issue of the *Philadelphia Ordinariate Post* that you will get before Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6th, I need to say a few words about Lent – even though we are not yet to Septuagesima and you probably (like me) don't want to think about fasting and penitence.

The actual *obligation* of fasting which the Church lays upon us is quite modest: all those 14 and older are bound to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent. All those 18 and older up to and including the 59th birthday, are bound to fast by limiting themselves to a single meal on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday (a modest collation is permitted at the other meals if necessary). Obviously this is minimal. The intent of the obligation is to allow even the weakest to fulfill it. Everyone, for the love of Jesus, will want to do more, as their health and physical strength permits. This includes forgoing the collations on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, fasting in some way on all the weekdays of Lent (eating less: as for example, cutting out snacks, desserts, seconds and alcohol), perhaps abstaining from meat on Wednesdays as well as Fridays. Because we are not purely spiritual beings, such physical disciplines are essential for our spiritual life. It can be surprising how difficult they are – which tells us how much we are ruled by the flesh.

There are many other possible Lenten disciplines which will bear fruit in our hearts. All are undertaken for the love of Christ. The aim is not self-improvement, but to live in a way that is ever more pleasing to our beloved Lord and Savior. The lesson we most often learn (though not usually the one we want to learn) is humility: how little we can manage to do on our own. Dependence on God rather than self is essential, if hard to learn: only those who depend on God will be in heaven. We all need to learn it, and it takes both practice and humility.

Among the disciplines we might consider this Lent: adding a weekday Mass; coming to Stations of the Cross and Benediction on the Fridays in Lent; spending time with our Lord adoring Him in the Blessed Sacrament; visiting the sick or lonely; spiritual reading; praying daily Morning or Evening Prayer (one of the great riches of the Anglican Patrimony); taking some special time with your kids (especially for dads); one of the corporal or spiritual works of mercy. You get the idea. The aim is to undertake something particular and well-defined, significant but not overwhelming, as a means of serving and drawing closer to our Lord.

As is usual in Lent, there are special opportunities for corporate devotions at St John's. On Shrove Tuesday, March 5th, you are invited to a **pancake supper and hymn sing** in the parish hall. I will also be in the confessional before Mass on Shrove Tuesday, in addition to the usual times Sunday and Thursday. On the Fridays in Lent (except for Good Friday), **Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament** at 7:30 p.m. There will also be a simple Lenten supper beforehand. There will be a **Lenten Quiet Day** on Saturday, March 30th. I should also note that **Bishop Lopes will be lecturing** on Ecumenism (and aptly so, since the Ordinariate is a significant example of realized ecumenism) at the Aquinas Center at Princeton University on Thursday, March 7th, 4:30 at Julius Romo Rabinowitz A01. While the Bishop will not be stopping by St John's in March, he will be with us on Maundy Thursday in Holy Week.

It is important to approach Lent with a generous spirit. I don't know anyone who *enjoys* fasting and penitence. But it is important for us to do it. It teaches us to depend upon God – for we inevitably learn our weakness when we try to do such things. It also reminds us of Christ's love for us, as He fasted in the wilderness, and then later poured out His life's blood on the Cross. It humbles us, keeping us mindful of our unworthiness of the great gifts God gives us. Penitence leads us to Christ, by way of humility, love and generosity.

Organ

We want to maintain first rate liturgical music in support of the worship of almighty God at St John's. The organ is an essential element in this. Some background. We are currently using a two-manual Rodgers electronic, given to St John's by Kevin Chun when we first moved to Bridgeport. There is a small Moehler pipe organ in the gallery. We are not using that one primarily because the console is placed so that the organist cannot conduct the choir. We have not moved the console because the instrument is too limited for our long-term needs. Eventually, we would like to have a pipe organ of sufficient size (three manuals, perhaps 30 ranks) to support the full

range of our needs. This, however, would require expanding the gallery (as well as a large sum of money), which, in turn, requires the interior alterations to the church proposed in the Master Plan. So that is a good ways off in the future.

As an interim solution, we have been looking for a way to upgrade the current instrument for use until the ideal becomes possible. We have located a used three-manual Wicks digital electronic which should serve the purpose at a very reasonable cost. Bill Gatens and the "committee" have auditioned a sister instrument, and found the sound to be very good. We are proceeding with the details of the purchase, delivery (from Chicago) and installation. I don't yet know about the timing of the installation, but probably sometime this spring. There will be a small alteration to the front of the choir gallery for the installation of a shelf for the speakers for the new organ. It should provide a very major upgrade to what we hear in church. I am especially grateful to Bill, and to Kevin Chun (director of the Saint Cecilia Choir) for their help in locating this instrument, and determining that it will serve our needs. I am grateful for a gift from Elizabeth Dornberger which will cover nearly half of the purchase price. We also have some funds in hand from the Evensong collection last year, which we designated for the organ fund. When we can, we plan to sell both the Rodgers and the Moehler, which will help defray the cost of the Wicks (\$25,000-30,000, which includes shipping, installation and voicing). If others are motivated to help with the costs, let me know!

Thanks

I want to extend a word of thanks to all those who helped with Christmas. Many helped to decorate the church, and many helped to take down the greens, trees, flowers and clean up afterward (Augustine Finegan and Robert Curry-Bey deserve special mention here). The choirs – St Cecilia as well as the adults – contributed wonderfully to our worship. Bill Gatens and Kevin Chun also put in considerable time, effort and devotion. The acolytes served generously and well at the altar.

I also want to thank those who have contributed to the Building Fund, which has gone from nothing to \$118,000 in the last four months. Another \$90,000 has been pledged for 2019. While this is not enough to proceed with the tower repair immediately, it is extraordinarily generous, as virtually all of it comes from within the parish, at a time when our regular pledging for the operating budget is also increasing.

Thanks also goes to John and Michael Ewing for repairing several of the exit signs in the parish house and help with a leaking pipe; to my wife for mopping up after the leak; to all those who contribute to the Breakfast Bags for Aid for Friends, and the Royces for overseeing the good work; Angela and Mitch Johnson for doing last month's POP mailing (the Finegan clan did December's); Mary Hirschfeld for a provocative and useful adult forum on money last month; Clare Finegan for providing supper of the St Cecilia Choir every Thursday, Roger Converse for fixing windows in the parish house, helping with the leaks, and various other odd jobs; Leslie Altena, Mike Crofton and Beth Ousley for giving people rides to church.

Thanks also goes to Leslie Altena and Anne Hummel for their service on the parish Pastoral Council. They have rotated off. Mary Ann McCluney and Edel Lukens have agreed to serve on the Council, which also includes Bill Finegan, Bill Gatens, Chris Jordan, David Livezey, Gina Royce, and David Rawson. For your information, Mike Crofton, Dan Elliott, Pedie Hill, Mary Hirschfeld, Mark Jakubik, Chris Jordan and Doug Sherlock serve on the Finance Council. My thanks to all who serve!

Anglicanorum Coetibus Society

You should be aware of (and may well want to join) the Anglicanorum Coetibus Society, which exists to serve the Anglican patrimony within the Catholic Church. They have a revamped website at <https://www.acsociety.org/>, which also includes a link to their blog. Both website and blog carry an endorsement from Bishop Lopes – which is impressive since he generally discourages blog reading, at least among the clergy. The Society is not a formal organ of the Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter, but many of those involved are in the Ordinariate, and its mission supports that of the Ordinariate.

Calendar

February 8 & 22 – High School Youth Group, 7-8:45.

February 10 – congregational meeting for financial updates.

February 13 – Patricians adult discussion group, 6:30-8:30 in the parish hall. This month: Divine Mercy, as the devotion comes from Saint Faustina.

February 17 – Septuagesima; assembly of Breakfast Bags for aid for Friends at coffee hour

February 24 – Solemnity of the Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle, Patronal festival of the Ordinariate.

March 5 – Shrove Tuesday pancake supper & hymn sing

March 6 – Ash Wednesday, Mass at 10 and 6:30

March 7 – Bishop Lopes's ecumenism lecture in Princeton

March 8 – Friday in Lent: Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

Yours faithfully,
Fr David Ousley