

Dear Parishioners:

As you know, the season of Lent has begun. You should all have received a letter outlining all the various Lenten spiritual opportunities. In addition, these activities are also listed in the bulletin and on the Parish website. Take advantage of these opportunities!

Any important endeavor in life takes time, commitment and effort, whether that is losing weight, exercising to get into shape or getting an academic degree. The same is true in the spiritual life. We need to put in time, commitment and effort to grow in the spiritual life as well. It is not easy, but the rewards are out of this world!

This week we celebrate two great saints in the Church: St. Patrick (March 17) and St. Joseph (March 19). St. Patrick was born in Britain in 387. He was captured and became a slave at the age of 14. He finally escaped at the age of 20. After a vision from God, he studied and was ordained a priest and eventually a bishop. He was sent to bring the Gospel to Ireland, the place of his enslavement. He spent 40 years converting the people of Ireland. His famous prayer is the Breastplate of St. Patrick: "Christ be with me, Christ be within me; Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in the hearts of all who love me, Christ in the mouth of friend and stranger."

We know little about St. Joseph, but he is given the title of patron of the Church. St Joseph actually has two feast days: March 19 (St. Joseph, the husband of Mary) and May 1 (St. Joseph the worker). The Gospel of St. Matthew notes that Joseph was "a righteous man" (Matthew 1:18). Joseph was chosen by God to raise Jesus: St. Joseph fed Jesus, dressed him, comforted him, played with him, taught him how to walk – just as any dad today. The holiness of St. Joseph lies in doing the day in, day out work of being a husband and father. As Mother Theresa often said, being a Christian means "doing little things but with great love." St. Joseph lived that motto out and St. Joseph challenges us to do little things with great love in our lives as well.

St. Patrick and St. Joseph, pray for us!

Remember: Together, we can do something beautiful for God.

In Christ,

Fr. Brian

PS: As you know, each Sunday we are highlighting a symbol pertinent to Lent and Holy Week. Last week, we began with the symbol of the **LANTERN**. Judas and the soldiers used a lantern to discover and arrest Christ. Our prayer reminded us that when we see the lantern on the wall of the church, we ought to be reminded of how and where Jesus was arrested. We pray that this sign will remind us to always do the will of God the Father, just as Jesus did.

This week, we use the symbol of the **ROPE**. May the picture of the rope help you to remember the night that Jesus went to the chief priest's house and kept his courage. We pray that this sign will give you courage to always do the right thing, even if it's a difficult thing!