



# February Newsletter

## Saint Joseph Parish School of Religion

Dear Parents,

Lent begins on February 21, Ash Wednesday. On that day, we begin a season of doing special forms of charity and being especially generous (almsgiving); of being more conscientious about prayer; and fasting. During Lent, our relationship with Jesus grows stronger as we prepare to celebrate the joy of the Resurrection of the Lord.

We don't often think about preparing for Lent, though. Yet, preparing for something is one way to ensure that we get the most out of it. Talk with your child about the season of Lent and the things you might do as a family during Lent. We talk about these things in class as well. Perhaps on Ash Wednesday Eve, you could gather as a family and read the Gospel that will be proclaimed at Mass the next day: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18. You will hear Jesus teaching about almsgiving, praying, and fasting.

Then, throughout Lent, share moments of generosity, prayer, and fasting with your child.

Together, we can help your child have a meaningful Lent.

Sincerely in Christ,

**Steven M. Fischer**

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### Important Dates to Remember

#### February 7<sup>th</sup>

Confirmation Rehearsal  
7:00 p.m. Church

#### February 8<sup>th</sup>

Confirmation Retreat and  
Confirmation  
Retreat during day –  
Ceremony 7:00 p.m. Church

#### February 25<sup>th</sup>

Reconciliation Services  
(Class begins at 8:45am)

### What's the Good Word?

Page McKean Zyromski

#### **Monstrance (MON-struhnts):**

the sacred vessel used to expose a consecrated host for benediction or Eucharistic adoration

The word comes from the Latin word *monstrare* meaning "to show." Another Latin word with the identical meaning, *ostendere*, gives us a synonym for monstrance, namely "ostensorium," which is not as widely used.

A monstrance is made of gold or silver and typically has a circular glass-covered opening through which the Blessed Sacrament can be viewed. The glass enclosure is called a "luna" or "lunette" and often is surrounded by sun-like rays or other artistic decorations. The traditional sun-like design has been customary since the sixteenth century, but any dignified design may be used. A small cross is almost always found on the top of the monstrance.

In some locales at certain periods of our history, monstrances were made very large so they could be drawn by carts in processions. Nowadays, a monstrance usually is about twice the size of a chalice.

After the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, many parishes have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament using a monstrance. Exposition on First Fridays is also becoming more common. Some religious orders, like the Poor Clares, were founded for the purpose of perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Celebrating Saint

## Peter

Leader of the Church

Feast Day: February 22<sup>nd</sup>

By Patricia Mathson

Peter grew up on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and became a fisherman. He thought he would always be a fisherman, but God had other plans. How did this fisherman become the leader of the early Church? It just shows that all things are possible in God who works through us.

Peter and his brother, Andrew, were the first Apostles Jesus chose. They left everything behind to follow him. When Jesus asked Peter, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter said, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus then told Peter, "You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 15:15-18).

Later, when Jesus was arrested, Peter denied knowing Jesus – three times! But Peter realized what he had done and knew that Jesus would forgive him. After Pentecost, Peter proclaimed the good news of Jesus and was the leader of the early Church. Today, the pope is the successor of Peter. We celebrate the Chair of Peter on February 22. We celebrate St. Peter and St. Paul on June 29.

Our life story is like Peter's. We too are called to be disciples of Jesus. We are called to ask forgiveness when we fail and to share the good news of Jesus with others.

### ~Prayer~

Jesus, Peter left behind his way of life and followed you. May Brandon, Melanie, Dylan, Garrett, Alicia, Andrew, and Danny follow your call in their lives, proclaim your good news of love and peace, and put you first in all they do. Amen.

## "Be sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit!"

Like Peter our eighth grade candidates; Brandon Albertson, Melanie Ansara, Dylan Cottingham, Garrett Mahoney, Alicia Studer, Andrew Turner, and Danny Lusher; are called to be disciples of Christ.

Our candidates were baptized as infants, Confirmation provides an opportunity to ratify freely and deliberately what was done for them at Baptism. It helps to focus their minds and the minds of the whole community on the essentially missionary dimension of the baptismal commitment.

It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1302)

From this fact, Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- It roots us more deeply in the divine filiations which makes us cry, "Abba! Father", (*Rom 8:15*)
- It unites us more firmly to Christ;
- It increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- It renders our bond with the Church more perfect;
- It gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross...(CCC, 1303).

Like Baptism which it completes, Confirmation is given only once, for it too imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark, the "character," which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of the Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be his witness (CCC, 1304).