

St. Joseph of Cupertino Catechetical Ministry

Family Letter—February 2010

Dear Families,

Jesus. Your child often hears the name of Jesus in their catechetical classes. We talk about Jesus; textbook material is based on Jesus, the Son of God; and we pray, always in the name of Jesus. The students are comfortable talking about Jesus as they learn more about the faith. But in forming and supporting the faith of a child, the classroom is not the child's main encounter of Jesus. That happens at home.

The Church often refers to your home as the “domestic church.” That means that in your home, a small community of faith— your family— lives out most meaningfully the generosity and goodness that Jesus taught.

One might say that the classroom is where your child hears about Jesus but your home is where your child meets Jesus. Our parish is a strong community because your home and your family build up the entire Body of Christ. Thank you for all you do.



Yours in Christ,

Tam Tran
Director of Catechetical Ministry

Rosie Carmona
Administrative Assistant



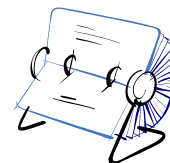
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LENT

Lent begins on Wednesday, February 17. As the three practices of Lent are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, the Catechetical Ministry Office attempts to provide such opportunities for the families in our program.

During this Lent, the Catechetical Ministry program will again participate in **Operation Rice Bowl (ORB)**. ORB is the Lenten solidarity program of Catholic Relief Services. We join in the traditional practices of Lent and **pray** as a community, **fast** in solidarity with those who are hungry, and **give** concrete assistance to those most in need.

Parishes throughout the Diocese of San Jose participate in this program and 25% of the money collected will stay within the Diocese, to help fight hunger and poverty locally. A Lenten calendar and rice bowl will be sent home with each child on February 21.



**NO CATECHETICAL CLASSES on
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14 and WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17.**

Sacrament Preparation

Family Retreat

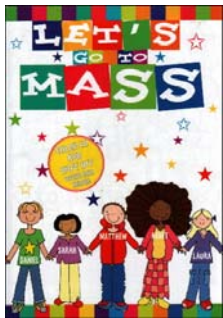
All families of children celebrating the sacraments of Confirmation and/or First Eucharist are expected to participate in the family retreat. At least one parent/guardian should be in attendance with all the children preparing for the sacraments this year—sponsors and siblings are welcome to attend! **The family retreat is scheduled for Saturday, March 20, from 9:30 am—12 pm in the Parish Hall.** Further details about the retreat will be sent home in March.



Children's Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation and Eucharist

In their catechetical sessions, the second graders are beginning to look at the meaning of our Eucharist Celebration and how we come together to celebrate the Mass as a community each Sunday. They will learn about the parts of the Mass, in order to help them participate more fully and meaningfully each week when you go to Mass as a family.

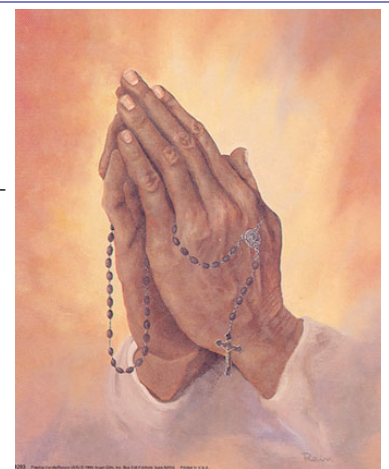
One of the most important gifts you can give your child is your family's attendance at Mass together on a regular basis. During this time of preparation, take the time during the Mass to answer any of your child's questions. Help them follow along in *Breaking Bread* so that they may participate in the responses. Help them turn to the songs when appropriate. The focus during the Catechetical sessions is the liturgy and what we do as members of the celebrating community when we gather each week. If the children do not experience this celebration, it is almost impossible for them to follow along. St. Joseph of Cupertino offer the following mass times: Saturday at 5pm, Sunday at 8am, 9:30am, 11am, and 5pm.



I am taking book orders for Let's Go to Mass. This creative activity book will lead the children to a deeper appreciation of the Mass. Imaginative illustrations, games and thoughtful activities provide the basis for teaching children about the praise and worship of God. Children can write and color with crayon and then wipe-off the plastic pages, allowing repeated use. I have a sample in my office if you wish to take a look at it before ordering. The cost of the book is \$4.95 plus any shipping and tax costs. I will be sending in the order on February 9.

Family Prayer Time

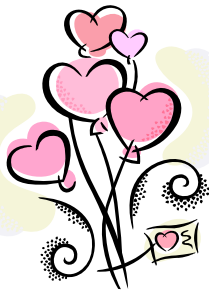
Last month we spoke of the importance of the family meal in preparing children to better understand the great depth and intimacy of the Eucharist. This month we want to offer up the idea of how we make our whole being a prayer—all our actions, words, hopes and dreams. We all know the dedication involved in being a parent. There are many helpful manuals out there for a variety of parenting issues, but often we feel all alone in trying to figure out how to pass on our most treasured faith traditions. In that light, the Catechetical Office has available a variety of resources to assist parents in learning about their children's stages of faith development, as well as other spiritual issues. Over time, you will also find resources to bring the various elements of the liturgical year alive, as well as resources to help you answer doctrinal questions in plain language. Please don't hesitate to approach Tam with any topics you would like to see addressed in the future.



This Month's Dates to Remember

Sunday, February 7	Sunday Catechetical Classes in session 9:30 am liturgy with special emphasis on children <i>Love & Friendship Prayer Celebration</i> , 10:00 am in Parish Hall
Sunday, February 14	NO CATECHETICAL CLASSES—Winter Break
Wednesday, February 17	NO JUNIOR HIGH MEETING—Winter Break ASH WEDNESDAY —Mass at 6:30am, 9am, 12:15pm, and 7pm
Sunday, February 21	Sunday Catechetical Classes in session
Sunday, February 28	Sunday Catechetical Classes in session Chinese New Year celebration, 11 am mass with reception following in the parish hall

***Junior High will meet every Wednesday night from 7:30pm-8:45pm except for February 17.**



Early Childhood Education News

This month the Three year olds are celebrating God's love and gift of friends and animals, the Four year olds will learn about praying and God's gift of animals, and the Kindergarteners are exploring about loving and feelings. Our first graders are celebrating God's gift of the Holy Spirit. The children will also be gathering together for a Love and Friendship Prayer Service on February 7 at 10:00am in the Parish Hall. Class still will take place at 9:20am as usual for the children.

CATHOLICISM 101

Do you know what the Catholic Church teaches? Have you been updated on your faith lately? Come and be informed about your Catholic Faith!

Presented by Brother Bill Bolts, S.M.—A veteran educator, served for 13 years at Queen of Apostles parish in San Jose directing the adult faith formation programs. Recently he was a member of the Office of Religious Education for the Archdiocese of Vancouver, B.C. Presently he is a member of the Marianist Center Community in Cupertino. Brother Bill has a doctorate in church history and is the author of three books in that field. His talks are filled with information, challenges, and humor!

SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS—Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., St. Joseph of Cupertino Community Center

February 2	The Basics of Being Catholic
February 9	Vatican II
February 16	Lent, Prayer, Liturgy, Devotions
February 23	Saints & Church History—an overview



Meditation for Lent: A New Heart



When our physical heart no longer functions as it should, it becomes urgent that we have it repaired. Occasionally, hearts wear out and can no longer be fixed, and then they must be replaced. Many of us know someone in need of a heart replacement. The old heart is exhausted, congested, suffering. These people find themselves unable to do the simplest tasks. What they once took for granted has been wrenched from daily life.

And where does one go to get a new heart? Money can't buy it. Those you love can't give it to you. Doctors have yet to discover a one-heart-fits-all. Artists can't create one. All the self-help books in the world can't make a new one.

The only hope for a new heart is the complete generosity of a stranger willing to be a heart donor.

As we begin this Lenten season we are all in need of a new heart—not the physical one we carry in our body, but rather the spiritual heart that has not been given totally to God. We need to replace the heart that doesn't trust in God's plan and doesn't want to change a thing about the way we go about our daily lives.

The promise of the next forty days is that a friend, not a stranger—God—is stepping up to be your donor. The love of God seeks to give you a new heart. God wants to give us all a new heart so that we might let the world know the only thing really worth living for is God's own heart.

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Guidelines for FAST and ABSTINENCE during Lent:



Abstinence: Penitential practice consisting of refraining from the consumption of meat and is to be observed by all Catholics who are 14 years of age and older. Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and the Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence. Pastors and parents are encouraged to see that children who are not bound by the obligation to fast and abstain are led to appreciate an authentic sense of penance.

Fast: In addition to abstinence, fasting is to be observed by all Catholics between the ages of 18-59 years. On days of fasting, one full meal is allowed. Two smaller meals sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one's needs, but together they should not equal to another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids are allowed. Note: If a person is unable to observe the above regulations due to ill health or other serious reasons, they are urged to practice other forms of self-denial that are suitable to their condition.

What's Your LENT IQ?

- Lent lasts
a. 30 b. 40 c. 50 d. 60
- Peter denied Jesus
a. 3 times b. 4 times
c. 10 time d. 70x7 times
- Lent is a time for an extra effort in
a. fasting b. giving to the poor
c. prayer d. all of these
- The color of the priest's vestments during Lent is
a. black b. green
c. violet d. white
- We receive ashes on Ash Wednesday
a. as a sign of penance
b. to remind us that one day we will die
c. to remind us to repent and believe in the Gospel
d. all of these

Questions taken from *What's Your Catholic IQ*, by Page McKean Zyromski, Pflaum Publishing Group, Dayton, OH 2006.