

## **GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS INSERT-March, 2024**

### **From our Lenten Journey to Easter...**

#### **Lenten Video #2: "7 Ways to Be Spiritually Great"**

Join us for this half-hour video with Bishop Barron explaining the Spiritual Works of Mercy. Reflection and discussion on how this may factor in each of our lives and at our parish will follow. The video will be shown Tuesday, March 12, immediately following the 6 pm Mass in the parish hall. Come for Mass too!

#### **Adoration-Stations-Confession**

Don't forget to avail yourself of as many opportunities for spiritual growth as you can:

Adoration: Tuesdays from 3-6 pm; Fridays from 6-7 pm

Stations of the Cross: Fridays at 7:00 pm. Sign up in the entrance to lead.

Confessions: Tuesdays from 5-5:45 pm; Saturdays from 5:45-6:15 pm; Friday, March 22 from 6-7 pm.

#### **Chrism Mass—March 19**

Every year before Easter, the Diocese celebrates the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior. At this Mass the three oils that we use for the Sacraments at our parish are blessed by Bishop and returned to each of our parishes. These newly blessed oils are presented at Holy Thursday Mass. The Chrism Mass begins at Noon, followed by a meal in the lower level. The meal tickets must be ordered through our parish office by Monday, March 4. You can also attend the Mass exempt from the meal. We are looking for someone to represent Good Shepherd Parish and receive the blessed oils. Consider going if you never have. It's a wonderful experience!

#### **Community Ecumenical Choir**

This is our first time hosting this area choir! We are hoping for a good turnout and we encourage all our parishioners to attend and make others from our broader community to feel welcome here. Mark your calendars: Sunday, April 7, 3:00 pm.

#### **Palm Sunday Brunch**

Once again we will be hosting a Palm Sunday Brunch on Sunday, March 24, from 10:30am until food is gone. Proceeds will go to the bathroom remodel project which is under way right now. Menu includes egg bakes, plain and blueberry pancakes, Caramel French toast bake, coffee cakes, juice, coffee, milk and fruit. Call Debbie (Tom) Gojmerac if you can help with the baked items or waitressing. (715-427-3485).

#### **Blessing of Easter Baskets**

New this year is the Blessing of family foods for our Easter meals. This is an old tradition, which you can read about on the reverse side of this page. Whatever foods you plan to use for your Easter dinner can be brought in an Easter basket for Father Patrick to bless. The blessing of baskets will be Saturday, March 30, 11:30 am. Let's hope we can start this tradition in our parish community. Some suggested foods are listed on the back page.

## **EASTER TRIDUUM SERVICES**

#### **Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper-March 28**

This Mass includes the Presentation of the Holy Oils blessed by Bishop at the Chrism Mass, the Washing of the Feet, Procession to the Altar of Repose in the hall, and Adoration until Midnight. Sign up sheets are posted in the entrance for both Adoration and the Washing of the Feet (12 people). Collection will be taken for the poor (Catholic Relief Services/Rice Bowl).

#### **Good Friday-March 29**

Stations of the Cross begin Noon, and the Good Friday Service begins 12:30 pm. Veneration of the Cross will take place during this service. The Holy Land collection is always taken on Good Friday. Reminder: Please leave in silence that day.

#### **Easter Vigil Mass-March 30**

Mass begins outdoors in the dark, starting 8:15 pm with the Blessing of the Fire and procession into church. If you have never gone, consider it! You are welcome to bring bells from home to ring during the Gloria at this Mass and on Holy Thursday!

#### **Easter Sunday Mass-March 31**

Mass will be our usual Sunday Mass time, 9:30 am.

#### **Prayer Corner** "Lord God, bless and care for our loved ones..."

All nursing home residents (including Fr. Dennis Meulemans, Glenn Mathias, LaVern Mitchell, Bob Schmeiser, Wayne Tlusty, Bob Tomaszewski, Rosie Petty, Karen Pocock, Elaine Malitz and Lorraine Jagielo), Fr. Oen, Ken Matyka, Helen Hobl, Baby Armand, Barb Matyka, Bernice Matyka, Jimmy Gehrig, Jeanette Gehrig, Joe Fuchs, Mary Warner Plamann, Dennis & Diane Niggemann, George Gunderson, Gib Juedes, Julie Gehrig, Danny Van Hecker, Ryan & Audrey Metz Family, Wally Emmerich, Sue Thums, James Van de Castelee, Donna (Mann) Lind, Dan Sackmann, Carol Long, Gayle (Long) Murphy, Rose (Matyka) Anderson, Carol & Dan Pozanc, Betty Brandner, Kathy Haas, Marian Johnson, Duane Draeger, Nicole Richardson, Steve Spurgeon, Richard Weinzatl, Norman Metz

# The Blessing of Easter Baskets: A Cherished Catholic Tradition

*Taken from "The Catholic Witness"*

In many Eastern European countries, it's a tradition to have a basket of food blessed on Holy Saturday. This Catholic ritual has been cherished for centuries among many families. It has now been adopted by people of all ethnic backgrounds who enjoy this richly symbolic custom.

The roots of this tradition date back to the early 12th century history of Poland, and is now observed by expatriates and their descendent Poles in the U.S., Canada and the United Kingdom, and other Polish parish communities. However, Eastern Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, including Czechs, Croatians, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Russians, Slovaks and Ukrainians, also participate in this holy ritual.



What goes into a food basket depends on the region one is from and the family's preferences. Years ago in rural villages, it was a mark of one's wealth if a groaning basket of special, savory foods was presented to be blessed. However, these types of extravagant displays are less common, and just a sample of many foods with symbolic meaning now line the baskets. Instead of hams, some Croatians and Slovenes place a lamb in their basket, and western Slovaks might place a veal loaf or a yeast bread made with veal in their baskets. In wine-making regions like Hungary and others, bottles of superior vintage go into the basket, and others add green vegetables. Balkan countries like Serbia, Bosnia, Bulgaria and some others exchange eggs on Easter morning rather than have a basket of blessed food.

Since Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians fast during Lent, none of the blessed food is eaten until after Mass on Easter Sunday. This then becomes the traditional Easter breakfast. Generally, each member of the family eats a sample of everything in the basket.

The blessing of the food is a festive occasion. People take special pride in preparing a decorative and tasteful basket with crisp linens, possibly embroidered for the occasion, both lining the basket and covering the food which symbolizes the covering of Christ's burial shroud. These covers are usually passed down from generation to generation. The basket could be decorated with colored ribbons, greenery, pussy-willows or dried flowers to symbolize spring, renewal and the Resurrection.

The creativity of the parishioners brings a special joy to this event. Children are eager to help prepare and decorate the family basket and proudly carry it into the church. Some families with small children carry their own decorated basket filled with fruits, a chocolate bunny or some other treats. In some parishes, baskets are lined up on long tables; in others, parishioners process to the front of the altar carrying their baskets or line the aisle next to the family who brought the basket to church.

While tastes vary by region and family, the basket usually contains smoked meats, sausage, butter, cheese, bread, salt and decorated, colored eggs. A white candle symbolizing Jesus, the light of the world, is placed in the basket so it can be lit during the blessing. Another local tradition is to tie two nails together in the form of a cross and place them in the basket.

The foods that have a place of honor on the festive Easter table are the decorated hard boiled eggs, which are broken and shared by all, and a lamb molded of butter or pastry, representing Christ as the "Lamb of God." Butter may also be placed into a glass container with cloves in the form of a cross studding the top.

## Basket Contents and Symbolism

- Eggs – Decorated, dyed or plain white eggs; symbolizing hope, new life and Christ's Resurrection from the tomb
- Butter – Dairy products celebrate the end of Lent and the richness of our salvation; reminds us of the goodness of Christ that we should have toward all things
- Easter Bread – A round loaf, sweetened yeast or rye, topped with a cross, symbolic of Jesus, the Bread of Life
- Horseradish – Symbolic of the bitterness and harshness of the Passion of Christ; the vinegar it is mixed with symbolizing the sour wine given to Jesus on the cross but sweetened with some sugar because of the Resurrection.
- Pepper – Also symbolic of the Passion of Christ and the bitter herbs
- Kielbasa/Sausage – The links are symbolic of the chains of death that were broken when Jesus rose from the dead, as well as God's favor and generosity
- Ham, Lamb or Veal – Meats are symbolic of great joy and abundance in Christ's Resurrection
- Smoked Bacon – With its great fattiness, it is a symbol of the overabundance of God's mercy and generosity
- Salt – A necessary element in our physical life; symbolic of purification, prosperity and justice; preserves us from corruption. Jesus used its symbolism: "You are the salt of the earth."
- Cheese – Usually fresh, dry curd or farmer's cheese shaped into a ball; it is the symbol of the moderation Christians should practice.

Holy Water – Used to bless the home, animals, fields and used in various rituals throughout the year.

## **GOOD SHEPHERD NEWS INSERT PAGE 2-March, 2024**

### **Growing This Lent-Serving our Community Through Works of Mercy**

Approximately 10 parishioners participated in our first Lenten Video on “How to Become a Person of Love.” The video focused on the seven Corporal Works of Mercy. Bishop Barron mentioned that focusing on these seven Works of Mercy can also serve as a good Examination of Conscience during this Lenten season. They focus on each of us “willing the good of others,” looking beyond our own desires, and searching out the needs of others. Following the video we brainstormed on what we, as Good Shepherd Parish, can do to be Christ to those around us. The process generated several ideas. Perhaps we can consider forming a new “Works of Mercy” committee. The seven Corporal Works of Mercy are:

1. Feed the hungry.
2. Give drink to the thirsty.
3. Clothe the naked.
4. Visit the imprisoned.
5. Shelter the homeless.
6. Visit the sick.
7. Bury the dead.

One suggestion was for each family to prepare a meal or frozen dinner, a dessert, or take someone out for lunch—whether it is your next door neighbor, a friend, or even someone you don’t know very well. Any accompanying card could indicate that you are thinking of them, praying for them, and wishing them a good day. Doing this one deed in Lent can hopefully prompt us to do this more often for others.

We are aware of a local family in need who is unable to work due to illness. As a Lenten practice, any monetary support is being accepted at the parish office to pay for some of their expenses—be it for medical and utility bills, gas or food cards.

We will again make baskets for students at college (possibly at Christmas time, or during spring break). The practice fell away for a few years, but the group felt it was important to keep our youth connected to the Church.

We will continue donating jackets and other winter apparel. Currently a rack of coats and a table of other winter items are in the hallway at the Rib Lake Village Hall. If you or someone you know can use them, please help yourself.

We will continue to support the food pantry currently stocked at the Rib Lake United Methodist Church. Money or food donations can be brought to the office here, or you can drop them off 8:30 am at the Methodist Church when the pantry is open on the third Wednesday the month.

We will be contacting someone regarding ministry at the Taylor County jail, to see what we can offer there, possibly books and special bookmarks, or back packs/bags when they leave. People are imprisoned in many other ways too, and we hope to serve them better—those who are lonely, depressed, bereaved, in nursing homes, etc. If you are willing to drive others to appointments, take them Holy Communion, visit shut ins, help with certain household chores or prepare meals at different times for the ill or new parents, let us know!

Youth are currently making cheer baskets for different people in our community. Parents are asked to bring in simple items to share in the baskets, which they will be making on March 13. Parents will deliver them with their children before Easter.

Always remember that our Partners in Prayer meet monthly to pray for individuals. The prayer vessel remains in back of church for this. Please put names on the slips of paper and place them in the vessel. Next prayer time is Friday, March 8, 3:00 pm.

Our 4-parish community, through “Walking With Moms” is collecting diapers for the Abiding Care Center. Parents with children in Religious Education should have received a flyer about it. Donations will be collected during the month of March. A pack and play is in the back of church to drop off the diapers. Diaper sizes/needs at this time are indicated on the flyer, which is posted in the entrance. Also, our parish has purchased a table for the Abiding Care Reception for Life, their biggest fundraiser of the year. This year’s event will be held Thursday, April 25, at the Simek Center in Medford. We currently have only two registered for our table of 8. If you would like to support this Center, consider joining the parish table. Call Mary at the parish office.

Opportunities will present themselves to each of us to represent Christ to others. Assess the gifts you have been given, then be prayerful, be watchful and let the Holy Spirit guide us in the Works of Mercy.