



SAINT TIMOTHY
CATHOLIC CHURCH



DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: *Celebrating The Infinite Mercies of Jesus*



The infinite mercies that Jesus has poured out for us will be celebrated on April 11 on Divine Mercy Sunday. We will open the day by praying the Liturgy of Divine Mercy during Mass, followed by the Eucharistic Holy Hour at 3 p.m.

The Feast of Divine Mercy is a devotion to Jesus Christ associated with the apparitions of Jesus to St. Faustina Kowalska, a Polish nun who was canonized by St. Pope John Paul II.

During the Eucharistic Holy Hour, you are encouraged to join Fr. John Blum in praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, and to participate in other devotions related to Divine Mercy.

"I think this is a very, very important devotion, especially in the time we're living," Fr. Blum says. "There is an acronym, 'FINCH,' that highlights the essential elements of Divine Mercy Sunday."

Fr. Blum explains:

F — "This stands for Feast of Divine Mercy," Fr. Blum says. "It is celebrated in all the Church on the Second Sunday of Easter and, is really the center of Divine Mercy devotions."

I — "The Image of Divine Mercy," Fr. Blum says. "When Jesus appeared to St. Faustina, He asked that an image

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March 2021

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Stewardship

The Wise Men's Gifts Symbolize Our Lenten Obligations

We experience great joy when we celebrate the coming of the Magi at Epiphany each year. For many of us, it is the completion of Christmas. Yet, the gifts offered by the Magi — gold, frankincense and myrrh — can serve to guide us as we observe Lent this month.

It may seem strange to connect the joyful celebration of Epiphany with the penitential season of Lent. Yet, our spiritual life should not be divided into separate bits having no connection with each other. In the same way, the Church's liturgical year should also flow from one season to another. The different feasts and seasons certainly have different emphases, but they are intended to build on each other. So let's see if we can connect what the Magi gave Jesus with what we're going to offer Him this Lent.

The basic ingredients for our Lenten rule normally come from what are termed the Three Notable Duties — prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These in turn come from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).

How do we connect the wise men's gifts with the notable duties? Actually, what the gifts symbolize matches up surprisingly well.

Frankincense is the basic ingredient in the incense used in the worship of God, in the ancient world and in the Church today. Offering it to Jesus points out His divine nature, and so it symbolizes prayer. Our Lenten rule needs to include prayer and worship. Of course, we are bound to worship at Sunday Mass year-round. Maybe during Lent, we might add a weekday Mass. Perhaps we can increase the time we devote to private prayer at home or in adoration. Devotional reading from the Bible, or another appropriate book, can be added. In addition, don't forget the possibility of adding family devotions during Lent, so the whole family prays together.

When we offer our gold to Christ to build His Church and to help His poor, we are engaged in almsgiving. While giving from the treasure God has entrusted to us is a duty



throughout the whole year, maybe this Lent we can practice being a little more generous than usual. If our giving is a thankful response to the gift of eternal life that God has given us, we will find that the giving is indeed a means of grace.

For centuries, myrrh has been associated with fasting. Although myrrh comes from the same family of plants as frankincense, it has a more pungent scent and bitter taste. In the ancient world, it was regularly used in embalming. Generations of theological writers have seen the gift of myrrh as a foreshadowing of Christ's sufferings. Fasting strengthens us in holiness and prepares us to come into God's presence after our

own deaths. St. Thomas Aquinas himself linked myrrh with repentance and fasting when he wrote that myrrh represents the penance by which we preserve our souls from the corruption of sin.

Fasting may be the most difficult of the three notable duties for modern Americans. After all, most advertising and many of the magazine articles we see are devoted to making us more, not less, comfortable. Sometimes we think of fasting under the heading of dieting to lose weight. Instead, we should try to think of fasting as a way to become more spiritually fit. Body and spirit affect each other. The whole sacramental system is built on the truth that we can receive spiritual grace through material things and physical actions. Our specific requirements of fasting are limited — abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent, and a reduction in the quantity of food we eat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. But discipline of our physical bodies for our spiritual well-being does not have to be limited to Lent!

Gold, frankincense and myrrh were indeed valuable gifts for the wise men to present to the Child Jesus. When we look at their symbolism, we can see their relationship to the three notable duties of almsgiving, prayer and fasting. What gifts are *we* going to offer to Jesus this Lent?

SAINT TIMOTHY

CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Letter From Our Pastor

HEAD OF THE HOLY FAMILY: *Celebrating the Year of St. Joseph*

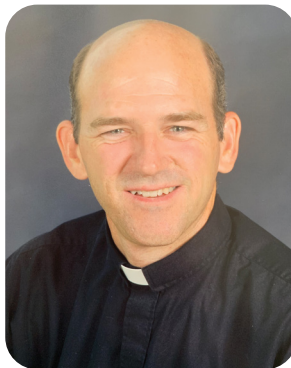
Dear Friends in Christ,

As we continue our Lenten pilgrimage, we have an opportunity to celebrate a special feast day in the life of the Church. March 19th, the feast of St. Joseph, is often overshadowed by St. Patrick's Day on March 17th and the subsequent Marian Solemnity of the Annunciation on March 25th. But this year, St. Joseph's feast day will not go unnoticed.

Pope Francis, this past December, announced that 2021 would be a special year of grace dedicated to St. Joseph, the earthly father of Christ, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Head of the Holy Family, and Patron of the Universal Church. It was 150 years ago that Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph to be the patron of the Universal Church. In celebration of this anniversary declaration, the Church will honor St. Joseph in a special way this year.

How important it is for us to take advantage of the graces available to us through the intercession of St. Joseph at a time when we most need his saintly aid. As we continue to witness the decline and fall of the family in our culture, we need to ask St. Joseph, Head of the Holy Family, to help us in strengthening the bonds of family life. In a time when we are also witnessing a crisis of fatherhood, husbands and fathers can find in St. Joseph a model and support to help them faithfully fulfill their God-given vocations.

As we navigate through these challenging and difficult times, St. Joseph can be a source of quiet strength and calm in the midst of life's storms. No earthly person, other than the Virgin Mary, was closer to Jesus than St. Joseph. Just as our devotion to Mary will lead us to a deeper friendship with Christ, so too will our devotion to St. Joseph lead us to a more profound relationship with Christ. These healthy devotions are not competitive, but complementary. As important as it is that we go to Jesus through Mary, this special



year dedicated to Christ's earthly father is an invitation for us to go to Jesus through Joseph!

As we celebrate this special year of grace dedicated to St. Joseph, I encourage you to go to our diocesan website (www.dosp.org) and open the link to the "Year of St. Joseph" on the homepage to access some great resources that will aid you in making the most of this grace-filled year.

St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church, pray for us!

Pax Christi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Fr. John Blum".

Fr. John Blum, Pastor

To read more about Pope Francis' declaration for the Year of St. Joseph, visit:
www.bit.ly/StJoseph2021

Pope Francis' Prayer to St. Joseph

*Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer,
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.
To you God entrusted His only Son;
in you Mary placed her trust;
with you Christ became man.
Blessed Joseph, to us too,
show yourself a father
and guide us in the path of life.
Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage,
and defend us from every evil. Amen.*



The Parish Library:An Opportunity

As Catholics, there are a great many writers who share our tradition. From prolific saints to current theologians and even everyday people, we've inherited a wealth of resources from those who have taken the time to share their journey with God and reflections on the doctrines of our faith, all through the written word.

Here at St. Timothy, we hope to make some of these texts and other valuable resources available to our parishioners, aiding in understanding the faith and spirituality. Over the past year, parishioners Ken and Lisa Marinik — a couple who met in a library, as high school students — have worked hard to turn boxes of donated books into the St. Gregory the Great parish library.

Found in the parish center's St. Gregory the Great room, our library offers a wide variety of published resources, giving parishioners access to everything from Bible commentaries and books on Catholic theology, to books about significant Catholic figures and a variety of other topics for personal and spiritual growth. From children to adults, from lifelong Catholics to those who

are curious about the faith, our library has something for everyone.

"These resources are a passport for growth to all, regardless of where you are in your faith journey," Lisa says. "Spiritual resources can only enhance your understanding of your faith and the conversion process, and deepen your relationship with God."

"Everybody can find something there," Ken adds. "Just take a look and take something home."

For Lisa and Ken, reading and learning about their faith has been an integral part of their spiritual development and deepening of their relationship with God. And as their knowledge of their faith has grown, so has their desire to know more.

"These resources have had a significant impact in our spiritual life," Lisa says. "The greatest book ever written, the Bible, touched our lives many years ago. Pondering the Scriptures created a spiritual thirst to learn more about our faith. Other books on discernment and lives of the saints, among other topics, have further guided us in our life journey."



For Lisa and Ken Marinik, reading and learning about their faith has been an integral part of their spiritual development and deepening of their relationship with God. And as their knowledge of their faith has grown, so has their desire to know more.

to Delve into the Riches of Our Faith

The library also helps our parish to fulfill its mission of empowering people to experience and share God's love with others.

"The library promotes the parish mission of spreading God's love and evangelization by providing reference tools and books with insightful concepts that can be applied to everyone's spiritual journey and growth, in their families and throughout all our ministries at St. Timothy," Ken says.

The Mariniks encourage fellow parishioners to consider checking out a book that might help them grow in their faith.

"Spiritual reading with Scripture, prayer and other supporting inspired literature should be a priority, to promote peace and direction amid the challenges and distractions in our daily lives," Ken says.

"It is important for us to learn more about our faith, whether young or old, to give us direction and guidance — as we all work towards our heavenly reward," Lisa adds. "Spiritual reading focuses us to broaden the awareness of God's active presence in our hearts and in our lives.

"Just be willing to dip your big toe in the water and go where your heart leads you," she continues. "Say a little prayer before you walk in the library, that you be guided to a resource that's going to help with your growth."



Over the past year, Lisa and Ken Marinik have worked countless hours to create a parish library that enriches the lives of their fellow parishioners.



Several years ago, Lisa and Ken Marinik visited the Ephesus Library in Ephesus, where our parish patron, St. Timothy, was the first bishop.

For more information or updates on the availability of the St. Gregory the Great Library, please contact Deacon Peter at the parish office, 813-968-1077.

Special thanks to Rose and Terry Pelpbrey, who negotiated a great deal on used bookcases, touched them up, and installed them in the library; to Lisa and Ken Marinik, who coordinated the mammoth effort to sort and organize the books, along with the help of Catana and Joe Bologna, Bill Lynn and Chris Peterson; and to Sandy Hay of the Creative Hands Ministry who helped with bookcase labeling.



From the *Catechism* **WHAT IS ALMSGIVING?**

“Giving alms to the poor is a witness to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2462).

During the seasons of Advent and Lent, it is not uncommon to hear about fasting, prayer and almsgiving. Most of us are familiar with at least two of the three penitential practices — prayer and fasting. We engage in prayer each day, while fasting becomes a regular part of our Lenten routines.

But what is almsgiving?

It is simply giving to those less fortunate than ourselves. This can be done in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, donations of canned goods to the local food pantry, giving spare change to an organization that serves the poor (e.g. Salvation Army), or even through person-to-person contact with the poor.

This Lent, if your family has not regularly engaged in almsgiving, consider making a change. Search for opportunities to serve the poor and vulnerable, making their lives easier — even if in a small way.

Things to consider doing with your family:

- Place a coffee can in a prominent place in your home, and commit to filling it with loose change throughout the week. Then, donate the money to a local charity.
- The next time you shop for groceries, buy a few extra canned goods and donate them to a food pantry or food bank.
- Research a charity that works with the poor, and make a commitment to regularly give to that organization.
- Resolve to never judge those who are less fortunate, and teach your children the same.



Meet Gabe Linder: Behind the Scenes with a Young Steward

During a World Youth Day 2013 address, Pope Francis spoke the following words to millions of young Catholics who had gathered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: “You too, dear young people, can be joyful witnesses of His love, courageous witnesses of His Gospel, carrying to this world a ray of His light.” The pope’s message reminds us of the importance of encouraging young people to participate fully in the faith and, reassures us that we can expect great things from the future of our Church. Here at St. Timothy, parishioner Gabe Linder is proving just how true these words can be!

Gabe has always had a love for all things technical and mechanical, often taking apart and fixing old household items such as speakers and receivers. Several years ago, he began helping our Youth Ministry with the light and soundboard in the Underground meeting space of the St. John Paul II Youth Center. This past year, as the COVID-19 crisis has necessitated that many parish events — including our Masses — be made available in a virtual format, Gabe has expanded his technical ministry to the parish.

Although he is currently in the midst of a busy freshman year at Steinbrenner High School, Gabe continues to spend countless hours at the parish, running the lights and audio-visual equipment for the Youth Ministry and the K-8 Faith Formation program, in addition to providing the projection of readings and song lyrics during our Masses and Eucharistic Adoration.

“Making things happen behind the scenes has always been a hobby for me,” Gabe says. “I just try to make life easier for our main youth minister, Justin Lantz. I handle a lot of things for him. This year we are doing Zoom meetings, so I’m organizing that and making sure everything works and functions as smoothly as possible. I like to do anything really to make people happy, and this is a good way to do it.”



Grateful for our loving and supportive faith community, Gabe Linder encourages all teens to become more engaged with life at St. Timothy by participating in Youth Ministry events and finding ways to serve.

Gabe’s service to the parish combines his love of technology with his love of the Catholic faith.

“I’ve always loved going to church, even when I was younger,” he says. “Then Justin arrived, and he was very young and lively. He got the whole Underground going, and I was able to get involved with that. I really like producing the audio and visual stuff to help make it a nice experience for anybody watching from home who is participating in the retreats and things like that. It warms my heart.”

For Gabe’s mother, Youth Ministry assistant Jen Linder, seeing her son become such a valued part of our parish community is a true gift.

“I like for my kids to be involved,” she says. “I have three teenaged boys, and they each have different talents that they bring to the table. I want them to keep a good relationship with God, and being close to and active in church helps keep that going and keeps them away from the negative distractions.”

Grateful for our loving and supportive faith community, Gabe would certainly encourage all teens to become more engaged with life at St. Timothy by participating in Youth Ministry events and finding ways to serve.

“Really, the friendships that come from knowing everybody is the best part,” he says. “I can walk around and look at everyone at Mass and think, ‘Oh yeah, I know them’ or ‘I haven’t seen them in a while.’ Everybody is so nice. They know what I do here, and I’m always told I’m such a great help — kind words that are more than I think I deserve! — but I appreciate it, and I enjoy serving, and that’s why I do it.”

Many thanks to Gabe for the ways in which he gives of his time and talent to serve our parish — he is truly the witness of Christ’s love and light that Pope Francis exhorts all of our youth to be!



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DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY *continued from front cover*

be made and promoted to help the people embrace the message of Divine Mercy. The image is a very important part, a visual reminder of Jesus and to know God's merciful love for us. 'Jesus I trust in you' is a very powerful prayer from the image. We entrust our lives to Jesus."

N — "The Novena of Divine Mercy," Fr. Blum says. "This is also an important prayer used to help us prepare for the Feast. The Novena begins on Good Friday with special prayers. It is prayed leading up to the Feast of Divine Mercy. It can be prayed anytime but traditionally on Good Friday."

C — "The Chaplet of Divine Mercy, an essential element of devotion," Fr. Blum says. "Using rosary beads

accompanied by prayers, we ask God to pour out His mercy on us, our lives, our whole world. We also meditate on the Passion of Christ, when the floodgates of mercy were opened."

H — "The Hour of Divine Mercy," Fr. Blum says. "The 3 p.m. hour is the time Jesus hung on the cross on Good Friday and poured out His merciful love to the world. It's an important part of the Divine Mercy devotion. We should take the time to reflect on Jesus' great love for us. 'Jesus I trust in you' reminds us of His message, and that we also are to be messengers of God's mercy to others."

*For more information about the celebration of Divine Mercy Sunday,
call the parish office at 813-968-1077.*

Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 p.m. • Sunday: 7:30, 9, 11 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. • Daily: Mon-Sat 9 a.m. • Holy Days: 9 a.m. & 7 p.m. Vigil: 7 p.m.