

FEBRUARY 21, 2010

## CATHOLIC QUOTES

## FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

As you know the Season of Lent began this past week on Ash Wednesday. Every time Ash Wednesday comes around I am amazed by the effect it has on some people. Even though it is not a holy day of obligation there are many people who come to Mass and to receive ashes. This is good and as it should be. Receiving the ashes is a sign that we accept the call to repentance and renew our commitment to Christ. What surprises me is the number of people we see on Ash Wednesday who want to receive ashes that we rarely see in church at any other time.

Typically, the week of Ash Wednesday the phone in the rectory rings off the hook with people wanting to know when ashes will be given out. In a previous assignment, when I told people the Mass times for Ash Wednesday a few even said things like "I just want ashes." *Apparently for them receiving ashes is more important than receiving the Body of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.* One year I had a man come to the rectory at 9 o'clock at night asking for ashes. Every priest I know has had similar experiences and none of us has quite figured out why non-practicing Catholics still want to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday.

My own theory is that people who almost never come to Mass still want to be included in the Church and for them receiving the ashes is a way of "keeping up their membership." I wish they understood that the ritual involves a lot more than that. Receiving the ashes while hearing the words that are said, "**Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return,**" is intended to remind us of our mortality.

As a result of Adam's sin, sooner or later, we will all die. The ashes of Ash Wednesday are a sign calling us to focus on where our lives are leading. Truly, all the material things we see around us and we ourselves will one day be dust. All that we will take from this life are our souls and the love we have for the Lord and one another.

Some people try to avoid thinking about death. Indeed, our whole culture seeks to deny its reality as if not facing it will make it go away. This is not a Christian attitude. The Bible teaches us that because of Adam's sin, death is now an inevitable part of life. But for the faithful, death is not the end. The Scriptures tell us that love is stronger than death and our Lord Jesus proved it by His resurrection.

We observe Ash Wednesday and Lent because they remind us to think and pray about where our lives are leading us. They're leading us to Easter and resurrection with Jesus Christ. And we want to be ready.

With my prayers,  
Fr. Conley

*Living out the Ten Commandments means living out our own resemblance to God, responding to the truth of our nature and thus doing good.*

Pope Benedict XVI

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## WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR LENT?

Beginning this Wednesday, on the Wednesdays of Lent, we will have a **Holy Hour** in the church from 7 to 8pm with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Benediction and opportunities to go to Confession. On the Fridays of Lent we will have **Stations of the Cross** in the church at 2:30 with our school students. At 7pm on the Fridays of Lent we will have **Mass** followed by **Stations of the Cross** at 7:30pm. Come to these grace giving devotions. You will be glad you did.

## A BIBLE STUDY ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE WILL BEGIN THIS WEEK.

This 12 session class will meet on **Tuesday evenings** from 7 to 8:30 pm in the Notre Dame Center. **Morning sessions** will be held on Wednesdays from 9:30 to 11 am beginning March 3<sup>rd</sup>. The cost of the book is \$10. You may sign up for the class in the church foyer, or by emailing Fr. Conley at [rtconley@comcast.net](mailto:rtconley@comcast.net) or by calling the Rectory.

## COMING SOON—MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

A Bible Study for men will begin on Saturday morning, March 6<sup>th</sup>. The group will meet from 7:30 to 8:45am in the rectory basement and we will be using the eight session "Journey Through the Bible Series." The cost of the materials is \$20 and coffee & donuts will be served. For more information or to sign up contact Fr. Conley at [rtconley@comcast.net](mailto:rtconley@comcast.net) (301-870-2220 ext 13) or Mitch Johnson at [ravens16@comcast.net](mailto:ravens16@comcast.net)

## MANY THANKS TO THE FAMILY &amp; FRIENDS OF MARIANNE CANTER

- When Marianne passed away last month, her family asked that instead of sending flowers, friends should make donations in her memory to St. Mary's School. As a result of their generosity, Marianne's friends and friends of the Canter family raised over \$1300 for our school. We encourage all of our parishioners to remember your parish when designating memorial contributions. We also encourage parishioners to remember St. Mary's in your wills. *After all, you can't take it with you.* Why not "store up treasure in heaven" by leaving some of your resources to the Church on earth? Who knows, your charitable bequests may shorten your time in Purgatory.

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This week St. Mary's recognizes **Bonifant Financial Group, Inc.** Please support our bulletin advertising sponsors who support St. Mary's bulletin.

**Please Give Us Your Email** - We would like to have the email addresses of all our parishioners who use email. Having your addresses will enable us to send you information on Holy Day Mass times, funerals of parishioners and special events in the parish. It would also save us the time and expense of using "snail mail". We promise not to bombard you with notices. If you're willing to give us your email address, please fill out the sign up sheet in the foyer or send it to our parish admin assistant Kathleen Beder at: [smboffice@stmarysbryantown.com](mailto:smboffice@stmarysbryantown.com).

#### **NEW BUILDING MAINTENANCE FUND**

In addition to the \$1300 in memorial donations for Marianne Canter, we have recently received other anonymous donations of \$5970. These funds have been put in a separate account to be used for the maintenance of all our buildings and physical plant. All donations made to this fund will be spent entirely in the parish. Our Facilities Committee has recently identified repairs and upgrades that we will need to be made over the next few years. The estimated cost of these repairs and upgrades is over \$350,000. While the Parish Council and the Finance Council are looking at ways to meet these needs, donations to our new Building Maintenance Fund would certainly be appreciated.

#### **\*~\* PARISH AND SCHOOL NEWS \***

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**Offertory Collection from Last Weekend:** \$16,123.06. Identifiable contributors using envelopes or checks were 304 (approximately 22% of the parish) gave \$15,559.56 (97% of the total collection). The unidentified loose collection was \$563.56. School Support collection was \$934.00.

#### **MASS INTENTIONS FOR THIS WEEK:**

**SUN:** 8 am Mary Jean Henderson,

10am David C. Becker, 12 noon PARISHIONERS

**MON:** Herbert Costello **TUES:** Fr. Levester Jones

**WEDS:** Msgr. Michael Farina

**THURS:** Msgr. Michael Farina

**FRI:** 11:30 am Msgr. Michael Farina, 7 pm Fr. Levester Jones **SAT:** 9 am Rosa A. Love, 4pm Paul Therres

#### **PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:**

Scott Boteler, Ellen Bowles, Will Byrne, Ryan Gilding, Mary Lou Gough, Bill Hardesty, Nick Hurysh, Marie Knobel, Melanie Lippert, Melanie Upright, Family of Brian & Julie Wilson, Devin Wilson, and pray for all the sick of the parish. Please pray also for those serving in religious vocations.

**ANY PARISHIONERS USING** a 4 (four) digit envelope number, please contact the Rectory Office.

**THE ST. MARY'S CHURCH – PARISH COUNCIL** will have an Open Forum on Thurs. Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> 2010 at 7pm in the Parish Hall. The Open Forum is an invitation to each & every parishioner to make any suggestion, to submit any question and/or to comment in regards to any concern that you may have relevant to our church community including but not limited to the school, the Church, the CCD, the facilities, etc. Place any written correspondence in the box in the foyer. If you'd like to speak with any member of the council prior to the meeting, please feel free to do so or contact Rudolf Carrico, Jr. at (301) 932-2155 or (301) 274-3223 or email [rudolfacarricojrlaw@comcast.net](mailto:rudolfacarricojrlaw@comcast.net)

**ST. MARY'S SCHOOL** has an opening for a 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. Applicants must have a Bachelor's Degree & Certificate from the state of Maryland. Teaching experience preferred. Send your resume', transcripts, & an employment application from the Archdiocese of Washington's website: [www.adw.org](http://www.adw.org) to St. Mary's Bryantown School, 13575 Notre Dame Pl, Bryantown, Md. 20617, ATTN: Mrs. Sharon Caniglia.

**LEDO'S "FUN" RAISER** ~ Mark those calendars! Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ledo's Pizza in Charlotte Hall will donate 10% of all sales back to St. Mary's Church and School. Tell everyone you know-the more food sold that day, the more funds raised for St. Mary's. Also remember to order your Ledo's shopping cards through the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). Not only does our school earn more money, but you earn money toward the cost of tuition. Hey, why not ask your friends buy Ledo's shopping cards through TAP, too. . .

**FLEA MARKET** ~ The Social Concerns Committee is sponsoring their annual Flea Market on Saturday, March 6<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 12 noon in the Parish Hall. Tables can be rented for \$20. Donations of good condition: household items, toys, appliances, furniture and clothes are requested. Call Mary Brannick (301) 274-4507 for more information. Thanking you in advance for all of your support in making the Flea Market a success.

**ST. MARTIN'S WOMEN OF PRAYER** invites you to a women's weekend retreat on Feb. 26-28<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the Bolger Center in Potomac, Md. The retreat master; Father Philip Scott, founded the Family of Jesus the Healer and has been leading retreats for many years. To retrieve the registration form, go to [www.thewomenofprayer.org](http://www.thewomenofprayer.org). Send your form a.s.a.p. Should you have questions, please contact Marisa Stoolmiller at (240) 401-0589 or [scottandmarisa@comcast.net](mailto:scottandmarisa@comcast.net)