

FAITH FORMATION NEWS FOR ALL



Happy February

Where did the first 31 days of this year go? Dealing with the bitter cold and illnesses hasn't been fun, but we will survive this also.

It is hard to believe that Lent begins next. Ash Wednesday is February 17, and there will be two Masses, 9:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. We look forward to seeing your family at one of these services.

Lent is a special opportunity for us to do spring cleaning of our hearts and souls. It is a chance for us to remember the sacrifices Jesus made for us and reflect on our shortcomings and seek forgiveness for our sins. It is a time when we renew our commitment to God and prepare to celebrate the Risen Christ's presence at Easter.

Observing Lent as a family will help all of you to experience the full meaning of this season. Some of the ways that your family can celebrate Lent together are through prayer, reading the Bible and attending services together. Get more involved in some of the activities that will be taking place at St. Christopher's during the next several weeks.

Join our community for Soup Suppers on Friday evenings and Stations

of the Cross. Five Saints West will be sponsoring another series of talks given by Dr. Joe Kelly. Check out the website and the bulletin for all of the activities that will be available for you to partake in.

Jonah This Lent?!

This Lent we will be giving our family a project called "Jonah This Lent" for the



entire family to do at home.

It is a daily prayer and sticker activity. There is a

book and a centerpiece of the journey Jonah was on. Each day, beginning on Ash Wednesday, there is a reading from the Book of Jonah and a sticker to be placed on the centerpiece. So what does Jonah have to do with Lent. We all know that Jonah was swallowed by a fish for three days and when he emerged he called all sinners to repent and to return to God and ask for forgiveness.

Jesus was swallowed by death and three days later he also emerged. He announced God's great grace to all sinners and to each of us. As we read the selections for each day, we will learn about God's forgiving love and a love shown by Jesus' dying on the cross and his empty tomb. We hope that you enjoy this program. It is a great way for the entire family to journey together and grow in God's love for each of us.



FIRST COMMUNION UPDATE

Students should be working on their books. Once they have them completed they can return them to the Faith Formation Office. They are due no later than the 15th of March. Don't forget that when they come to Mass on the weekend they should be picking up their name buttons and wearing them so that people know who is preparing for the Sacrament.

Students should be attending Mass weekly and participating in the Liturgy of the Word. I am at all Masses should you have any questions.

I hope they are working on their banners. Remember they should identify them as an individual. Banners should be finished and turned in at the parent /student retreat March 20th.

The sheets for the Mass schedules for First Communion are located in the Faith Formation office. You may sign up when you bring you child in for classes. If you have any questions about available times don't hesitate to contact the office.

WHAT'S YOUR CATHOLIC IQ?

1. The First Reading on Ash Wednesday ("Blow the trumpet in Zion!") is from the prophet
(a) Isaiah (b) Joel (c) Zechariah (d) Hosea
2. During Lent, we omit the following from our Liturgies
(a) Alleluia and Creed (b) Gloria and Kyrie (c) Gloria and Alleluia (d) Gloria in Excelsis Deo

3. Which Sacraments are considered the Sacraments of Healing?
(a) Baptism and Anointing (b) Reconciliation and Anointing (c) Reconciliation and Eucharist (d) Confirmation and Reconciliation
4. During Jesus' 40 days in the desert, he ate
(a) locusts and wild honey (b) bread and water (c) manna (d) nothing
5. The Lord's Prayer includes how many petitions?
(a) seven (b) four (c) three (d) twelve
6. A person who looks after the sacred vessels and vestments in a church is called a
(a) sacristy (b) sarcastic (c) sacristan (d) sacramental



CONFIRMATION UPDATE

Don't forget that the parent and sponsor meetings are cancelled until Father Bob returns. He is looking at his calendar now and trying to decide when he can meet with everyone. Thank you for your patience.

Students should be working on their Confirmation names and deciding who they would like as a sponsor. This information should be returned to the Faith Formation office no later than February 24th. Once students have decided who they want as a sponsor, that person needs to contact their parish office and request a notice letting us know that they are a practicing Catholic and attending Mass on a regular basis.

Beginning the First Sunday of Lent, February 21st, at the 11:00 a.m.

liturgy we will be meeting with the students in the Parish Hall for the first part of Mass. Have them find seats with you so they know where you will be sitting and then join us in the hall. The students will be joining you after the Prayers of the Faithful.

ANSWERS TO "WHAT'S YOUR CATHOLIC IQ"?

1. b) Joel 2:12-18. In the fifth century B.C. the prophet Joel called the people of Judah to repent with fasting and weeping, seeking deliverance from a terrible invasion of locusts that threatened their very existence.

2. c) The omission of the Gloria and the Alleluia during Lent draw our focus to the penitential nature of the season and deepen our desire and longing for the celebration of Easter.

3. b) The Sacraments of Penance/Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are referred to as Sacraments of Healing in the Catechism (n. 1421).

4. d) Matthew 4:2 and Luke 4:2 tell us that Jesus fasted (ate nothing) during his 40 days in the desert. In the Bible, the number 40 signifies a significant amount of time during which one's faith is tested.

5. a) The seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer are: hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses; lead us not into temptation; and deliver us from evil.

6. c) Catholic parishes rely on the service of sacristans to care for, organize, and arrange the sacred vessels and vestments that are

used for the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2010 IS COMING! BAOBAB BLAST WE ARE GOING TO AFRICA

GOD'S GREAT GET TOGETHER

JULY 19 - 28 2010



Faye - Trust



Amy - Love



Bud - Follow



Sam - Care



Jonathan - Share

It is time for another spectacular year of Vacation Bible School! Passing our faith on to our children is very important, not just to our parents but our entire Parish Community. VBS is a fun environment, where students learn about their faith through story, song, prayer and activities.

This year's theme of community helps to reinforce the Catholic teaching that we are all one Body of Christ. Our themes this year are Trust, Love, Follow, Care and Share.

So where does the word Baobab come from? It is a very amazing tree that typically reaches between 10 and 80 feet and can live as long as 400 years.

An old Baobab tree can create its own ecosystem, supporting the life of countless creatures - a home for birds like swallows and hornbills and insects, food for elephants (bark), giraffes (leaves), baboons (fruit), bats (nectar) and many other uses that sustain life on the savannah.

The Baobab tree serves as a meeting place for many African villages to discuss community matters, share the news of the day, and tell stories.

When Baobabs age they hollow naturally. Hollowed trees have been made into shops, houses, storage barns, bus shelters, and restaurants. They have the capacity to hold as many as 40-50 people!

Baobab bark is used to make rope, mats, baskets, paper, and cloth. The tree heals itself after bark is removed. The leaves are used as a vegetable throughout much of Africa and the flowers, which turn into a gourd-like fruit, can be cracked and eaten.



This e-mail was sent to me by a friend and I thought I would share this with you. I don't know who the author is but it made me stop and think about how we

sometimes respond to a change from our normal actions.

You Took My Parking Place at Church

One day, a man went to visit a church. He got there early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near him. The driver got out and said, "I always park there! You took my place!" OK

The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing.

After the service, the visitor went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still He said nothing.

Later as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?" The visitor replied, as his hat became a crown of thorns, and a tear fell from his eye, "I took your place'.