



January/February Newsletter

St. Joseph Parish School of Religion

"Fruits of the Spirit"

Dear Parents,

Here's a way to share our faith with your children even in the face of frenzied commercialism. Welcome yet one more chance to help your child focus on love. Here's how: Right now, in these early weeks of January, all the acts of love and gift-giving that happened at Christmas are still fresh in your child's memory. Now, on the heels of Christmas, here comes Valentine's Day – a day for love and gift giving, again. The close association of Christmas and Valentine's Day actually serves as a way to continue an active focus on the theme of love and charity.

So go ahead! Buy those boxes of little "Be Mine" cards and help your child begin to prepare them for friends and classmates. As you did at Christmas, talk about love and what it means and how we express it no matter what season it is.

The holiday colors of green and red turning to white and red is a great time for us to show our children that love knows no season.



"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

John 13:34

Thank You to all the families that participated in the **Christmas Potluck** this year. All of the students that participated in the ministries did a wonderful job. I heard a lot of great comments from parishoners on how well you read – and as a lector it is the spirit that works within us to proclaim the word of God. So thank you! I look forward to more volunteers for our next season celebration. If you would like to share any feedback please email me at stjoepsr@hotmail.com. I know that we keep it simple and it is a time to sit back and enjoy the time with our PSR family.

PSR ARRIVAL:

Just a reminder that since winter has arrived we are now to enter the Main Doors of the building to enter the *Library*. We are still meeting in the **LIBRARY!** Please do not enter the Library Door – it is too cold to have that door opened while we are waiting for class to begin. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter!



Sacraments

Outward symbols of inward grace, instituted by Christ for our sanctification, sacraments are celebrated at Saint Joseph Parish as part of the religious educational process.

Important Dates to Remember!

- January 31 Class
- February 7 Class
- February 14 Class
- February 21 Class
- February 28 Class

Sacrament Important Dates:

- February 11 Confirmation Rehearsal
7:00 p.m. Church**
- February 12 Confirmation Retreat and
Confirmation
*Retreat during day -
Ceremony 7:00 p.m. Church***

On January 14th our second grader's received their first reconciliation. This was an exciting time and I want to thank you for keeping them and their families in your prayers. I over heard some parent's talking about the excitement and how their child could not wait. How awesome is that!

Many believe that it is scary but it truly isn't. It is a way for us to confess to God what we have failed to do and to promise to do good. Our God is a loving and forgiving God and our second grader's know that. They are now one step closer to receiving the greatest gift and that is Jesus. Soon they will be able to take part in the banquet that Christ himself prepared for us at the First Communion. He loved us so much that he died on that cross so that we may have eternal life.

Now of course our first reconciliation is not our last. I encourage you to take your child as often as you can so they are comfortable with the sacrament and don't lose sight of its healing power. I personally have never been to a confession that I haven't felt the weight lifted from me. It's a way to refresh and to allow God to know out loud that you are sorry and with his grace you will do better to sin no more. After all we are all human and we all sin whether it be great or small. So I challenge you to go once a month or minimum once a year. It would also be a good time to go as a family. After all home is the first church and if they see you as the parent going then it is something that they will continue to do as well.

"Bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you."



St. Valentine

*Patron Saint of Love, Young People,
Happy Marriages*
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The origin of St. Valentine, and how many St. Valentines there were, remains a mystery. One opinion is that he was a Roman martyred for refusing to give up his Christian faith. Other historians hold that St. Valentine was a temple priest jailed for defiance during the reign of Claudius. Whoever he was, Valentine really existed because archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to Saint Valentine. In 496 AD Pope Gelasius marked February 14th as a celebration in honor of his martyrdom.

The first representation of Saint Valentine appeared in a The Nuremberg Chronicle, a great illustrated book printed in 1493. [Additional evidence that Valentine was a real person: archaeologists have unearthed a Roman catacomb and an ancient church dedicated to Saint Valentine.] Alongside a woodcut portrait of him, text states that Valentinus was a Roman priest martyred during the reign of Claudius the Goth [Claudius II]. Since he was caught marrying Christian couples and aiding any Christians who were being persecuted under Emperor Claudius in Rome [when helping them was considered a crime], Valentinus was arrested and imprisoned. Claudius took a liking to this prisoner -- until Valentinus made a strategic error: he tried to convert the Emperor -- whereupon this priest was condemned to death. He was beaten with clubs and stoned; when that didn't do it, he was beheaded outside the Flaminian Gate [circa 269].

Saints are not supposed to rest in peace; they're expected to keep busy: to perform miracles, to intercede. Being in jail or dead is no excuse for non-performance of the supernatural. One legend says, while awaiting his execution, Valentinus restored the sight of his jailer's blind daughter. Another legend says, on the eve of his death, he penned a farewell note to the jailer's daughter, signing it, "From your Valentine." St. Valentine was a Priest, martyred in 269 at Rome and was buried on the Flaminian Way. He is the Patron Saint of affianced couples, bee keepers, engaged couples, epilepsy, fainting, greetings, happy marriages, love, lovers, plague, travellers, young people. He is represented in pictures with birds and roses.

We would like to invite you to a CRHP weekend retreat. Please take a moment to read the following prayer, and reflect on the current status of your relationship with God and your community.

I Need You

Dear God, I need You every day.
I stumble so –along the way.
I need the faith that You can give,
every single day I live.
I need more strength, for I am weak,
And God, it is Your strength I seek.
Please give me hope, when things go wrong.
Then fill my heart with your sweet song.
Life's road is long—the hills so steep.
I even need You when I sleep!
Let's face it, God, what would I do if I could not turn to
You?

Amen

After reading and reflecting on that prayer, do you feel that your spiritual life could use some attention? You are not alone! Everyone's spiritual life needs some tender loving care. An upcoming CRHP weekend could be your opportunity to grow closer with God, as well as, your faith community!

The **MEN** will embark on their journey on
March 20th and 21st, 2010.

The **WOMEN** will journey from
April 24th & 25th, 2010.

**Contact Steven or Kari Fischer
for more information!
859-359-0790
email: stjoepr@hotmail.com**



"A faithful friend is a sturdy shelter; he who finds one finds a treasure. A faithful friend is beyond price, no sum can balance his worth. A faithful friend

is a life-saving remedy, such as he who fears God finds; For he who fears God behaves accordingly, and his friend will be like himself."

(Sirach 6:14-17)

How Catholics Worship

The liturgical life of the Church is the Catholic Christian community's way of celebrating what we believe. Through the signs of the sacraments and our participation in the liturgical celebrations, we renew our faith and gain an even greater share in the life of grace, God's life in us. Through the sacraments, we are challenged to follow the way of Christ that leads to the realization of God's kingdom.

What kinds of sacraments are there?

Sacraments are divided into 3 groups: sacraments of initiation, sacraments of healing, and sacraments at the service of communion. Through them we are welcomed into the Church and called to conversion and service. The life of the Church revolves around the sacraments. In them we encounter the Lord Jesus and are enabled to live the life of faith more deeply.

What are sacraments of initiation?

The sacraments of initiation include Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. Baptism is the basis for the whole of Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and first step to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed and reborn as children of God and are incorporated into the Church to share in her mission.

Confirmation gives us the Holy Spirit to root us more deeply in all that is divine and incorporate us more firmly into Christ. It strengthens our bond with the Church and her mission and to bear witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds.

The Eucharist is the heart and culmination of the Church's life. By his sacrifice, Christ pours out the graces of salvation on his Body, which is the Church, his sacrifice of praise to the Father. Receiving this sacrament strengthens our union with the Lord.

Why is there a need for priestly vocations?

In reflecting upon the Mass as the central celebration of the liturgy of the Church, we cannot help but be concerned about the fact that in many dioceses throughout the world, there is a shortage of priests. Because the Mass is essential to the life of the Church and requires the ministry of an ordained priest, it is critical to pray daily for vocations to the priesthood. We must actively encourage and support young men who may be considering the priesthood as a vocation.

Next Sunday, January 31st Fr. Josh will speak to all of the grades about his vocation and how he was called to serve our Lord as a priest.