

MARCH  
2017

# SAINT MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PARISH

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## *Local Knights of Columbus Serving Our Parish Community*

All the good works done by the Knights of Columbus are based upon their four core principles – Charity, Unity, Fraternity, and Patriotism. And to be sure, charity and service are hallmarks of the Knights. In the past decade worldwide, the Knights have donated \$1.475 billion to charity and given almost 700 million hours in support of the Church and charitable works. At a recent audience, Pope Francis commended and thanked the Knights. “On this occasion, I wish to express my gratitude for the unfailing support the Knights of Columbus have always provided to the Church, to the Holy See, and to me personally. This support is both financial and spiritual. It can be seen in the daily prayers, sacrifices, and the apostolic works of so many Knights in their local councils, in their parishes, and in their communities.”

Thanks to the efforts of Fr. Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Conn., the Connecticut State Legislature chartered the first Knights of



Columbus Council in 1882. From that one Council, the Knights have grown from a few members to more than 15,000 Councils and almost 2 million members in the United States and 16 other countries.

We are blessed here at St. Michael with our Knights of Columbus Pope Pius XII Council #1123, for which Rick Klamm serves as the Grand Knight. There are over 160 Councils

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## *Light of the World Retreat Promises a Refreshing Encounter with Christ*

Have you ever taken a really great vacation? The kind that left you feeling refreshed and ready to take on the world once again? How would you like to have that same experience without going anywhere?

This year's Light of the World Retreat will be held March 31 through April 2 in Tyson Hall. Held biannually, the retreat will feature talks by both clergy and lay members of the parish, reflection on Scripture in a small-group setting, and best of all, time with the Holy Spirit that will leave your soul feeling restored.

The Light of the World Retreat takes place completely within the daytime, allowing participants to go home to their own beds and families each evening. The retreat begins Friday night at 6:30 p.m. and then picks up again the following two mornings after Mass. Retreat committee member and host Cherrie Mooers says many participants enjoy the opportunity to spend the nights in their own homes and says this added benefit brings many parishioners back each time it is held.

"The key thing is that we like to stress that they prayerfully consider attending this year," Cherrie says. "If you've attended before, you can come again because there's new material each time."



*Coming March 31 through April 2, The Light of the World Retreat is a chance to experience Christ on a personal level. In this photo from the 2015 retreat, parishioners and clergy from St. Michael's and St. Cecilia Parishes, Assumption Parish, Juniata, and Sacred Heart of Roseland, joined together to enjoy a weekend of fellowship and growth with the Holy Spirit.*

Light of the World retreats have been held all over the United States. These retreats feature a method of evangelization that invites each participant to experience Christ on a new, personal level. Run completely by the parish, a six-week post retreat course allows participants to continue to grow in faith together long after the weekend has ended. Out of these, small groups often form to meet weekly.

"We have a lot of small groups that form afterward," Cherrie says. "I have a group that met at our house for 17 years. There are 15 of us and we meet every Thursday night. We do a lot of things together and try to do some community service, too, but it's mostly a regular Bible study. It's patterned off of Light of the World and there's five of them at St. Michael, but we're hoping we get more this time."

Cherrie added that many past participants have also felt inspired to build upon what they learned at the retreat by becoming more deeply involved with our parish community at large.

"One of the biggest pluses we've noticed is that people who go to the retreats are the ones who step forward with their time, talent, and treasure," she says. "It's a way to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit and it's very powerful."

*If you would like to attend the Light of World Retreat or simply learn more, contact Cherrie Mooers at 402-462-9506, or other Light of the World Retreat committee members Mike and Loretta Tebbe at 402-463-7704, or Tom and Karen Jurgensmeier at 402-462-2947. There is no fee to attend, but a small donation at the end of the weekend is suggested.*

## A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

## Lent Is More Than Preparation for Easter

Dear Parishioners,

In 2013, Pope Francis issued his first significant work. It was what is called an “apostolic exhortation” titled *The Joy of the Gospel* (*Evangelii Gaudium* in Latin). While Rome may use fancy words for some of these things, an “exhortation” of this sort does not change any official Church rules or traditions. However, it does offer advice and encouragement about how we should live our lives.

Pope Francis offers this kind of guidance on a regular basis, but this one in particular seems to present us with suggestions that are worthy of our consideration, especially during Lent. The pope called us to become missionary disciples: “The Church which ‘goes forth’ is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 24).

Speaking about his exhortation, Pope Francis said, “One of the riches of the Second Vatican Council was to remind the Church of the two ‘lenses’ of the season of Lent: baptismal and penitential.” In fact, Vatican II noted specifically, “The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent – the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and penance – should be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. It is by means of them that the Church prepared the faithful for the celebration of Easter, while they hear God’s word more frequently and devote more time to prayer” (*Companion to the Catechism of the Catholic Church* #1348).

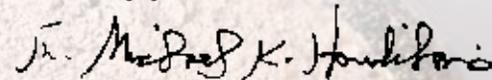
It might be well for us to keep these in mind during Lent. There were vows made during our baptism, and this is the time of year to try to fulfill those vows, in addition to reaffirming them. We are given various opportunities to renew these vows, and we may tend to do it automatically without a thought. Now, however, is the time to think. Perhaps during

Lent, we can renew these vows as families – and we must not necessarily do it in church or at a Mass. Then, we need to do something during Lent to help each of us understand what that renewal means.

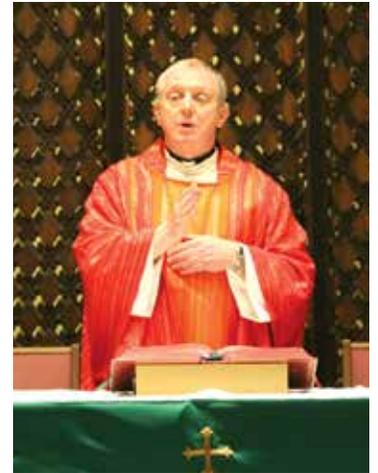
The other important part of Lent pointed out by Pope Francis has to do with penance. Most of us have heard the traditional practices of Lent – fasting, prayer, reception of the Sacraments, and almsgiving. These are things that may bring us closer to Christ. By fasting, we may gain a greater understanding of the hunger the Lord feels for our souls; by increased prayer, we join in union with God; through the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, we become a greater part of that union with God; through giving alms, we empty ourselves in part, just as Jesus emptied Himself for us on the cross.

This is a time to do more than prepare for Easter. This is a time to change how we may approach living and our faith. God bless you now and throughout this holiest of seasons.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Houlihan,  
Pastor



## A Book Like *Getting to Know the Word of God*

If you have ever struggled with reading the Bible or wondered how stories from thousands of years ago could impact your faith today, you're not alone. Many people are daunted by the big book, and while they know that they should spend more time with God's Word, it never really becomes a priority.

But what if something changed? What if you came to realize that God wants to speak to you through His Word? What if you realized that stories from 2,000 – or more! – years ago could really give you guidance on how to live your everyday life? What if, through reading Sacred Scripture, you really came to know and love Jesus?

"When we open ourselves to God's Word, we allow God to act in our lives," Fr. Houlihan says. "We're saying that we are serious about our relationship with Jesus. St. Jerome, the first great Bible scholar, said, 'Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.' If we don't know what God is saying to us, we really don't know Jesus. We want to know Jesus so we can love and serve Him."



*Parish Bible Study groups are an opportunity for parishioners to grow in their understanding of the faith, while building community with others.*

Fr. Houlihan reminds that the Bible really is different than any other book.

"It's not so much you reading the Bible, but rather, that you're letting the Bible read you, and speak to you about God and about your life," Fr. Houlihan says. "You don't read the Bible like a novel or a newspaper – you read it slowly and prayerfully and open up to what God, the Holy Spirit is saying."

Fr. Houlihan suggests the age-old practice of Lectio Divina, a method given to us by the Church that includes reading a small section of Scripture, often several times, and listening for a word or phrase that stands out to you. Then, reading again, asking God to reveal to you the truth that He wants to speak to your heart. This form of prayer closes with gratefully embracing the truth that God spoke to you

*"It's not so much you reading the Bible, but rather, that you're letting the Bible read you, and speak to you about God and about your life. You don't read the Bible like a novel or a newspaper – you read it slowly and prayerfully and open up to what God and the Holy Spirit is saying." – Fr. Houlihan*

# There is No Other Way to Know God Through Bible Study

through His Word, and thinking of a way to apply or enact this message into your life.

“When you do the Lectio Divina, God is speaking to you about your life and your experience and how this particular Scripture can shed light on it,” Fr. Houlihan says. “Even people who’ve read it hundreds of times, each time you read it, you pick up on something new.”

Fr. Houlihan also notes that, if you read the Scriptures “with the Church,” following along with the daily, or Sunday Mass readings, you would have the opportunity to hear much of the primary narratives of the Bible over the course of two to three years.

Some members of our parish meet in small Bible Study groups to pray together and learn from God’s Word. Mike and Loretta Tebbe have been part of a Bible Study for nearly 20 years, since they decided they wanted to continue growing in their faith, after attending the Light of the World Retreat. Their Bible Study has covered various aspects of the Bible over the years, from Gospels and letters from St. Paul, to the Mass readings for the upcoming Sunday.

“When you have Scripture study, there are a lot of things you’ve heard for the past 50 years, and all the sudden something different comes up,” Mike says. “[Someone else’s] take on it may be different than yours, but it could really be meaningful in your life.”

“I listen more closely to the readings when I hear them again on Sunday,” Loretta adds.

Bible Study groups can also be a great source of support and encouragement along the journey of faith.

“In a Bible Study group, we learn to be accountable to other people and receive support and prayer from other people on our spiritual journeys,” Fr. Houlihan says. “We’re not lone rangers – we’re supposed to help and support each other.”

“The main thing is to gather as a group, so we can support each other,” Mike adds. “If you’re out there by yourself, the devil will just pick you off. The important part is to gather as a group and sustain each other and encourage each other.”

“The world is so busy, but to meet with Catholics who also want to grow in their faith and pray together, it’s a great thing to

do,” Loretta says.

Fr. Houlihan encourages parishioners to study the Bible, whether in groups, or on your own, if you truly want to become a follower of Christ.

“The point of Bible Study is not to make you feel good about yourself – it’s to make you a disciple,” he says. “Listen to God’s Word and ask yourself, ‘How am I going to react to this? How am I going to implement this and bring Christ to the world?’”

He reminds that the study of Scripture should not just impact the faith of those studying it, but also the way that Christians see and act in the world.

“A successful Bible study is one that doesn’t just get together to socialize,” Fr. Houlihan says. “It’s [focused on], ‘What are we going to do to bring about God’s kingdom? How are we going to respond in gratitude, to what God has done for us?’ That’s the goal.”

So, if you are looking for a way to grow in your relationship with God this Lent and beyond, this is a great opportunity to dust off your Bible – you never know what God might want to say to you when you’re open to listening!

*If you would like more information on Bible Study groups within the parish, please contact Mike and Loretta Tebbe at 402-463-7704, or Bruce and Cherrie Mooers at 402-462-9506.*

# Holy Week

**PALM SUNDAY – April 9 - PASSION of OUR LORD**

*Mass Times:*

Saturday @ 5 p.m. – Solemn Entrance  
Sunday @ 8 a.m. – Solemn Entrance  
9:30 a.m. – Procession with Palms  
11 a.m. – Solemn Entrance

*Confessions With Deanery Priests:*

4 p.m. – Sunday, April 9

**MONDAY – April 10**

*Masses:*

7:30 a.m.  
8:10 a.m. School Mass  
5 p.m. – Chrism Mass @ Cathedral in Lincoln. All are invited to attend.

**TUESDAY – April 11**

*Masses:*

7:30 a.m.  
8:10 a.m. School Mass  
7 p.m. Altar Society Mass (public also)

*Confessions:*

4 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY – April 12**

*Masses:*

7:30 a.m.  
8:10 a.m. School Mass

*Confessions:*

Noon – 1 p.m.  
7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

*Confessions:*

15 minutes prior to 7:30 a.m. Mass  
(Mon - Wed) in addition to other times listed

**HOLY THURSDAY – April 13**

Morning Prayer - 8 a.m.

Mass of the Last Supper - 7:30 p.m.

This is the feast of the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

Offertory collection for Hastings Catholic Social Services

Adoration after the 7:30 p.m. Mass until 12:00 Midnight.

All parishioners are asked to come for one hour of adoration.

Families with names beginning:

A - H 8-9 p.m.

I - M 9-10 p.m.

N - S 10-11 p.m.

T - Z 11 p.m. - Midnight

If you are unable to attend at the hour specified, feel free to come any time until midnight.

*Confessions:*

4 p.m.- 5 p.m.

After the 7:30 p.m. Mass until finished

9 p.m. until finished

10 p.m. until finished

11 p.m. until finished

# Schedule

## **GOOD FRIDAY – April 14**

Morning Prayer - 8 a.m.

Stations of the Cross - Noon

Seven Last Words - 3 p.m.

Liturgy of Good Friday - 7:30 p.m. (This is the one to attend today if you attend only one)

The Good Friday Liturgy consists of the reading of the Passion, Veneration of the Cross and Holy Communion. Offertory collection for the Holy Land.

### *Confessions:*

After all services until all are heard.

*\*Good Friday is a day of fast for all Catholics between the ages of 18 & 59 and a day of abstinence from meat for all Catholics 14 years and older.*

## **NO CONFESSIONS ARE SCHEDULED FOR HOLY SATURDAY**

All parishioners are invited to come all three days of the Triduum (Thursday, Friday and Saturday). Blessing of the Easter bread, children's Easter baskets and food for Easter dinner will be after Masses of the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday.

## **HOLY SATURDAY – April 15**

Morning Prayer – 8 a.m.

Preparation of the Elect and Candidates for Full Communion – 10 a.m.

**NO MASS EXCEPT FOR THE MASS OF THE EASTER VIGIL AT 8:30 P.M.**

*There are four main events celebrated at the Easter Vigil:*

1. The lighting of the new fire and Easter Candle, representing the Risen Lord
2. The readings from the Old Testament unfolding the salvation history of the human race. Readings 1 – 3 – 5 – 7
3. The blessing of the Easter water recalling our entrance into redemption by our baptism, and initiation of catechumens and reception of other Christians into full communion.
4. The Mass of the Resurrection. This is the important and most joyous service of the entire year. We prayerfully urge all to come. This is the story of our redemption. The Easter Vigil Mass counts for your Sunday obligation and is, in fact, the principal Mass of the entire year.

## **EASTER SUNDAY – April 16**

*Regular Sunday schedule:*

8 a.m. ~ 9:30 a.m. ~ 11 a.m.

(Renewal of baptismal promises at all Masses)

## **FIRST COMMUNION SUNDAY - APRIL 22 & APRIL 23**

*Mass for First Holy Communion of our Second-Graders @ St. Michael's - Saturday - April 22 at 5 p.m.\*\**

*First Holy Communion at St. Cecilia - Sunday, April 23 at 9 a.m.\*\**

**\*\***These are regularly scheduled weekend Masses, but it is advisable to attend another Mass if you are not with a First Communicant.

# SAINT MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PARISH

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## *Knights of Columbus* continued from front cover

in the State of Nebraska. The state chaplain is Fr. John Rooney from Sacred Heart Church in Shelby. Fr. Rooney has this to say about the Knights of Columbus:

“Our theme for this year is ‘One Body in Christ,’” Fr. Rooney says. “It is based upon 1 Corinthians 12:20 and 27. ‘As it is there are many parts, but one body... Now you are the Body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.’

“We all have God-given talents which

allow us to glorify and honor the Lord through our families, our parishes and our Knights Councils,” he continues. “It is important for us to remember that our participation in the Knights of Columbus helps us to live our unity in the Body of Christ and provide assistance for those in greater need than ourselves, though some day we may be the ones in need and the support will be there for us. Many others can benefit from membership in the Knights, as well, to support them in faith and brotherhood. This is a way we continue to live out the reality that we are ‘One Body in Christ.’”

### LITURGY SCHEDULE

#### **Sunday:**

*Saturday Vigil 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m.  
and 11:00 a.m.*

#### **Weekday:**

*Mon-Fri 7:30 a.m. & 8:10 a.m.  
(School Mass)  
Saturday 8:00 a.m.*

*Our Pope Pius XII Council # 1123 meets on the third  
Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at St. Michael.*

*If you would like more information,  
or if you are interested in becoming a member,  
contact Grand Knight Rick Klamm at 402-461-6883.*