

Sunday Faith Formation

Mary's Musings

Special Points of Interest

- Lenten Project
- Family Faith
- Kid's Humor
- Spotlight on Volunteers
- Volunteer Opportunities

LENTEN PROJECT: Join the Giving

Almsgiving, sharing our abundance with the poor, is one of the three major works of the Lenten season. The children in our parish faith formation programs will participate in charitable work during Lent by bringing in socks, tee shirts, pajama pants, and underwear for the homeless and needy children and families.

Your child can bring items at any class time during Lent - February 17 through March 24. Items collected will be distributed through the ministries of the Franciscan Brothers of Peace in St. Paul.

Students bringing items can place them in the clothes baskets near the large pair

of socks or tee shirt located on the wall near the Faith Formation office Room 109.

Students are invited to color in a section of the socks or tee shirt for each item they donate for the needy.

Be as generous as you are able!

February/March Calendar

8:45 and 10:30 Faith Formation Classes

February 21: Music
February 28: Music

March 7: Music
March 14: Regular Classes

March 21: Music
March 28: No Class

April 4: No Class

Family Faith: Lenten Practices

LENT: PREPARATION FOR EASTER!

The triangle is one of the strongest and most solid architectural design. Consider the pyramids, standing undaunted for thousands of years. Consider our image of the Trinity—a triangle of strength in community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A successful Lenten experience is a triangle of activities - prayer, fasting, and alms for the poor, designed to strengthen believers in faith and Christian practice. The forty days of Lent are meant to prepare us, soul and body, for the great celebration of Easter. Try some of these ideas or develop your own as a family. If you work at something together for forty

days, success will be very evident come Easter.

PRAY MORE!

Suggestions for prayer:

- *Add to the prayers you already say on a daily basis
- *Set a day and time for your family to pray together
- *Read from the Sunday Scriptures - check your bulletin or parish website www.epiphany.org.

GIVE TO THE POOR!

Ways to give Alms:

- *Invite all family members to go through their closets and give unwanted items to a local charity
- *Bring socks, tee shirts, and pajama pants for Franciscan Brothers of Peace mission to the needy.

*Eat a low cost meal once a week - donate the savings to help Haiti's earthquake recovery.

FAST FROM A HABIT!

Meaningful fasting ideas:

- *All family members agree to put aside bad language, put downs, name calling.
- *Each family member sacrifices a favorite treat food for the 40 days of Lent.
- *Agree to turn off the TV/ video games for an hour each day - play cards or a board game.

Adding these three activities to your Lenten experience of forty days will increase your faith and bring deeper meaning to Easter Sunday and the Easter Season.

How "asparagus" got it's name

A young student was asked to write a synopsis of the passion story. He wrote: "Judas Asparagus was a really bad guy who betrayed Jesus with a kiss. He was so awful they named a terrible tasting vegetable after him."

Volunteers Give from the Heart: THE GESE FAMILY

Our spotlight volunteer this week is the Geese Family: Ginger, Eddy and Kelly who have worked with the Sunday school program for NINE years. Below, Ginger speaks about her family's ministry at Epiphany. What a blessing!

My husband and I were still pretty new to the parish and wanted to get involved any way we could to help. I had decided to give faith formation a try as I loved being with kids and that was my life. I had worked in daycare, then opened a home daycare for some time. Later I moved on to getting involved with early childhood education. I felt that working in faith formation would be a right fit for me.

I started working with both the 2nd grade program and the 3 and 4yr olds, nine years ago. I discovered

volunteering to teach requires lots of time and dedication. I did not have enough time to do both classes, one Wednesday nights and one early Sunday morning. At the end of my first volunteer year, I decided to concentrate on teaching 3 and 4yr olds.

Nine years later we have grown to love the parish and developed stronger faith within it. Epiphany has become an important part of our family and life. Each year that has passed offers such rewards and I continue to see it in the families and children. It is a joy to see the excitement as little children are able to say the "Hail Mary" on their own and make the "Sign of the Cross". We are so blessed to be a part of the learning no matter how small the learning may seem.

The children give back much more than I can give. Trust, love, and patience come from them with no effort. They continue to remind me of the best in life, never to take anything for granted and to see how truly blessed we all are.

Working side by side with my son Eddy and my daughter Kelly has enveloped a stronger bond between us. We share our experiences, what continues to work and what we would like to continue to work on. I think my family has learned how important stewardship truly is and how you will be taken care of if you believe. We believe all things happen for a reason even though we may not understand why, but to see faith we must first know faith.

Parenting Young Children - age three to five

Some hints for encouraging the growth and development of your preschool child.

***Foster a love for the printed word.** Read to your child everyday! Set a regular schedule for going to the library and help your child select books which interest them.

***Foster responsibility.** Children can help and they love to know that they

are being of value to the family. Give your child little chores to do—set the table, pick up things and put them away, play simple games.

***Foster your child's social side.** Encourage your child to play with other children. Learning to share and making friends are skills your child will carry with them throughout life.

***Foster language growth.** Talk to your child in full sentences and skip the

"baby talk." Gently correct misused or mispronounced words. Encourage conversation by asking questions.

***Foster character development.** Discipline is essential to developing strong character traits. Be consistent, firm and gentle with your child. You are their best example of how to behave—be a **GREAT MODEL**.

Volunteer Opportunities during Sunday Faith Formation:

Office Assistant (adult) during the 8:30 session

Assistant in classrooms during the 10:30 session – adult, teen, middle school youth.

Can you help ? Contact Ms. Fritz at mfritz@epiphanymn.org or call 763-862-4332. Easy, fun ways to give from the heart!