

St. Michael Church  
401 S. Main St.  
Newark, NY 14513  
March 14, 2017

Dear Parishioners,

Once again we find ourselves in the season of Lent. During Lent, we abstain from meat on Fridays, we fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and we are called to make a sacrifice as a way of showing our love of God.

While our Lenten practices are important, Lent is not a season unto itself. Lent is a time to get us ready to celebrate the most important day of the year, **Easter!** It is on Easter the tomb is found empty! Jesus is Risen!

I invite and welcome all of you to join us as we celebrate Easter on April 16<sup>th</sup> (see enclosed schedule). At the Easter morning Masses we will hear of the Resurrection and celebrate it with great joy but I want to encourage you to come on Saturday evening to the Easter Vigil at 8:00 p.m., the most special liturgy of the year. In my days before entering seminary I did not go to the Easter Vigil until I was specifically invited and found it a wonderful experience of faith. So, let me offer you your own invitation to come.

Of course, we should not forget the Sunday before, Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord. April 9<sup>th</sup>. It is our celebration of the day when Jesus entered Jerusalem knowing He would be crucified. We will bless and distribute palms and hear the story of Jesus' Passion. So, again I invite you to come.

There are two more services during Holy Week that I encourage you to attend. On Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate the Mass of Lord's Supper. We commemorate that Jesus celebrated the Passover at the Last Supper. At that supper, He gives us the gift of the Eucharist to nourish us with **his own Body and Blood**. I will wash the feet of twelve parishioners to recall how Jesus washed the feet of the Twelve Apostles. As a pastor, I have found this a very humbling experience that leads me to a very deep appreciation of my role as Pastor. Our church will remain open until 11:00 p.m. for anyone who wants to spend time in private prayer.

On Good Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, we **celebrate** the Crucifixion of Jesus. Yes, I said we **celebrate** the Crucifixion. It should bring sorrow to our hearts that Jesus died but He did it willingly **for us**. Our sins offend God and we cannot earn forgiveness on our own but Jesus freely gives his life for us.

The Church calls all who are conscious of mortal sin to confess their sins at least once a year. You can do this every Saturday (except Holy Saturday) from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. I have also started offering Confessions on the second Tuesday of each month from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Lastly, we will have our annual diocesan Day of Penance and Mercy on March 28<sup>th</sup> where every parish in our diocese will offer the sacrament. I will be in the confessional from 12:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

It is my hope and prayer that you will join us for our services throughout Holy Week.

Peace,

Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunncliff  
Pastor