

St Robert Bellarmine Parish School of Religion

March 2011

Important Days this Month

- 5 Partners in Prayer
- 6 Monthly Catechist Meeting
- 7 As for Me & My House
Parish Awareness Conference
- 9 Ash Wednesday
- 12 YCIA Retreat for grades 5-8
Cardboard City (YGOD)
- 16 NO CLASS – Spring Break
- 17 St Patrick's Day
- 19 Parish Family Night
- 23 Confirmation Interviews
Parent Meeting in Church 6:30
Prayer Service for all Families 7:00
- 30 Reconciliation for grades 2-8
Confirmation name/saint report due



*We enter the season of Lent on
March 9.*

*Children will report to their
Classrooms for a brief lesson and
attendance before joining in the
Eucharistic celebration of Mass.
Parents are encouraged to come and
pray with us.*

*Dismissal will take place
at the end of Mass.*



Prayer on Ash Wednesday

*Jesus, our Lord,
we join you in the desert praying and
fasting during this season of Lent.*

*During this holy time of sacrifice, prayer,
and good works, may we prepare
our hearts, our souls, our minds, and our bodies
for the greatest feast of all,
the feast of your Resurrection.*

*May we follow your footsteps as we journey with
you to Jerusalem. Every time we participate in
the Mass, may we be reminded of the Last
Supper and your gift of Eucharist.*

*May we continue with you to Calvary,
accepting the crosses given to us each day
and may we stand by your Mother Mary at
the foot of your Cross.*

*We ask you to forgive our sins and thank you for
your sacrifice for us.*

*Grant us the perseverance to strive each day of this holy
season to be more like you.*

*May our preparation for Easter make us one with the
Risen Christ every day of our lives.*

Partners in Prayer

Our Parish School of Religion Faculty and others involved in ministry will be attending a workshop on Saturday, March 5 from 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. to learn new and creative ways to bring children into a deeper relationship and friendship with Jesus.

Included will be ways to use storytelling as prayer and ways to introduce children to Lectio Divina, a means of guided meditation that engages imagination and invites personal conversation with Jesus.

We would like to extend an invitation to any adult parent, grandparents, aunts, uncles, godparents, sponsors for Confirmation, etc to join us. Please call Carol Breckle at 946-6461. Your registration fee has already been paid, but we do need to have adequate materials and food on hand!

As for Me and My House

All families in the archdiocese received a letter and brochure this past week from Archbishop Carlson speaking of the dangers and widespread availability of pornography, as well as the way it threatens our society.

On March 5 and 6, Father Ryan will be speaking to all of us about the archbishop's initiative and this will be followed on Monday evening, March 7 with a Parish Awareness Conference at 7:00 p.m.

It is our sincere hope that many parents will make the effort to attend this conference, to learn from it, and to share with the rest of us in the work of making a better world – for the sake of our world.

Please mark your calendars now and plan to join us.

Retreat Day for Grades 5-8

The junior high youth group, Young Catholics in Action (YCIA), is sponsoring a day of prayer for anyone grades 5-8 and/or their parents on Saturday, March 12 from 11:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m..

Our theme this year has been "Jesus Dares" and we have answered the dares to realize the wonders of the world, to respect differences, to be thankful, to be joyful, and to respect our bodies. Now we want to know how we can pray "always and all ways".

We encourage parents and children to join us, engaging in some old forms of prayer and learning some new ways.

Everyone is asked to bring a sack lunch and a cd with one contemporary song that calls them into a closer relationship with God, drawing them into conversation with Him.

We know you are busy, but we challenge parents to take time to join us and show your children by example how important prayer is to you.

The day is free! Simply call 946-6461 to reserve a spot!

Cardboard City

On Saturday, March 12, YGOD will once again be spending a night in solidarity with the homeless, sleeping on the sidewalk in front of the church in cardboard boxes. Boxes may be stuffed with paper, plastic bags, and rags for warmth but sleeping bags, comforters, and pillows are not allowed. Also not allowed are cell phones and electronic toys of any kind (a real sacrifice for our teens). They will gather for the 5:00 Mass and the plan is to have nothing to eat or drink except what is given to them by Good Samaritans until after the 11:30 Mass on Sunday. They will be begging for your contributions to help the growing number of poor in our own parish through the work of our St Vincent de Paul Society. It's amazing what we can learn from participating in this activity – from a new appreciation of what we have to a resolute determination to make sure we apply ourselves at school to diminish the possibility of poverty in our personal lives!



Special Meeting for PSR Parents on March 23

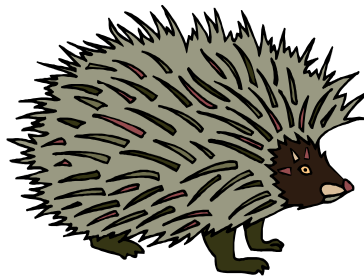
All parents are asked to set aside time to stay with us on March 23 when you bring your children to class.

The Archbishop has set forth some criteria that all parishes need to meet for spiritual growth and development and our Parish Council is asking all organizations to work together to make these things happen. Ray Nabzyk and Patti Goslin are our designated liaisons with our Parish Council rep, Nadine Smith.

They would like to take a few minutes to explain this process to you and to spend some time brainstorming how the Parish School of Religion can work better to provide a warmer and more welcoming atmosphere for students and parents.

The areas of focus given to us by Archbishop Carlson are sacramental life, prayer, faith formation and catechesis, social justice, hospitality, strong collaborative leadership, and transforming lives. Our Parish Council has chosen hospitality as the area of focus for this year.

Hospitality, as defined by this project, is *sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with others without imposing Catholic beliefs on anyone but also without minimizing the moral values and doctrinal principles that are at the heart of our Catholic belief and practice.*



The Story of the Porcupine

It was the coldest winter ever. Many animals died because of the cold. The porcupines, realizing the situation, decided to group together. This way they covered and protected themselves; but the quills of each one wounded their closest companions even though they gave off heat to each other.

After a while, they decided to distance themselves one from the other and they began to die, alone and frozen. So they had to make a choice: either accept the quills of their companions or disappear from the Earth.

Wisely, they decided to go back to being together. This way they learned to live with the little wounds that were caused by the close relationship with their companions. The most important thing was that they were able to survive because of the heat that came from the others.

The best relationship is not the one that brings together perfect people, but when each individual learns to live with the imperfections of others and can admire the other person's good qualities.

Love one another!

Lenten Family Prayer Service

All parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters are invited to join us in prayer on March 23 at 7:00 p.m.

There will be music and storytelling, meditation time, and we hope this will be a time to remember and talk about after you have gone home.

Please plan to stay with us after the parent meeting.

Parish Family Night March 19

Parish Council is sponsoring a night for all families to join together in food and fun on March 19 after the 5:00 Mass.

Who doesn't love a good mystery? We will all have to put our imaginations together to solve the story, young and old alike. Who done it? Only the Shadow knows! But we will all know before we go home!

The main course will be provided by Parish Council and each family is asked to bring along a side, salad, or dessert, according to where the last name falls in the alphabet. Watch the Sunday bulletin for details and for a registration form.

This event is free of charge but somebody has to know how many people to cook for! Please don't let that be the biggest mystery of the night! Fill out the form while you are still at Mass and your spot is secure!

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.

I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

Amen.

Reconciliation on March 30 for grades 2-8

"...when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift."

All children in grades 2-8 will have the opportunity to confess their sins and receive absolution on March 30, but in order to do this well, they need some help at home to prepare.

There seems to be quite a lot of misconception about sin in our society today. Many of us do not even think that sin at all!

When we look in the mirror, we should see what is truly there – not a distorted vision – but sadly, we do not take time to look very closely at ourselves. And when we do see a failing or a weakness, it is easy to blame someone else.

We ask all parents to sit down with their children this month to review the Commandments and to help consider whether we are acting as Jesus would in our own daily situations. Let your children know that although we are all supposed to be as good as we can be, moms and dads sometimes make bad choices, too. Sin is a choice, not a mistake.

Speak with your children about some ways that your family can work together to help each other be more Christ-like. If you do not already set aside some time each week for family prayer, this time of preparation for Easter would be perfect for starting a new habit.

How can you help each other to be more considerate and less angry? How can you look out for the needs of others at least as much as you look out for yourselves? Is there a relative or neighbor that needs help?

Time is one of the most precious commodities that any of us has – and yet, it only takes time to visit a shut-in or to bake cookies in return for a good deed done. It takes only a little time to baby-sit so that a young couple on a strapped budget can have some "date time" and it takes only a little time to help clean someone's house or to plant a spring garden.

What can you do to help each other break bad habits? How can you work together to make better choices about homework, television, and video games? How can you work together to make better use of the time that you have?

Finally, we ask that you review with your children the way to make a good confession and practice saying the Act of Contrition. This could be done by the whole family every night before bed to create awareness of our own sinfulness and appreciation for our Forgiving Father! If bedtime doesn't work, how about after meals? We all need to learn how to say "I'm sorry and will try to do better." – When was the last time your children saw you receive the sacrament of Reconciliation? Would you care to join us?