

## Notes from the Chapel

We are all capable of good and evil.  
We are not born bad; everybody has God's goodness inside.  
Some hide it, some neglect it, but it is there.  
God created us to love and to be loved,  
So it is our test from God to choose one path or the other.  
**Mother Teresa**



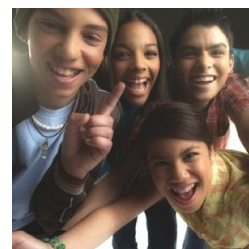
### **The Lenten Season Begins on February 22<sup>nd</sup>**

The forty days of Lent represent for the Church, the forty days that Jesus wandered the desert before he began his public ministry. Just as Jesus faced temptation, we are to focus on our own temptations, the vices that hold us back from becoming the best version of ourselves.

The season begins with Ash Wednesday where we mark ourselves with ashes as a reminder of our own mortality and our need to return to the source of our creation. The ashes act as an invitation to enter into the deepest parts of ourselves and listen to the inner whisperings of the voice of God. This voice lies in the secret of our hearts and urges us to release ourselves from the ties that bind us – our habits, our vices, our inadequacies. We are invited to enter the desert where we thirst for the greater good of giving something up and more specifically, something that perhaps is an unhealthy character trait.

We can struggle to give up the foods that we love the most as a heroic gesture of fortitude, yet if we concentrate on giving up something that we perhaps may not like about ourselves; our anger, our resentment, our desire for revenge; perhaps our hearts will experience great joy when we leave the desert journey at Easter.

During the Lenten journey we strive to remember that we were created in a perfect love that knows us better than we know ourselves. Our challenge is to trust this love, this God that wants nothing more than life at its fullest for us. I pray we will spend time during Lent focusing on the power of this love to transform our lives so we may be ready to arise fully alongside the Risen Christ at Easter.



## **Ash Wednesday Liturgy**

Our Lenten journey will begin with an Ash Wednesday liturgy on February 22. This liturgy offers a critical time for students and staff to mark our independent and collective journeys into the desert for forty days.

We will be challenged to critically look at the interior parts of our being and discover there, not only the areas of our lives that are in need of improvement, but also the riches of God's love and desire for us to be open to unconditional love. The symbolism of ashes profoundly reminds us that we all are in need of returning to God, who in grace and mercy guides us to becoming the best version of ourselves.

I wish to extend a personal thank you to Mrs. Fernandes and her grade twelve religion class for their leadership in the liturgy, and to Ms. McDonald who is preparing the choir for this important symbolic beginning to the Lenten season. I am extremely grateful for the many talented staff and students who made the liturgical celebrations powerful and memorable.

## **Pancake Breakfast**

The journey into Lent would not be complete without a celebratory pancake Tuesday which this year, is scheduled on February 21<sup>st</sup>. The Social Justice Committee has been quite active in displaying posters marking the event and anticipating a very early arrival at school to prepare the breakfast of pancakes, sausages and juice to be served to as many students and staff as possible. We are hoping that many will take advantage of this hot breakfast at the low price of \$2.00 per plate. I wish to thank local retailers who have assisted in helping make this event financially viable. All proceeds from the breakfast will go toward the Chaplaincy Benevolent fund which supports directly the needs of Notre Dame students and their families. We ask for your prayers for the event's success as well as special prayers for the students who are scheduled to arrive at 6:00am!



## **Dominican 2012 Mission Team**

The count-down is on to the departure of this Mission Team to the Dominican Republic. In the last week I have received many comments and emails from students who traveled last year and who are, once again, experiencing their emotions surrounding the journey.

The mission team, consisting of Nick Chaloux, Danielle Derrick, Aaron Francis, Kaitlin Meadows, Rachel Moffa, Emerald Sheridan and staff advisor, Mr. Harper will partake in an off-campus day of reflection on March 2<sup>nd</sup> in preparation for this experience of a lifetime.

Their departure will not go unnoticed by the school community as we prepare for a school wide 'send-off' event which will take place on Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, just two days prior to 'lift-off'. Having been a part of last year's team, I remember fondly the emotions I experienced as I felt the love and concern of my school community.

We ask for your prayers for the team in their final preparations and most importantly, in the time they are away experiencing the lives of the poverty stricken of our world.

## Some of the Saints We Remember this Month (Twenty-Third Publications)

### February 8 – *Saint Jerome Emiliani*

Born in Venice in 1486, he pursued a career in the military and gave very little thought to God. Early in his adult life, he experienced the truth of God and a conversion to faith. It was at this time that he studied to become a priest and devoted himself to the care of orphans and the poor until his death at the age of 51 years. He is the patron saint of orphans and abandoned children.

*Dear Lord, I pray every day that my spirit and my soul will be nourished. I pray that I will always be meditative and reflective; with an open heart and clear mind. Amen.*

### February 11 – *World Day of Prayer for the Sick*

Jesus wanted the people to know that God wants our total good as human beings. Jesus ministered to the sick. The Church has designated this day as a communal prayer for healing. It is also a day to recognize the selfless work of doctors, nurses, and other health-care professionals who dedicate their lives to healing others.

*Dear Jesus, you healed the blind, the lame, the crippled, people afflicted with different kinds of pain and illness. We pray to you for healing of our physical as well as our spiritual afflictions. Help us bring comfort, support, and love to all those who are ill. Amen.*

### February 21 – *Saint Peter Damian*

Peter was born in 1007 into a large family in Italy. His parents died while he was very young and he was cared for by one of his married brothers. He devoted his life to God and became a hermit monk until 1057 when he was appointed the bishop of Ostia and fought for clerical reform. He returned to the life of a simple monk prior to his death in 1072.

Lord of all, you call us to be a brother or sister to all people. You give us a moral obligation to love all of your children. We pray for the courage to bring about justice and peace. Amen.



Lord, on your mercy I lay down those decisions to change what I always put off until tomorrow.  
Lord, on your tenderness, I lay down my faith, sometimes hesitant, as it struggles to take flesh in my daily actions.  
Lord, on you, I lay down my life to be revived.  
You are the Potter, I am the clay!

May we open our hearts and mind to experience God's forgiveness and grace as we prepare to celebrate the Risen Christ!

*Shalom in our Christ of Peace*

Mrs. Brenda Reinkeluers, Chaplaincy Leader