

WHAT IF WE DESCRIBE LENT AS A "RETREAT"?? A space of days taken to pray and to be with God. Often, one goes to a retreat house to have one; a place often of beauty, where one can meditate, listen to talks, and refresh the spirit and soul.

However, it is not practical to speak of disappearing for the 5 weeks of Lent — who of us can do that? But what about setting aside a bit of each Lenten day to partake of certain retreat practices? For instance, what about setting aside a little time daily to let your 'insides settle down' for awhile, and create space within you to welcome God? You might set up a special place in your home just to pray. How about a picture or crucifix, or maybe just a candle? Or how about just 10 minutes of silence?

You could take some time to read the weekend's Gospel beforehand — read it slowly, and let the scene described 'take place' in your head and heart. This week, ask Jesus how it felt to have the Spirit drive him into the desert....

The point? Let the Lord's loving deeds be your motivation for "giving up" anything during Lent. You might begin to see that you are making a gift of gratitude to God, rather than just "giving up" something you like. How does this prepare us for Holy Week and for Easter? By doing exactly what Jesus does when he makes himself a gift of suffering and death. He is returning a gift of love to the Father. Lent prepares us to witness this reality of our savior.

It is the gift we receive at every Mass when we go to Communion.

Maybe we could let ourselves be driven into the desert ourselves, and let the Holy Spirit guide us??

John Foley, SJ, St. Louis University (Sunday Website), St. Louis, MO

**Only this I want:
but to know the Lord,
and to bear his cross,
so to wear the crown he wore.**

Dan Schutte, "Only This I Want" (#499 in Breaking Bread)



GOOD NEWS — A FIRST PLACE MIRACLE!

After 28 years, First Place has had its prayers answered. A generous, anonymous, couple has donated **2 million** dollars for the purchase and renovation of the Cross-fire building on West Amazon St.. Nineteen efficiency apartments for families will be created and used as short term housing. This huge project will start serving our community in Fall of **2019**. This means we will welcome families at St. Peter this coming Fall 2018, as usual. Our gifts of labor and food will then relocate to the new site for Fall of 2019, if renovation proceeds as planned. Details are still in the planning stages, so we will keep you posted as progress is made. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for this enormous blessing!

Gretchen & Fred Merten

ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO SHARE WITH THE FRANCISCANS IN THE REACTIVATION CEREMONY & BLESSING OF THE FRATERNITY, ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH, 12 NOON, AT ST. PETER CHURCH (FOLLOWED BY RECEPTION). FOR INFO CONTACT: LOIS CERSOVSKI (541-953-6632) OR DAVE OLSZYK (541-689-8070).



THE DOCTOR IS IN!! Dr. Ray is coming to Eugene! Join Mater Dei Radio for an exciting evening with EWTN's Dr. Ray Guarendi. Equip yourself for Lent, and don't miss Dr. Ray's "*Strengthen Your Family with Catholic Media*" at **7:00pm, March 13th**, at Marist High School. Tickets are free, but *very* limited. Get yours now, at: **MaterDeiRadio.com**.

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY Join Eugene Catholic Young Adult group (ages 21-39, married or single) for Thursday evening Bible Study, **6:45pm**, at St. Mary in the Parish Center — discussion on how St. Paul's letters apply to our lives today. For info contact: eugeneyoungadults@gmail.com or 541-270-9329 or [facebook.com/EugeneCYA](https://www.facebook.com/EugeneCYA). ALSO — Theology on Tap **every 2nd Thursday** at the K of C Hall.

UPCOMING RETREATS:

WOMEN'S PRAYER DAY — Offered at St. Benedict Lodge (McKenzie Bridge, OR), on **March 6th, 9:30am—4:00pm**. Theme: Lent—Our Joy, with presenter Linda Beach. Cost is \$15, and includes morning snack & lunch. To reserve your spot, call St. Benedict Lodge (541-822-3572), or Linda (541-747-1064), or email to: sblodge@opwest.org.

..... **HOLY WEEK RETREAT** — Also at St. Benedict Lodge, **March 29th (begins with dinner) — April 1st at noon**. Cost is \$125/person for a private room or \$90/person with double occupancy — \$30/person deposit required with registration. For info: 541-822-3572 or website (www.sblodge.opwest.org). Address for St. Benedict Lodge: 56630 North Bank Rd, McKenzie Bridge, OR 97413.

 **40 DAYS FOR LIFE**. You are invited to join other Christians for **40 Days for Life** campaign of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion, from **February 14th** (Ash Wednesday) through **March 25th** (Palm Sunday). There is also a peaceful prayer vigil during this 40-day campaign, in the public right-of-way in front of the Planned Parenthood facility (3579 Franklin Blvd). There will be a 'kick-off' Mass for this campaign on **Feb. 13**, 6:00pm, at St. Mary church (1062 Charnelton) — please join us! For info, or to volunteer, contact Eileen at 541-543-7168 (or email to: etmoregon@yahoo.com); website is: 40DaysforLife.com/Eugene.

FAITH SERIES: CATECHISM THROUGH THE YEAR

WHY DO CATHOLICS GENUFLECT?

Solomon was the most glorious and powerful king the nation of Israel ever knew. Not only his subjects, but foreign visitors, as well, would have knelt whenever they came into his presence. In the ancient world, that was the universally recognized posture of reverence and submission.

According to 2 Chronicles, when Solomon entered the temple he had built, this great king, himself, knelt down before God's altar (6:12-13). He recognized that he was in the presence of the King of kings, the all-powerful, all-glorious, Ruler of the universe.

Today, our culture tends to scoff at the notion that anyone should ever kneel. To many, the gesture is a quaint leftover from medieval times, an act that is somehow beneath our modern dignity. But Catholics recognize that God is still God, and that "every knee should bend, / of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, / and every tongue confess that / Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil 2:10-11). So, Catholics count it a privilege to kneel before him, because he is worthy of our reverence and submission.

Jesus is present in his precious body and blood, soul and divinity, in the Eucharist. So when Catholics come before the tabernacle in a church, where the Eucharist is reserved, they genuflect, bending the right knee to the floor and then rising. In this way, they imitate the faith of the holy women who embraced Jesus' feet, upon encountering him on their way to tell the disciples he had risen from the dead: "Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to his disciples. And behold, Jesus met them on their way and greeted them. They approached, embraced his feet, and did him homage (Mt 28:9-10). Their gesture gives glory, not only to God the Son, but to God the Father, as well (Phil 2:11).

RECOMMENDED READING: Excerpt taken from The NEW Catholic Answer Bible

Ps 95:6-7 · Mt 2:11; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 20:20 · Lk 24:52 · Jn 9:38 · Rv 5:8 ·

& Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) No. 1378 ·