

CCD Happenings

February/March
2015
Issue 4

The Church of St. John and St. Mary Chappaqua, NY

As parents of young children know, Lent can seem so "heavy" in comparison to the anticipation and excitement of preparing for Christmas. What can this season of conversion and preparation "to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed" mean for children?

For many of us growing up, Lent meant "giving up candy." That wasn't a bad way to introduce us to the notion of self-discipline, but simply giving up something for Lent, without a whole spirituality that children can enter into, can leave kids dreading Lent more than looking forward to it.

The first and most important help for children is that we as adults understand Lent and enter into it ourselves with real devotion and joy. If Lent makes its way into our home and into our conversations and practices that children can see, they will naturally grow up in a culture that embraces Lent as a season of grace.

Depending upon the age of our children, we can have the older children help the younger children with Lent. A family "meeting" could be scheduled each week, in which we could say a prayer, and then plan out what each person in the family can do in the upcoming week, to help the whole family out. For example, each child could be assigned one *small* "duty" to do, to help out the family this week. It could be an ordinary household chore, or it could be to draw a symbol for our Lenten journey - a picture of the people crossing the Red Sea, Jesus' baptism, his or her own baptism, one of us in the family when we are sad and when we are happy.

Perhaps at this family meeting, the family plan for eating during Lent could be discussed. How will we abstain from meat this coming Friday? Why are we

doing it? One idea is to volunteer at a food pantry preparing or serving meals. This kind of family Lenten practice can transform a child's experience of the special power of Lent.

Children are naturally loving, but sometimes they can get into bad habits like fighting with brothers and sisters or being disobedient and talking back. Lent

is a great time to build family practices, which can also be an outstanding renewal for the parents and older children in the family. If we choose to "fast" from crabby-ness, complement each other and spend more time with our children, they will notice and take part in the kindness. And if we fail on a given day, we can quickly apologize and ask for forgiveness, a behavior that is central to Lent.

Finally, the most important days to prepare children for are Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday - the three days Lent builds up to. It would be wonderful to prepare children for the great liturgies these days. In this spirit, every family can do something to make Lent special for their children!



(Online Ministries, Creighton University)

SAVE THE DATE

- Lenten Fish Dinner, March 20th, 7 pm
- Monthly Birthday Mass March 22nd, 10 am
- Palm Sunday, Sunday March 29th
- March 30-April 5 Spring Break/ No CCD Classes

CCD Pick-Up

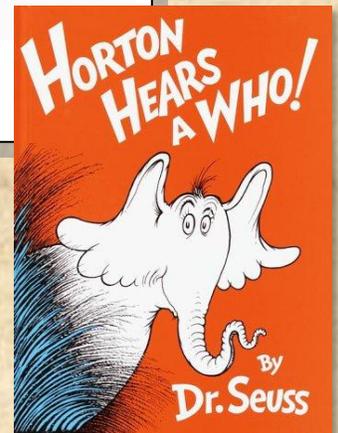
Parents we ask that you be mindful of our dismissal time. We have had a number of students here past our 4:45 pm dismissal time. We ask that if you know you are going to be a few minutes late or if you are stuck in traffic to please give us a call at 238-3696 so that we can let your child know you are on your way!

Second Grade Mass



On Sunday, February 8th, we celebrated and prayed for the second graders as they prepared to receive their First Penance. They worked very hard to prepare for this special sacrament. In the coming months they will focus on preparing for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion.

A big thank you to Deacon Charlie for his wonderful homily. Dr. Seuss was a big hit with parishioners "big" and "small!"



If your child is interested in joining the Children's Choir, please contact our Music Director, Kyle Mange at kylemange@hotmail.com



Living in Easter Joy

After the Last Supper, we know what happens next: Jesus is arrested, put on trial before Pontius Pilate, and sentenced to death. But we know that this is not the end of the story. On Easter morning, the stone was rolled away, and Jesus was risen! And Jesus still lives with us today, whenever we hear his Word, share his story, and celebrate him in the Eucharist. We have walked through Lent together with Jesus. We recognize his stories as our stories—stories we don't simply read about but participate in by using our imagination. These stories bring us closer to Jesus and give us promise and joy. May Jesus Christ continue to inspire us and transform us as children of God. ■