

A NOTE FROM FATHER EICKHOFF

We have begun the Season of Lent. You might wonder why I keep on writing “the Season of Lent.” Is it to pad my word count on my bulletin articles? Maybe. Or perhaps it is to recognize that there is an important meaning behind the words “the Season of Lent” that the single word “Lent” just doesn’t cover in enough detail.

When we speak of “the Season of Lent,” we immediately recognize that a significant period of time will be taking place. Lent is not just one day or one week. A short period of time that will quickly come and go. Rather, the Season of Lent will be staying with us for quite a while. This long period of time gives us the chance to truly plan out how we can improve our relationship with God and to put those plans into effect. During the Season of Lent we should be thinking of what we can do to improve our relationship with God. How can we do this?

The first step is to pray. By this I mean take some time – a few minutes is a good start – and turn off all the distractions around you. Turn off the TV, turn off the phone, turn off the computer. You get the idea. Instead of being distracted by all the busyness around you focus on asking God to aid you in getting through the day. Ask the Lord for help, for inspiration in dealing with all of your difficulties. Ask the Lord to point out to you those occasions where you did right by God and your neighbors. And ask the Lord to point out to you those occasions where you did wrong. Ask the Lord to help you do right in the future and avoid the wrong. This prayer needs to be done not just once or twice during the Season of Lent, but rather it needs to be carried out throughout the Lent season.

The second step is to make right your relationship with God. Our relationship with God is built on our responding to God’s call to be disciples of Jesus Christ. These responses are based in the small things that we do on a daily basis such as an act of kindness towards another person or taking those few minutes to pray. These responses also include those actions that we do to mark us out both publicly (such as ashes on Ash Wednesday) or in private (such as abstaining from meat on Fridays). The times of fasting and abstaining from food or meat during Lent is a way of strengthening our relationship with God. They mark a dedication we make to be disciples of Jesus not just in promise, but also in deed.

The third step is to make right any broken parts of your relationship with God by going to confession. Confessions are heard at St. Anne on Wednesday evening between 7pm and 8pm and on Saturday afternoons from 3.30pm and 4.30pm. There will also be a special opportunity for confession on Sunday, March 5th beginning at 4pm. A large number of priests will be coming to help hear confessions on that day.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Eickhoff
Pastor