







Dear Friends,

Lent will soon be upon us. Ash Wednesday is February 14 and our theme this year is "Love for Others." It is also the title of our Capital Campaign to raise funds to build our new Food Pantry. On the weekend of February 10-11 we will have an Open House of the Food Pantry to see "what is" and "what will be" come and see!

Please join me in prayer during this holy season, so that we may be inspired to embrace more fully, the person of Jesus who said, "Love one another, as I have loved you." (John 13:34) The Greek word used for love in this passage, is *agape* which means profound sacrificial love. During this season, we Pray, Fast and Give Alms. It is penitential season where we examine our conscience and ask God's forgiveness, for those times we have not loved God, neighbor, or ourselves properly. *Agape* love

calls us to compassion, mercy and forgiveness.

This Lent, we will reflect on the significance of the Eucharist in our lives. God's sacrificial love for us. We believe that the Holy Eucharist is the true Body and Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus. On June 19, 2022, on the Feast of Corpus Christi the Catholic Church in United States launched a three year Eucharistic Revival. This revival will lead to the 10th National Eucharistic Congress on July 17-21, 2024, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

In the spirit of the Eucharistic revival, we are grateful to parishioners who have made the book *Beautiful Eucharist*, by Matthew Kelly, available to us for Lent. A short description of the book reads: "*Beautiful Eucharist* is a stunning collection of lifechanging reflections about Jesus truly present in the Eucharist and wonderfully present in our lives. The world needs the healing

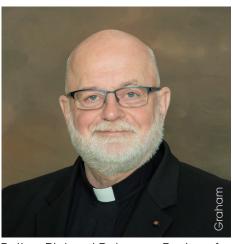
and hope only Jesus can provide. He is waiting in the Eucharist to transform families, churches, communities, and the culture as a whole."



Also, on Saturday April 13, the Women's Ministry will host a Eucharistic Retreat from 9:00 am-2:00 pm in the church and Parish Activity Center. Save the date and plan to join us!

May we grow in our "Love for Others" in Jesus!

Father Rich



Father Richard Roberge, Pastor of Christ the King Parish



Crack, came the undeniable sound of something hard slamming against some other thing that was also hard. "AAHHHH!" Harry's signature call when he feels he's been wronged, he doesn't want to eat his vegetables, or his life is in mortal danger. Something about the immediacy in which the wail followed the crack and the frequency of this particular wail made my mama-senses tingle. This one was serious.

Just as the tingling began, out rang Jack's panicked voice, "MOM! MOM! He's bleeding! I'm so sorry, Harry! It was an accident, Mom! I'm so sorry, Harry!" I ran into my bedroom where Jack and Harry were horsing around, but now Jack was holding Harry's head, his hand spattered with blood. As I turned to look at Harry and examine the damage, Jack quickly explained that they were playing around and Harry's head caught the corner of a low lying window-sill.

As I pulled Harry close to my body and covered the cut with my own hand, I said with a calm that surpasses all understanding, "Boys, I think we need to go to the emergency room." No sooner did the words leave my mouth than all the brothers simultaneously sprang into action, each doing something to help the smallest among them.

Charlie held Harry's hand, Cooper got rags, and Jack got Harry's coat and shoes.

In C.S. Lewis' book *The Four Loves*, Lewis dives into four kinds of love described in Greek thought: *storge* (meaning affection), *philia* (friendship), *eros* (romantic love), and *agape* (selfless love). Amidst the chaos of a child getting his head cut open by a bear-hugwrestle-to-the-ground move by an older brother, I believe I witnessed, on some level, three of these four loves in action.

This accident happened one morning during Christmas vacation. Cooper was playing piano and Charlie was building with Legos. These leisurely activities were immediately abandoned without a second thought. When Jack saw how Harry was hurt, he didn't concern himself with how he might get in trouble, but instead abandoned all selfish thought and looked only to helping Harry. The way the three older boys rallied around Harry during this whole kerfuffle was truly a gift to behold.

We all piled into the Suburban, and as I started to drive, I had only one concern: to get quickly and safely to Urgent Care. Cooper holding a rag, applying pressure to Harry's head in the backseat, said, "Shall we pray?" "Of course!" I replied. I was nearly moved to tears to hear all my boys simultaneously begin our usual morning prayer. This movement to prayer added such an element of peace to what could've been a stressful situation.

All in all, Harry was a total trooper as he received three stitches that day. Over dinner that night as we were reviewing and discussing the day, the overarching theme was the faith and strong love that my boys displayed for each other.

Father Mike Schmitz in a recent podcast episode was talking about the love of Christ. He said, "We have to live with the love with which we have been loved." I'm proud to say that that day, my boys did just that. †



Jen Albee, Coordinator of Young Disciples at Christ the King

Why do we fast?

During this month of February, we will begin the liturgical season of Lent. As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops tells us, "Lent is a 40-day season of **prayer**, **fasting**, **and almsgiving**... a period of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter." While each of these Lenten practices is invaluable, for this month's *Come Alive*, we're going to explore fasting – when, how, and why do we fast?

During Lent, we are called to fast in two different ways. The first is a very literal fast from food on two significant Holy Days. The USCCB explains, "Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics.... The norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal." It wasn't until adulthood that I became aware that more was expected of Catholics on these days than simply abstaining from meat – and it can be a challenge trying to work out exactly what the conditions above mean within your circumstances. As always, however, what is most important is willingness to rely on God and offer him our discomfort.

Holding that in mind, we come to the second way we are called to fast during Lent. We are challenged to fast from or "give up" pieces of our daily lives. The stereotypical Lenten sacrifices are giving up sweet treats or your daily coffee. However, I often encourage people to look deeper. While all sacrifices are powerful and it is always good to push ourselves out of our comfort zone, I like to

consider what in my life is keeping me from a deeper relationship with God. Perhaps we find ourselves scrolling on social media or playing an online game before bed, rather than turning to prayer. Maybe we are prioritizing our work or the family schedule over making time for God or attending Mass. Or there might even be things in our lives that lead us towards sin. Prayerfully ask God to show you what you are being called to fast from this Lent.

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But why fasting? Why is it that we are called to fast during Lent as we prepare for the Passion of our Lord? Fasting allows us to practice self-discipline and self-control, important virtues of the Christian life. Discipline can often be viewed through a negative lens, but without discipline of ourselves — our thoughts, our words, and our appetites — we cannot live a holy life. Additionally, as we've already said, fasting makes us aware of our total reliance on God.

While fasting during Lent is familiar and commonplace, the truth is that we are called to fast every Friday, year-round! Allow me to share an excerpt from an article written by our own Jen Albee! "According to the Code of Canon Law, all Catholics who are able should fast and abstain [from meat] on Fridays throughout the year to commemorate Christ's Passion, except when a solemnity (a feast day of the highest rank) falls on that day." This always stands out to me because in society today, Friday is a day of celebration. We often have special food, dessert, or drinks to acknowledge the conclusion of the week. TGIF and all! However, this is a place where we as Catholics can stand apart from secular society. Consider what would be a sacrifice for you to give up every Friday and practice self-discipline and reliance on the Lord!

I'd like to end with the words of our Lord Jesus when He entered into fasting and prayer for forty days and nights before beginning his public ministry. Let us hold these words in our heart as we fast this Lent and beyond! "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:1-11) †



Haley Judd, Coordinator of Adult Discipleship at Christ the King



There is something remarkable about listening to someone speak of their passion, their God-given calling in life. As Sister Melinda delights me with stories and anecdotes of her long career as a teacher, her passion is palpable. Next to her, on the table, sits a thick, well-worn notebook, with notes and pictures protruding out on all sides. "My bible," she says, lightheartedly. Inside are memories of her years teaching and class lists full of names, so many names representing so many lives that crossed with Sister Melinda's, even if just for one school year.

Sister Melinda Hill, RSM, was born and raised in Concord, New Hampshire, and continues to reside here today. Her love for this city is evident. She describes a wonderful childhood with her mother and father, two brothers, and two sisters. "We were poor but happy," Sister Melinda says, "Growing up, I loved life and I was involved in lots of things." She even attended and graduated from Saint John's School, where one day she would return as a teacher.

When I ask what led her to religious life, Sister Melinda chuckles and says, of course, "God! While at St. John's, I was approached by Sister Brigid, one of my teachers. She was a Sister of Mercy and she said she believed I had a calling to religious vocation and to her order. I was floored and flabbergasted!" But she found herself eager to share this information with her family whom she did not think would agree with Sister Brigid. Instead, when she gathered her courage and opened up, her father cried happy tears and supported her exploration of this calling.

Sister Melinda continued to struggle with doubt regarding her

vocation. She was open to the will of God and so found herself driving along I-93 praying for a sign. "Send me an eagle!" she begged God. Suddenly, a car appeared in front of her with the license plate "Eagle." Nearly driving off the road, she knew God had answered her prayer.

But the question remained of which order she was to enter. Sister Melinda's parents were heavily involved with the Carmelite Monastery in Concord (that only recently closed its doors). In light of this, they urged her to meet with Sister Margaret Mary, the prioress there, and to consider the Carmelite Order. In one of her meetings with Sister Margaret Mary, the wise woman told her, after a long, agonizing silence for Sister Melinda, "You will make a wonderful Sister of Mercy, but you will go with a Carmelite heart." And so, Sister Melinda would join the Sisters of Mercy.

The Sisters of Mercy website provides a great summary of the order's charism: an international community of Roman Catholic women who dedicate their lives to the Gospel of Jesus. Inspired by the life of Jesus and by their founder Catherine McAuley, they envision a just world for people who are economically poor, sick and uneducated. These remarkable women take four vows upon entering religious life; the traditional vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience are completed with a fourth vow to care for the poor, the sick, and the uneducated.

Sister Melinda professed her perpetual vows after nine years of preparation on May 12, 1972. "To this day, I am so delighted to be a Sister of Mercy," she says.

Even within the vocation of religious life, there was still discernment about what work she would do. Originally, Sister Melinda had every intention of becoming a nurse, but all that changed when she stepped foot inside a school and fell in love with teaching, a love that endures to this day. She received a bachelor's degree in elementary education, followed by a master's degree in early childhood education. She also studied Catholic school administration at Boston College. as later in her career she served as principal of West Side Catholic School in Manchester for nine vears. But she found her niche in teaching the first grade, which she taught for a total of 27 years divided among six schools, including eight years at her almamater Saint John School here in Concord.

Sister Melinda shares that many of her classes averaged 45-50 kids and she often taught in poor schools and neighborhoods. Too often, the children that came to her classroom were not well educated in the past. "There was a young boy who came to my first grade class not knowing his colors. I asked him to help me sort some buttons so he could learn his colors and not be embarrassed."

She tells of another little boy who grew up in great poverty, often dumpster-diving for food. "Years later, I ran into that young man on the day he received a full scholarship to college. He told me that I was the first person to ever tell him that he was smart and that those words encouraged him in his education," she says. Similarly, Sister Melinda recently ran into a 55-year-old former student at a funeral who approached her to share how she had touched his heart and that she was still his "favorite teacher" after all these years. With each story she tells, it becomes ever more apparent that God created her for this purpose.

Outside of academic teaching, Sister Melinda has also served the local community in many ways. After her time as principal



of West Side Catholic, Sister Melinda went back to school and received her certificate as an Activity Professional from St. Joseph Hospital. She was hired by Birch Hill Terrace in Hooksett and spent 10 years there ministering to those living with Alzheimer's. "To this day, because of this work, I am a more compassionate, caring person. In truth, I am a better person. As a group and as individuals, they taught me never to hesitate to tell people they are special and loved," Sister Melinda shares.

Sister Melinda also passionately speaks of her work with the Manchester Immigration Project (MIP), which continues to this day. At the MIP, she and other volunteers watch two- to fouryear-olds for their mothers, while they learn English or run errands, since it can be a challenge for many immigrants to find or afford childcare. Sister Melinda can also regularly be found on the campus of Christ the King Parish. She volunteers with the Hospitality Ministry, serves as a Eucharistic Minister, works at the Christ the King Food Pantry, and is a member of the Handbell Choir.

While the many ways Sister Melinda has served and currently



serves the Church and local community are incredibly impressive, I find myself most impacted by her vivid memories of her students. She holds them so clearly in her mind and heart that I sit across from her wishing I had been lucky enough to be one of her flock. In fact, Sister Melinda shares with me that each day, she randomly opens her book of love, her "bible," and prays for the class and the children-no-more that God leads her to. Her love for her students, from the first to the last, is on-going and a true joy to behold. †



Chrissy Almanzar and Cheryl
Correllus serve the parishioners of
Christ the King Parish with their
work in the Meals Ministry. If
you have ever been to an Alpha or
Emmaus session, or have attended
any other event in the Parish
Activity Center where a meal was
served, you have encountered
the work that the Meals Ministry
does. When asked to describe the
experience of serving in the Meals
Ministry, Cheryl says, "Well, first
of all, we have fun!"

Both Chrissy and Cheryl are motivated by a devout belief in Jesus and a strong desire to serve others. Chrissy converted to the Catholic faith as an adult, inspired in part by her encounter with scripture during college. "I wasn't brought up Christian or Catholic," she says. "I converted to Christianity when I was 18 after I left home, and I became a Catholic through my studies in 2009." What was particularly influential in this decision was a close study of the Old Testament. "Learning Hebrew and Jewish Studies opened my eyes to the connection between Old Testament religion and Catholic distinctives."

Cheryl is a lifelong Catholic. She was a parishioner at St. Peter's Parish. Ever since the parish was merged with others to form Christ the King Parish, Cheryl says, "I've been trying to be a very active parishioner. I try to go to church everyday as church is my safe place spending time with Our Lord which is always the start of a wonderful day. I try to do lots of things for others." Her service in the Meals Ministry is a big part of what she does for others.

Chrissy's work in the Meals Ministry involves organization and coordination of the ministry, making sure that volunteers are available for specific events where meals are requested and scheduling them accordingly. Chrissy lives about 25 minutes from the parish and has a busy family life of her own. "We have five kids and one car!" However, she is still able to serve the parish in a very important way, ensuring that the Meals Ministry is able to be there whenever it is needed.

Cheryl, along with Maria Aubrey, focuses on leading the volunteers in cooking the meals. When a meal is requested through the

parish office for an event or a bereavement meal, it is prepared and served by the Meals Ministry. Cheryl and Maria plan the menu, purchase the ingredients, and organize the cooks to prepare the meal.

Both Chrissy and Cheryl have found that their service in the Meals Ministry has elevated their faith. "The Catechism tells us that true joy comes from the works of mercy," says Chrissy, referring to the corporal works of mercy, of which feeding the hungry is a part. "When I'm doing something for others where I know that they need my help and I'm able to offer it – that's an important part of not only being joyful, but also growing in faith."

Cheryl's view is similar. "The Lord wants us to help others," she says, "and feed them like he fed them." Chrissy and Cheryl show how the work of the Meals Ministry has benefited those who serve in the ministry as much as those who have been served by it, and they are always looking for new volunteers to join them. As Chrissy puts it: "Step up, we need your help!" †

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2024

February 7: Adoration

Come for an hour of adoration every Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 pm in the church. All are welcome! Come for a few minutes or stay for the whole hour.

February 9 & 11: Emmaus

Emmaus is a place where every disciple of Christ of every age can come and grow deeper in their Catholic faith. This month, we will discuss "The Conversion of the Baptized: The Sacrament of Reconciliation." For more information, visit

christthekingnh.org/emmaus.



February 14: Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is a day of fasting and abstinence, meaning a person should eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal as well as eating no meat. This is **not** a holy day of obligation. Mass and distribution of ashes will be available at 9:00 am, 12:10 pm, and 7:00 pm.

February 16: Fridays in Lent

During Fridays in Lent, we are asked to abstain from meat. "From the first century, the day of the crucifixion has been traditionally observed as a day of abstaining from flesh meat to honor Christ who sacrificed his flesh on a Friday." (Catholic Source Book)

February 16: Stations of the Cross

Stations of the Cross will be prayed in the church at 5:30 pm every Friday during Lent.

February 19: President's Day The parish office will be closed in

The parish office will be closed in observance of the holiday.

MARCH 2024

March 8 & 10: Emmaus

This month, we will discuss "Christ the Physician: The Anointing of the Sick." For more information, visit **christthekingnh.org/emmaus**.

March 25: Day of Reconciliation

On the Monday of Holy Week, Father Rich will offer additional confession times. Confessions will be heard in the church confessional at 11:00 am-12:00 pm, 1:00-2:00 pm, and 5:00-7:00 pm.

March 27: Tenebrae Service

Tenebrae means "darkness" and refers to the singing of the Divine Office in the days leading up to Easter Sunday. We will hold our Tenebrae Service at 7:30 pm in the church. Reading and psalms, along with music pieces, will help you to prayerfully prepare for the Triduum.

March 28: Holy Thursday

Today, we commemorate the Last Supper of Jesus Christ. Mass is available at 7:00 pm in the church. After Mass, adoration will be available until 10:00 pm in the Parish Activity Center.

March 29: Good Friday

On Good Friday, we gather to commemorate the Crucifixion and Death of Jesus Christ. At 12:10 pm, Stations of the Cross will be prayed in the church. Services will be offered at 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm in the church. Good Friday is a day of fast and abstinence, meaning a person should eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal as well as eating no meat.

March 30: Easter Vigil

Tonight, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Easter Vigil will be at 8:00 pm in the church.

March 31: Easter Sunday

Today, we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Mass will be available in the church at 7:00 am, 9:00 am, and 11:00 am.

APRIL 2024

April 13: Eucharistic Revival Retreat

Join us for the Eucharistic Revival Retreat with the Sisters of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Healing Love. The retreat will be held on Saturday, April 13, from 8:30 am-2:00 pm at Christ the King Parish. \$5 registration fee. A light lunch will be included. For more information, email ctkwwwp20@gmail.com.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

February 3 & 4:

Food Pantry (Parish) Catholic School Education (Diocese)

February 10 & 11:

Fuel & Utilities (Parish)

February 14 - Ash Wednesday:

Churches in Eastern Europe and Churches in Africa (National)

February 17 & 18:

Maintenance (Parish)

February 24 & 25:

no special collection

CONTACT INFO







Christ the King Parish

72 South Main Street, Concord, NH 03301 603.224.2328 | christthekingnh.org

Weekend Masses

Sat: 4:00 pm | Sun: 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 11:00 am

Weekday Masses

Mon, Wed, Fri: 12:10 pm | Thurs: 5:30 pm

Confession/Reconciliation

Thurs: 4:45-5:15 pm | Sat: 2:30-3:30 pm

Pastor:

Father Rich Roberge, frrich@christthekingnh.org

Winton DeRosia, deaconwinton@christthekingnh.org

Director of Parish Life:

Cynthia Tokos, cynthia@christthekingnh.org

Bookkeeper:

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Coordinator of Young Disciples:

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Director of Music Ministry:

Michelle Dokka, michelled@christthekingnh.org

Facilitator of Community Engagement:

Jeff Litchfield, jeff@christthekingnh.org

Parish Secretary:

Kathy Planchet, kathy@christthekingnh.org





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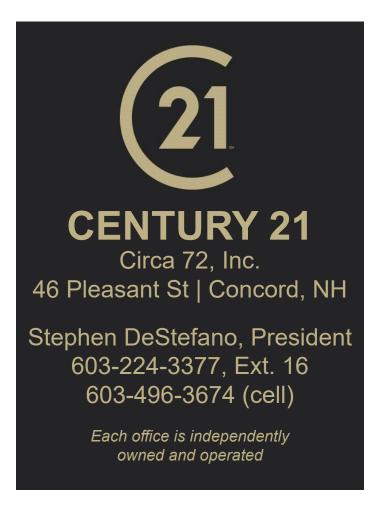
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	12/24/23	12/25/23	12/31/23	1/7/24
Offertory	\$21,415.00	\$11,893.00	\$15,496.00	\$16,179.00
Online	\$7,047.77	\$2,103.28	\$5,060.17	\$11,426.29
Total	\$28,462.77	\$13,996.28	\$20,556.17	\$27,605.29



For more information on the parish's online giving program, visit christthekingnh.org/give. To request monthly parish envelopes in the mail, call Kathy Planchet, Parish Secretary, in the parish office at 603.224.2328.

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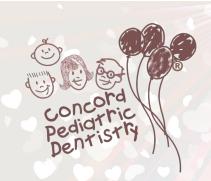
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