



Cathedral WEEKLY

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

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Cathedral WEEKLY

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Mass Times: Saturday - 4:00pm; Sunday - 7:00am, 10:00am, & 5:00pm
Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday - 7:00am & 5:15pm; Saturday - 8:00am
Reconciliation: Monday through Friday - 4:15pm-5:00pm; Saturday - 9:00am-10:00am & 2:30pm-3:30pm; Sunday - 4:00pm-4:45pm
Adoration: Tuesday & Thursday - 4:00pm to 5:00pm

Diocesan Victim Assistance is available. For the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, please contact: Patricia Kornfield at 321-1155.

Please remember that if you or a loved one is in the hospital, a nursing home or home-bound, to contact the Parish offices or Sr. Francella at 217-522-3342 x 142.

Welcome to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception!

On behalf of our bishop, the Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki, our parishioners, deacons, and priests, I welcome you to the mother church of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

The seat of the diocese was moved to Springfield from Alton in 1923. In the same year, "Old St. Mary's" church of Immaculate Conception Parish was named as the pro-cathedral of the new diocese until this cathedral church was built and dedicated in 1928. Currently, our diocese comprises twenty-eight counties in central Illinois, serving over 140,000 members of the Catholic faithful.

I hope that your visit to our Cathedral is one of grace and beauty and that you feel at home in the mother church. I also hope that you will find this edition of the *Cathedral Weekly* to be both informative and spiritually enriching. May God bless you and yours!



Very Reverend Christopher A. House
Rector



Answering the Call

Next Sunday, Jesus's ministry reaches its earthly climax with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem marking the beginning of Holy Week. Today's Gospel, as recorded by St. John, provides an impetus for the fervor of the crowd as Jesus performs arguably his greatest sign in raising Lazarus from the dead. This Gospel stands out as a beautiful demonstration of the reality of Jesus Christ being both God and man.

Jesus comes to Bethany at the request of his friends. Martha and Mary have sent Him word that Lazarus their brother is gravely ill. Jesus comes to Bethany, though later than Martha and Mary had hoped for, and finds that Lazarus is dead, in fact he has been buried for four days. At the reality of Lazarus's death and the grief of Martha and Mary, John records for us that Jesus weeps. This is a detail that we cannot simply pass over. It is important for us to see that Jesus truly did assume our human nature and that, like us, he was affected by the tragedies and sorrows of life.

Here we see how wondrously our shared human nature is joined in Jesus to the divinity of His person. Jesus comes to Lazarus's tomb and, over protestations, asks that the stone be rolled away. In what must have been an astonishing moment, Jesus then calls Lazarus forth from the darkness of the tomb and back to life, showing that He truly is the Lord of life.

In these days late Lenten days, as we prepare to enter into Passiontide, we need to remember that Jesus Christ both shares in our human trials and at the same time offers us the grace to be lifted above them. Jesus is no stranger to frustration, disappointment, uncertainty, and even fear. He truly is one with us in all things but sin. At the same time, He is the God who is calling us out of darkness and beyond our fears into light and hope.

As we face the on-going challenges and uncertainty of this pandemic, we wonder when is it going to end, how might things change, and/or what am I going to lose? Remember Jesus's words when Lazarus came forth from tomb, wrapped in burial cloths: *untie him and let him go*. Jesus makes this same command regarding our fears, uncertainty, and doubts, but we also have to be willing to let them go.

Easter is set. There is no moving it. There is no stopping the coming of the feast. We may not be able to celebrate these coming days as we would like but our present challenges do not change the reality of Holy Week and Easter, that Christ has died, risen, and will come again. In fact, He is coming to us each day, calling us out of the tombs of doubt, uncertainty, fear, and our sinfulness. He is calling each of us by name; do not let His call go unanswered.

Father Christopher House is the Rector of the Cathedral and serves in various leadership roles within the diocesan curia, namely Chancellor and Vicar Judicial.

Sunday Reflection

Dying with Christ; Dying to Self

Even when his friends are disappointed with him and his disciples misunderstand him, Jesus is clear and resolute. No one's death is everlasting. We believe that just as Baptism graces us with new life in Christ, physical death transmits us to newer life with God for ever.

- What "death" is sucking the life out of me? What will I do about it?
- What will I do, as one loved by Christ beyond all measure, for those in need of mercy works?
- How will I be a sign of Christ-filled life for the elect preparing for Easter Baptism?



How to Trust God When You're Filled With Doubt and Disappointment

Like so many high school seniors, I had a plan for how the rest of my life would go. Since eighth grade, I had been completely in love with the idea of attending the U.S.

Naval Academy. I felt a call to serve God by serving my country. I spent my last year and a half of high school applying to get in, forming my academic schedule around the classes the selection committee encouraged, and choosing my extracurriculars accordingly. I made it to the last stage of the application process and then, suddenly, didn't get in. After stretching myself thin and shaping my life to be the perfect applicant, the plans I had made fell apart.

When the rejection email came, I was sitting in my blue Prius in the parking lot at the gym, listening to a Christian radio station.

After I read the email, I turned the radio off. I had been praying so fiercely for so long. I prayed that I would attend the U.S. Naval Academy. I prayed for the wisdom to know if this was where God wanted me to go. Through all of this prayer, I genuinely believed that God's will was for me to be accepted. So when the rejection came, I felt like God had disappointed me. I immediately began trembling and tears filled my eyes. In a moment of pure reflex, I called my mom and told her what happened. She kept her voice steady and reassuring, but I knew she had started crying too.



Before pulling out of that parking lot to go home, I turned the Christian radio station back on. It didn't seem very significant at the moment, but in retrospect, it was a step toward deciding that I wouldn't give up on God because of my disappointment, but instead lean into him.

The months that followed were difficult. I didn't really have time to process any of the disappointment and confusion I was feeling. I had one month to choose a college. Even though my own plans were derailed and my heart was broken, I could still feel that God was present. As I shared the news that I didn't get in, I was treated with tender compassion and sympathy. Friends sat with me in the library for hours, making lists of pros and cons at new schools and brainstorming career paths. Even friends whom I hadn't seen in months were sympathetic and supportive. With only two weeks left to spare, I chose Siena College as my destination for the fall. Sitting in the car with my mom, driving home from my last college visit, I was suddenly overcome with this feeling that God wanted me to go to Siena. I couldn't quite explain it, and while there were several things I really did like

about the school, the feeling that God wanted me there helped me make my final decision.

With every new day at Siena, I find another reason why I'm meant to be here. During orientation weekend, I met Sam, who has now been my best friend and my boyfriend for a year. He supported me through a very difficult freshman year, filled with family deaths, depression, and other challenges. Along with Sam and other new friends, Siena has given me the opportunity to grow in my faith and to continually discern what God wants me to do in the future. After having a concrete plan for so long, I'm finally able to be okay with not knowing exactly what's coming next. I've learned that when I feel lost, God knows where he's leading me, and that God will put people in my path to help me along the way. By trusting in God, I was able to find joy in the present moment and plan for the future while surrendering it to his will, *and truly meaning it*. Today, as I'm making a new plan for the future, I find joy in taking hikes with my family, in the relationship I'm building with Sam, and in the friendships I've made at Siena.

Recently, I was at Sunday Mass when one of the readings was about the healing of Jairus' daughter in the Gospel of Mark. In this reading, Jesus says to the little girl in need of healing, "*Talitha kum*," meaning "*Little girl, I say to you, arise*." This line struck a chord with me. It brought me back to how I felt last year when the time came for me to pack up and leave for college. I felt like Jesus was standing by my bedside as I laid there helplessly, unable to move. I still didn't feel like I was ready to move on from the heartbreak

of being denied from the Naval Academy; I hadn't even been able to process the loss fully. I felt as though I couldn't try again or stand without fear of falling and at that moment, Jesus said to me, "*Talitha kum*." Even though I couldn't see the path ahead, I felt God was guiding me where I needed to go.

In my rejection from my dream school, God didn't give me the answer I preferred, but it was the answer I needed. It's incredible to look back and see that had *my* plans worked out, I would most likely have never met my community of friends at Siena. I've had opportunities that I never would have had otherwise. My experience has taught me that it's okay to make plans, but it's even better to make them with an attitude of surrender. And if those plans don't work out, I know that God will be there to remind me, "*Talitha kum*."

Kelsey Baron enjoys writing about her faith and speaking on the subject of chastity. In her free time, she can be found hosting friends at her family's house on Lake Wallenpaupack, rocking her Birkenstocks around Siena College, and praising God through song on her ukulele.



5 Creative Ways to Bring Lent Practices to Life

In the past, I never paid much attention to Lent. The little I *had* heard about this season in the Church just led me to believe that Lent was a time of personal austerity, when you weren't supposed to enjoy things

(especially chocolate!). It seemed to me that Lent was mainly about following outward restrictions. But in the last couple of years as I've drawn deeper into my faith, I've begun to realize that Lent is an important season that prepares us spiritually for the joy of Easter. Of course, sacrificing a favorite food or pastime and giving to others during Lent are important ways to engage with the themes of the season, and I'll try to do both this year.

However, I'm learning that it's not so much about following the same rituals year after year, but about opening ourselves to an increased understanding of the true meaning of the crucifixion and the resurrection, and sharing that with others. So by adding a deeper spiritual dimension and creativity to my Lent practices, I feel that my preparations during Lent will enhance the celebration of Easter and all that it means.

And nowadays there are many creative ways to recognize Lent. Last year, I was given two huge (and delicious) cakes, both from kind church friends who'd each decided to bake a cake every day during Lent and give it away. This was their way of giving something to others as a reminder of how God loves us. So, this year I've decided to pay more attention to Lent as a season of repentance and renewal. I've been looking for more creative ways to bring Lent to life in my daily devotions. If you're considering what to do during Lent, these ideas might inspire you.

Make your own cross

Making a cross to act as a centerpiece for prayer and worship can actually be quite an easy craft. It can be as simple as binding two pieces of stick together and hanging it on the wall or displaying it in a prominent position. A cross made from recycled materials can look very beautiful, like one made from clothespins, and the whole family can get involved in prayerfully crafting one for your home. If you're keen on DIY, you could make a more sophisticated cross, such as one made from different colored woods. Or consider a fabric cross, like a stunning patchwork cross, or perhaps embroider a stitched cross.

A couple of years back, my adult daughter took part in a "Peaced Together" course, focusing on how beauty can come out of brokenness. One week, she made a stunning mosaic cross from crockery shards. It reminded her that even though she'd been through some difficult times and was in some ways "broken," beauty could still shine through.

Meditate with symbols of the season

Having a focus for prayer, Bible reading and meditation can be very helpful. *Lent in a Bag* is a perfect example. This set of meditations features a rock, sand, a human figure and a candle

placed in a fabric, paper or plastic bag. Each object is accompanied by a Bible verse and reflection prompts. For example, "Sand represents Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. What wilderness experiences have you lived through? What did you learn?" *Lent in a Bag* could be used for individual or communal prayer. For example, you could invite family members or friends to choose a symbol and share its significance to them.

Look at visual prompts

Displaying small Lent-related objects around the home (or even at your workplace if it's appropriate) is another way to bring the season to life. Our church once gave out a large nail to each member as a reminder of Christ's sacrifice – I taped mine to the freezer door so I saw it multiple times each day. Images are also great for this. Consider some of the events in the last few weeks of Jesus' life, and find some pictures to remind you of them. Choose one each day and display it in a clip frame or on a pin-board. Each time you notice it, spend a moment in reflection about its significance for you or offer a short prayer to God.

Use a Lent calendar

A calendar is a wonderful way to keep track of your devotions during Lent. The Busted Halo Lent "*Fast, Pray, Give*" calendar features a daily inspirational quote and a concrete action to take each day, such as donating to a charity, volunteering your time, or attending a weekday Mass. A calendar for coloring each day is also a good way to focus your thoughts and prayers. *Praying With Color* has several printable calendars including a spiral, boxes, and a stained glass window, together with instructions to get you started. Or, why not make your own calendar? Take a large sheet of paper and divide it into 40 squares. Then, use one square a day – you could stick photos of people you'll be praying for, draw a Lenten symbol, or add a scripture verse each day. You can even engage the family in planning what to put in each day's square.

Keep a Lent journal

Many people find that keeping a written journal during Lent is a valuable way of recording what they discover over the weeks. Some like to take a deeper dive into the Bible reading for the day or imagine they're an observer at key events in Jesus' ministry. But often, a prompt makes the process easier, especially if you're new to spiritual journaling. Amy Brooks, blogger at Prayer, Wine and Chocolate, has a thought-provoking prompt for each day of Lent that I always find useful.

So as I observe Lent this year, I intend to be as creative as possible, both to enhance my appreciation for Christ's sacrifice and also to share that appreciation for God's love with others around me. Maybe you could consider introducing some new and creative ways to observe Lent in your home too!

Elizabeth Manneh is a freelance writer, sharing her time between the UK and The Gambia, West Africa. She's written for many publications, including Huffington Post, ReadersDigest.com, and The Good Men Project. She's on a lifelong exploration to find ways of bringing God into all aspects of her everyday life.

Trust In His Promises

Experiencing anxiety when someone we love is ill can be extremely difficult. As faithful people, often our first (and best) response is to seek the Lord's help. Waiting for an answer to that prayer can also be anxiety-producing. It must have seemed so confusing to Mary and Martha, knowing how much Jesus cared for their brother, that he would delay coming to his assistance.

Jesus loved the family from Bethany, but he loved the Father more. Not only did he know all would be well, but more importantly, it was also to be an opportunity to glorify Him in the delayed response. In the reading from Romans, St. Paul reminds us we are not just flesh, but also spirit. Jesus demonstrates through his response to Lazarus' illness and death the importance of answering prayers ordered to renew, strengthen, and heal the spirit over physical healing. Though He promises Lazarus' illness will not end in death, and it does not ... eventually, Lazarus, like all of us, does indeed die. Jesus' discussions with both Mary and Martha in today's Gospel illuminate how His answer to our prayers should first and foremost lead us to deeper faith and hope in Heaven.

Remember, Martha is the sister upset, during Jesus' previous visit to Bethany, that her sister is sitting at his feet instead of helping with the work of serving. She is taught, then, by the Master, of the need to balance our service and work with making time for the essential work of prayer. She's taken his words to heart. Martha demonstrates her strength of faith within the anxiety and grief of her brother's illness and death. Although devastated at the loss of her brother, she clings to her faith in the resurrection.

Later in the Gospel Martha says to Jesus, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord. I

have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world'" (John 11:21-27).

As we pray and the answers do not come, we can feel abandoned or punished by God. Like Martha, we must cling to the truth and enter as she does into dialog with Jesus. Prayer is the vehicle of that dialog. Simply put, prayer is a conversation. Remember, it is meant to be a two-way discussion. How can we hear God when he seems quiet or distant? We can turn to the Scriptures; it is the Word of God.

Martha draws from the promises of Scripture to seek comfort in her brother's death. She recalls the promise of the resurrection, her own faith strengthened by her ability to learn from her earlier conversation with Jesus to balance work and faith life. Her words demonstrate she has learned the blessings that come from stepping away from the constant doing, to be with him and listen, since her initial encounter with Christ.

The better part Mary chose during his visit to Bethany, was to sit at the feet of Jesus. Mary acted aware of our need to turn to Jesus in prayer, to listen, await, and most of all, trust in His promises. The promise that he loves us, is always with us, and he can bring good into every situation in our lives. Above all, God is to be glorified in all things.

Allison Gingras is the founder of ReconciledToYou.com — where she shares her Catholic Faith and Relationship with Jesus with laughter and honesty, and how it is lived in the everyday, ordinary of life! Allison hosts A Seeking Heart with Allison Gingras recorded on FB Live Mondays 12:30 pm et; and distributed through Breadbox Media. Her newest project is the Stay Connected Journals for Catholic Women, published through Gracewatch.Media. Allison works for WINE: Women In the New Evangelization. As their WINE Steward she oversees and facilitates the online aspect, aka the Virtual Vineyard, including WINE Book Clubs.



Second Collection Information

Next week's second collection will be for Cathedral Parish Student Assistance for Catholic Education. The Cathedral Parish believes in the value of Catholic education and is committed to assisting parishioners who choose a Catholic education for their children by providing tuition assistance. This second collection will go towards funding those scholarships. You can support fellow parishioners by donating online at <https://spicathedral.org/give-online/>. Please specify in the comments section that your donation is for the Tuition Assistance Second Collection. You may also mail a check or cash to the Parish Office at 524 E. Lawrence Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703.

CRS Rice Bowl Prayer of the Week

Heavenly Father, we pray for those attending school to achieve their dreams, may they receive the proper nutrition needed to focus on their studies and have a brighter future. We pray also that as a community, we may recognize the importance of supporting students and their dreams, so that their communities can thrive. In your name we pray. Amen.

Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Time Is A Gift

So many times in my life, I have failed to start something because I had not yet adequately prepared. I would have started working out or going for a jog, but I needed to get the right shoes. I would have started eating right if only I could find the time and money to buy the right foods. I would have started that journaling project, but I couldn't without a really nice leather-bound journal. I would have, I would have, and I would have!

I know many people can relate. We offer up excuses for so many things. Sometimes we even get to the point where we do start something, but by then, we have already lost so much time.

Some of us are thinking about taking a stewardship way of life seriously, but we are just not ready yet. We would be more generous if we can first get out of debt. We would give of our time, but we have to wait until the kids get older or until we fully research our options. The truth is, we don't have to be in any particular state of life or have any specific financial portfolio to start giving our very selves to God. God takes us as we are now. No resume needed. Why waste so much time thinking about getting started and becoming serious? Time is a gift given to all of us. As we think and prepare endlessly, we are practicing poor stewardship. The time to start is today. Who wants to answer God one day at the gates of Heaven saying, "I would have"?



Tracy Earl Welliver is currently the Director of Parish Community and Engagement for LPI where he manages the company's coaching and consulting efforts. He has spoken on and coached dioceses, parishes, and individuals on stewardship, engagement, strengths, and discipleship all over North America, Australia, and New Zealand.