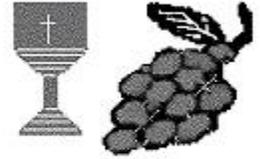


Taste the

NEW WINE



HOLY FAMILY PARISH

A CARING COMMUNITY

SPRING 2016

SEASONS OF GRACE

By Pat Sullivan – from the archives

Somehow, as I grow older, the seasons of change seem more deeply felt. There isn't a great deal of change in summer. What has begun in the spring simply matures. But the other three seasons are full of turbulence, of "rites of passage" through which pass all living things, willing or not. Autumn brings aging, ripening, then decline. Winter freezes what life remains, turning all into withered whiteness.

Late into this season, in concert with all Christians all over the earth, we stir from our inward hibernation to join with others in another Lenten journey. Like frozen roots reaching out to tangle with those of the next cold tree, we grasp a neighbor's hand to give and to draw what life we find between us. It is a time more suited for huddling by a friendly fire than for reaching out, but the spark of life remaining must somehow be renewed and instinctively we sense that it cannot be renewed alone.

So we gather, the fire turned to ashes, and we raise our faces to receive those ashes, reminders of the death of winter, the death that ultimately becomes the winter of each life, now a black cross upon the forehead of the humanity we carry to our altars.

A little scary, yes, maybe more than a little, but fitting, too, the normal progression of things in this season of change. And there is an odd comfort in that fit. It is a quiet time.

For the last several years, it has

occurred to me to thank God that I live in a place which experiences all the seasons, but especially winter.

Once, long ago, I lived for a year in a place which had little seasonal variance, so there was little change. Nothing much happened to plant or animal life. There was no autumn color eruption, no winter whiteness. All of nature just seemed to look about the same, feel about the same, all year. Oh, there was growth, of course. A sapling might become a tree if one could find enough water for it, for this was desert country. Animals were born and grew and either were slaughtered or died naturally, but nothing was particularly attributable to the seasons. It was rather dull, actually.

But here we have winter, without which the miracle of spring cannot happen! How fitting that we begin Lent in winter, that we pass through the ashes of death in winter, but then end it all with the glory of new life on Easter, as spring begins to thaw the cold earth and push up the tiny green shoots through the brown stubble of winter's remains. A crocus opens its petals to the sun as we open our arms to the Risen Jesus and to the forever-life He offers us. How fitting that Resurrection should happen in spring! How could it not?

Spring is the season of possibilities. It is the season of hope. It is the season of new life—new life of body and spirit. It is the season of love, and what

greater love could we imagine and celebrate than the love of our God made real to us in human incarnation, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth?

He it was who accepted death, even death on the Roman equivalent of our electric chair, to prove forever the truth of that love, and who then conquered that terrible death in His triumphant rising on the third day.

To us He left the promise of our own resurrections to come, a promise that makes all the new-life ecstasy of spring but a dim, misty metaphor for the astounding reality of the life we already possess within us which somehow will go on forever.

I don't know how this will happen, I don't know what kind of life it will be, nor do I have any idea of what form it will take. There are so many questions: Will I be with people I loved on earth? Will I even know them or they me? Will I still be me? Suddenly, even thoughts of eternal life can be a little scary, or maybe a lot.

But I don't need to face them alone. There is One who once felt those same uncertainties as He felt His own body dying, but who indeed found that new life and came back to show His friends! Now He is with me, extending his hand through my ashes, inviting me to join the dance into the light.

Oh! I see! It is for this that Lent has prepared me. Now it is Easter, and my hand, trembling, reaches out and touches Love.

From the Deacon's Desk

by Al Aulner

After being at Holy Family for over a year I have seen many examples of people volunteering their time, talents, and treasure. I have often remarked that the ministries that operate out of this church could not continue to serve the needs of the poor without these individuals. It takes thousands of donated hours and many dollars to keep everything going. Lately, I have also noticed how important businesses are to our programs as well.

We are a non-profit operation and as a non-profit we are dependent on the generosity of others. We don't have a way of generating an income by way of goods or services; if we had to do that we would be in trouble. In addition to individuals who donate their time and dollars, we are blessed to have several businesses that help us. They either donate their services or they give us special pricing that is far below their normal rates. I would like to mention some of the recent businesses that have or have pledged to help Holy Family.

ABC Seamless of Omaha gave Holy Family a discounted price for the siding and soffit work that was done last summer on the Porch above the Rectory. This spring ABC Seamless of

Omaha has agreed to replace, at no cost, the flat roof over the Rectory basement stairwell and equipment shed. They use very high quality, maintenance free materials that will give us many years of service.

Future Floors has pledged to donate both material and time to replace the existing tile floor in the social hall. Future Floors also uses quality materials and their installations are first rate. This project should be done sometime this spring, depending upon scheduling.

Charlie Graham Body & Service of Omaha has pledged to donate a certain amount of servicing for our vans and beyond that employee pricing. They have a fully equipped shop that will be able to do about anything we will need.

Last year, J. Robert Perrin, Architect, at no cost inspected the structure of the building to ensure its stability and integrity. This firm did the fix a few years ago to stop the exterior walls of the building from pushing out and their fix is performing perfectly.

Bakers Supermarket, Galvin Rd. Bellevue, provides the Sack Lunch Program with lunch meat at their cost. A Bakers also sells the produce bags that are used for the lunches to us at

below cost, thereby saving the program hundreds of dollars per year.

Ricky Rooter, "When Things Get Icky Just Call Ricky," has donated two service calls to Holy Family related to clearing drain pipes and gave us special pricing on the one service call that we did pay for. They are a great family owned business and they do a great job.

When a business donates their time or material they do so out of any profit they are making. Profits are the life blood of a business, without them they won't survive. So when a business donates to a non-profit it is always a sacrifice and a risk to some degree. Businesses must use their limited resources wisely so we are very grateful when they elect to share those resources with us.

I would ask you to support businesses that make the social commitment to support charitable organizations such as Holy Family. The businesses I have mentioned are true blessings to Holy Family; they are giving back to the community, sacrificing profit for the common good. Keep these businesses in mind the next time you are in need of a service or product that they provide.

A MESSAGE FROM BREAD FOR THE WORLD

Excerpted from a letter by Jim Lund, BFW Vice-Pres.

"With your support and involvement in the months ahead, Bread for the World will press Congress to sustain our nation's response to human suffering. Building on the positive momentum of Pope Francis's visits to Washington, D.C., and the United Nations, we will advocate for long-term solutions to hunger, poverty, and disease.

In particular, our 2016 Offering of Letters campaign will urge Congress to support measures that have proven effective in preventing maternal and child mortality. With basic medicines and better nutrition, more mothers and children will have a chance to survive and thrive. We will also seek to bring issues of hunger and poverty to center stage in this year's elections."

(Holy Family has a covenant, supporting relationship with BFW. The date for Holy Family's Offering of Letters Sunday will be announced at a later date....Mel Beckman)

The Easter Triduum

by Al Aulner

The Easter Triduum is a sacred three day spiritual walk we can take at the conclusion of Lent every year. I say at the conclusion of Lent because Lent ends just before Holy Thursday Mass begins.

Holy Thursday Mass, or the Mass of the Lord's Supper, is the beginning of the Easter Triduum. It will take us through the valley of the crucifixion and to the high point of the Easter Vigil Mass.

During these three days we have an opportunity to contemplate the final walk our Lord took to the cross; we have the opportunity to walk these steps with Jesus. Then we celebrate His victory over death, a victory He promises to share with those who believe in Him.

On Holy Thursday we can be present at the Lord's Supper which at the time must have given the Apostles a

feeling of: all is well. Meanwhile, Judas Iscariot executes his plan to betray Jesus. We can witness Jesus's example of humble service to others in the washing of the feet.

We can experience again the gift of the Eucharist, the real Bread of Life, being given to the Church. We can walk out into the still night with Jesus singing Psalms as he journeys to Gethsemane where His Passion will begin.

On Good Friday we can walk the way of the Cross with Jesus as He completes His sacrifice. Using our imagination we can see Pontius Pilot, the High Priests and the crowd. In our contemplation we can come face to face with the cross. We can place ourselves with the crowd at the foot of the cross, and with them hear the words "it is finished."

On Good Friday we listen to the Word of God, we venerate the Holy Cross and we receive Holy Communion. There is no Mass celebrated on Good Friday.

The Easter Vigil is the High Point of the Triduum and begins with a blessed fire from which the Pascal Candle is lit symbolizing the Light of Christ. The story Salvation History is read, the congregation is blessed, and new members are baptized and received into the Church. Christ's victory over death is acknowledged and His resurrection in glory is celebrated.

This year I encourage you to experience the Easter Triduum in all of its parts. To truly connect with the celebration of Easter, the high point of the liturgical year, we must first go with Jesus into the valley.



Pyramid of God's Grace

Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. But the Lord said, "I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers, so I know well what they are suffering. Therefore I have come down to rescue them from the hands of the Egyptians and lead them out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey..."

Come now!

I will send you to Pharaoh to lead my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt." But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and lead the Israelites out of Egypt?" He answered, I will be with you...Thus they will heed your message.

(Exodus 3: 6-8, 10-12, 18)



Holy Week Schedule

Holy Thursday 5:30 p.m.

Good Friday Liturgy 5:30 p.m.

Easter Vigil 5:30 p.m.

Easter Mass 10:00 a.m.

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