

First Sunday of Lent

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness...

LUKE 4:1



Giving - Fasting - Praying
Repenting - Forgiving

Saint Philip the Apostle Parish

CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners,

In 1922 Marjorie Williams published a children's book entitled *The Velveteen Rabbit*. The book is still being read today, because in this book she devises a powerful image that reveals the purpose and meaning of life. I believe that image can be useful for us in interpreting today's gospel. The story is a simple one. One Christmas, a young boy receives a stuffed velveteen rabbit. When the Rabbit enters the nursery, some of the other toys flaunt their superiority over him. They say, "We are the real toys, because we have gears and switches and whistles. You are just a stuffed rabbit. You're not a real toy." This, of course, discouraged the Rabbit so he sought the wisdom of the Skin Horse who had been in the nursery for a very long time. He asked the Skin Horse,

"What does it mean to be REAL? Does it mean that you have to have gears inside of you and switches to flip?" It is in the response of the Skin Horse to this question that Marjorie Williams sets forth the basic message of her book. Here's that response:

"Real isn't how you're made, it's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real." "Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit. "Sometimes said the Skin Horse" for he was always truthful. "When you are Real, however, you don't mind being hurt." The Rabbit asked, "Does it happen all at once, like being wound up, or bit by bit?" "It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real most of your hair has been loved off and your eyes drop out and you get loose in your joints and very shabby. These things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can never be ugly except to the people who don't understand."

This is one of my favorite stories. As a little kid, I could relate to the rabbit. I had a Winnie the Pooh that I loved and took everywhere. He was well-loved and very worn!

There are four aspects to this beautiful image which are relevant for us today. First, the purpose of life is to become Real, to understand what is important, to grow in wisdom, and to live in the love of God and the love of



others. Second, this is a process that doesn't happen all at once, it happens bit by bit, year by year. Third, becoming Real sometimes hurts, it involves pain and rejection and sometimes failure. Growing is not easy. And four, once you become Real nothing else matters because you have become what you are meant to be.

Now the season of Lent, which we began last Ash Wednesday, is another opportunity to become Real, to center on what is most important, to again claim the truth that we are called to live in the love of God and the love of others. It's a lifelong process. It doesn't happen all at once, it happens year by year, Lent by Lent, grace by grace. But this Lent, these forty days are another chance to take a step forward. We all know the things in our lives that we have tried in the past to make us happy, and which have failed us and betrayed us. This Lent is another chance to put those things aside and no longer let them rule our lives. We all know the relationships in our lives that are broken and how happy we would be if they could be healed. This Lent gives us another opportunity to take a step to make that healing happen. We all know the people in our lives who are connected to us and who love us. We know how important it is for us to express that love, to build that love, to celebrate that love. Lent is another time to put those relationships first, to make sure that other things do not detract from them, to give ourselves to what is most important because it is through the love of God and others that we become Real.

Is this easy? Not at all. Every time we try to love we take the risk of being hurt, of being rejected, of making a wrong decision, or even of failure. We see Jesus in today's gospel struggling with the devil. He does this because life is a struggle and growing is never easy. Even though Jesus is perfect, he still struggles because being human means that you don't grow without a fight. But if you give yourself to the fight, if you struggle honestly, it will lead to growth and in time we can become who we are called to be.

So, this Lent is a time to become Real, to put away the things that hurt us, to heal the relationships that are broken, to center ourselves more clearly on the love of God and neighbor. It's a struggle. If we give ourselves to that struggle, there is little doubt that it will in time wear us out. In time our hair will be loved off, our eyes will be dim, our joints will be loose, and we'll look overall rather shabby. But none of that will be important because when we live in the love of God and neighbor, we will be Real. And to be Real you can never be ugly—except to the people who don't understand.

Peace,

Fr. Monteleone

LENTEN SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES

CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

Saturday Evening 5:30 PM
Sunday....8:00 AM, 10:00 AM (Broadcast) and 12:00 PM
Mondays thru Saturdays.....9:00 AM

Beginning Friday, March 11th, there will be an added 7 AM Mass ONLY on Fridays of Lent.

Holy Hour is every Friday following 9 AM Mass.

Stations of the Cross is every Friday of Lent at 7 PM in Church.

Sacrament of Reconciliation is available every Saturday from 4:00 to 4:30 PM and every Monday of Lent from 7:00 to 8:30 PM in Church.

2022 Lenten Mission Retreat

Rev. Patrick May from the Diocese of Savannah will be speaking to us about the beauty of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. There will be two opportunities to attend the same talk on Monday, March 7th, one in the morning and one in the evening.

Monday, March 7

9 AM – Mass (Fr. Patrick May)

9:30 AM – Lenten Talk (Fr. Patrick May)

7 PM – Lenten Talk (Fr. Patrick May)

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study sessions will resume on Monday, March 7th in the Jubilee Wing Room of the Molloy Center at 11 AM. Fr. Monteleone will lead the discussion on the variations of the Passion of Christ in the gospels. We will meet every Monday throughout Lent.

DIOCESAN OPPORTUNITY

Dr. James C. Pauley will be holding a free online event for catechists and parents on Wednesday, March 23rd from 7:30 to 8:30 PM entitled Helping others encounter Jesus in the Eucharist. More details can be found at <https://www.insidethewalls.org/zoom>

ST. PHILIP PREPARATORY SCHOOL

On "Twos Day", 2/22/22, first grade students at Saint Philip Preparatory School completed a special time capsule project.

The soda bottle time capsules contained details about the current costs of milk, cereal, gas, and movie tickets as well as each student's personal favorites, including their favorite color, book, and food. Some of the time capsules created are set to remain behind at the school for future first graders to open, while others traveled home to be opened on 3-3-33 when the first graders will be high school seniors.

This special project offers the opportunity for students to see how they and the world around them has grown and changed.



SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Fish & Chips Dinner

Sunday, March 27th from 1 PM to 4 PM.

Tickets: \$15-Adults, \$8-children under 10. Eat-in or take-out Fish (or chicken) chips, coleslaw, coffee, tea, and dessert included. Soda, beer, and wine are available (beer and wine not for take-out).

All tickets must be purchased by Thursday, March 24th. All sales are final. No returns or refunds unless event is cancelled.

Tickets are available at <https://knights-of-columbus-11671.square.site/> using the QR code below.



You may also call Mike Cervine at (973) 220-3095, Rich Donkersloot at (973) 650-3327 or Mike Andolino at (201) 953-4724

You will receive a confirmation email of your purchase.

COLUMBIETTES

Blanket Ministry

The next meetings will be Thursday, March 17th at 9:45 AM in the Molloy Center. All crafters are welcome! For questions or fabric or yarn donations, please call Cathie Murtha at (973) 471-1265.

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES Cont'd

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

St. Philip Prep HSA will be hosting
"A Hawaiian Luau" Tricky Tray
 on **Friday, March 11th** in the Auditorium.
 Doors open at 5:30 PM.



Tickets will be **\$ 25 each**
 No one under 18 permitted.
 Tickets can be purchased online at
<https://stphilip.org/tricky-tray/>
 Or by calling Linda Valenti
 at (201) 638-1200.

No Admission tickets will be sold at the door.

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Simon



PARISH GIVING

SUNDAY COLLECTION: FEBRUARY 28, 2021	\$20,035.00
SUNDAY COLLECTION: FEBRUARY 27, 2022	
Weekly Collection	\$ 15,574.00
Online Giving Donation	\$ 7,4663.00
Total	\$23,040.00
Second Collection – Project Faith	\$ 2,106.00

Upcoming Second Collections:

March 13 - Project Faith

This collection is to provide resources for diocesan ministry, religious education, parish family life and social services.

WE PRAY FOR...

May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace...

Sean Hughes, Pasquale DeBiasi,
 Michael Renda, Janice Carter

A Time to be Healed...

Luca Ataide, Jennifer Rascher,
 Susan Stierlen, Jill Festa,
 Mary Grace Heyrich, John Riccardi,
 Debbie Werthmann, Edward Kovacs,
 Sylvia Shami



PRIESTS' SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2022

5:30 PM Fr. Nico

SUNDAY, MARCH 13, 2022

8:00 AM Fr. Jared

10:00 AM Fr. Monteleone

12:00 PM Fr. Kevin

MASS INTENTIONS

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2022

8:00 William and Juliana Ayers
 Chester and Stephanie Pritch

10:00 Peter Durso
 George Barbosa
 Ilda Frazao
 Gene Toma

12:00 Steve Amato
 George Morgan

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022

9:00 Rizaldy Quintos

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2022

9:00 Alphonse and Jennie Seiffer

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022

9:00 Joseph DiDonna
 Sean Hughes

THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2022

9:00 Corazon Nunag
 Edna Prince

FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2022

7:00 Rogelio Dela Cruz

9:00 Rizaldy Quintos

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2022

9:00 Ester Lim

5:30 Eugene Markey
 David Caccavella
 Sam Awada

SUNDAY, MARCH 13, 2022

8:00 All the People of the Parish

10:00 Manuel Moran
 Sean Hughes
 Eric Peterson

12:00 Catherine L. McClane
 Joseph Payne

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