"When you have free moments, go faithfully to prayer. The good God is waiting for you there."

St. Julie Billiart

Dear Parents,

 I am back! I was on a leave from work for almost two weeks (except for PSR last week).  I have now returned; l really didn’t forget you.

 Lent has begun!  Leading to the most important day of the Catholic Christian’s year, Easter, Lent is a time to take an inward look at ourselves and see what needs to stay and what needs to be thrown away.  There are many books, meditations, and prayer opportunities available to us to help us do just this. One is the Dynamic Catholic “Best Lent Ever” daily meditation. Check that out—it’s short, concise and very good!

 This Tuesday, your child will be bringing home his/her Progress Report for PSR. Please look for it. Thank you!

 This Saturday at 4:00 or Sunday at 9:30am are the First Holy Communion Enrollment Masses at OLMC.  Second grade families must choose one of these two Mass and attend, sitting near the aisle so that the students may exit when they are called to the sanctuary steps after the homily. After Mass, the families are asked to enter the west wing of the school, near the choir section, to sign the Communion Enrollment Books.

 If your child comes in late to PSR (after 6:25) please either escort or send them to the main school office to check in with Lisa Greger so that we know that he/she is here.  We have given more than one parent a ‘heart attack’ when they receive a call that their child is not at PSR when all that happened is that attendance sheets went to the office and a late comer entered the classroom after that.

 Please let me know if you have any issues with the PSR Program.  The staff works hard to make it a loving, beneficial program but we cannot change things that go wrong unless we are aware of them. I really do appreciate input from parents and l promise to act on your suggestions.Thank you!

 I’m hearing very positive reports about the parents’ evenings visiting their children’s classrooms. I hope you will get a chance to visit with your child’s class soon.  Next month the 4th grade will have a parent night.  More info to come later.

What your child will learn in class:

**Kindergarten**:  Jesus is God’s beloved Son

**Grade 1**: Lenten Lesson continued

**Grade 2**:  Chapter 27: Jesus Comes to us.  By the power of the Holy Spirit and through the actions and words of the priest, the bread and wine become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ during the Consecration. • During the Consecration the bread and wine become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus. • Jesus called the children to himself. • Jesus comes to us in Holy Communion.

**Grade 3**:  Chapter 22: Liturgy in the Eucharist, the True Presence in the Eucharist: Jesus' presence in the Eucharist is our greatest treasure: He is truly present Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. • Liturgy of the Eucharist • Members of the Church at Mass • Offertory • Consecration and priestly power.

**Grade 4**: Chapter 18: Loving Others: God loves us all, so we are to love ourselves and our neighbors as ourselves. • We should love ourselves and others, because of God’s love for us. • We should honor our parents and other authorities. • We should take care of our bodies and souls.

**Grade 5**: Chapter 28: Called to Holiness:  The Church has the mission to sanctify her members through the sacraments. Jesus gave us the sacraments as a sure way to receive his grace. • The baptized are children of God, sharing in his life through grace. • The sacraments are outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace. • The sacraments parallel the natural life. • Sin affects the life of grace in the soul.

**Grade 6**: Chapter 17: At the Last Supper: Jesus gives us his Body and Blood in the Eucharist. Jesus instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper, which was a celebration of the Passover meal. • Jesus prepared his disciples to receive him in the Eucharist. • The Passover commemorated the events of the Exodus in which God freed the Israelites from slavery. • Jesus is our Passover Lamb who offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from sin. • At the Last Supper, Jesus instituted Holy Orders so that through the priest at Mass we can participate in Christ’s one sacrifice.

**Grade 7**:  Chapter 25: God’s Mercy and Forgiveness:  God is just, but also merciful and offers forgiveness to the repentant sinner. • Jesus came to save sinners. He is the Divine Physician. • Jesus taught us to love sinners, but hate sin. • Jesus calls us to conversion. • All Christians are called to do acts of Penance.

**Grade 8**:  Chapters 15 and 20: The Virtuous Life and Living Faithfully: Virtue enables a person to do good actions easily and to avoid doing bad actions. • Virtue is the disposition of the soul to do good. • Cardinal virtues enable us to act rightly in our relationship with other men and created goods. • All other virtues hinge on these four virtues. • The moral virtues help us to counteract our inclination to the seven capital sins. These are humility, liberality, chastity, meekness, moderation/sobriety, brotherly love, and diligence. • The theological virtues are supernatural infused virtues that are directed toward God.  Society is established by God to protect and ensure the common good of every man. Men naturally seek to live in societies. • Authorities within societies must make just laws to ensure the common good. • The state receives its authority from God and does not have the right to demand something or make laws that violate God’s laws. • Citizens also have duties within societies. • God gave man dominion over the created world so that in using it according to God’s plan, man might be united to God.

 Saint of the Day:  St. Eucherius

God bless,

Mrs. Gulden

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

 **FAST:** Eating less food than normal (does not necessarily mean no food).

* **What you can eat:** One normal, full-sized meal, and two smaller meals which if combined would not exceed one full meal.
* **Why:** “Denying material food, which nourishes our body, nurtures an interior disposition to listen to Christ and be fed by His saving word. Through fasting and praying, we allow Him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God.” –Pope Benedict XVI

 **ABSTINENCE:** Do not eat meat.

* **What you can eat:** fish and seafood
* **Why:** “Catholic peoples from time immemorial have set apart Friday for special penitential observance by which they gladly suffer with Christ that they may one day be glorified with Him. This is the heart of the tradition of abstinence from meat on Friday where that tradition has been observed in the holy Catholic Church.” –USCCB

 **ALMSGIVING:**  Material generosity to the less fortunate.

* **What you can give:** money, goods, acts of charity
* **Why:** Almsgiving “represents a specific way to assist those in need and, at the same time, an exercise in self-denial to free us from attachment to worldly goods . . .  Almsgiving helps us to overcome this constant temptation, teaching us to respond to our neighbor’s needs and to share with others whatever we possess through divine goodness.” –Pope Benedict XVI

 IMPORTANT DAYS DURING LENT

 **Ash Wednesday:** Marks the start of Lent and the time for penance. Obligatory day of fasting (ages 18 to 59) *and* abstinence (ages 14 & over).

**Fridays of Lent:** Obligatory abstinence  (ages 14 & over). All Fridays (even outside of Lent) are days of penance.

**Holy Thursday:** Lent ends and the Holy Triduum begins in the evening with the commemoration of the Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper.

**Good Friday:** The anniversary of the Crucifixion of Christ (no Mass). Obligatory day of fasting (ages 18 to 59) *and* abstinence (ages 14 & over).

**Holy Saturday:**  Christ is in the grave conquering death and freeing the captives. Final day of Lenten fasting (no daily Mass, Easter Vigil begins at sundown).

**Sacred Triduum:** The period of 3 days (Holy Thursday + Good Friday + Holy Saturday) during which we remember Christ’s Passion, ending at the Easter Vigil (Saturday evening).

**Easter Sunday:**  Lent has ended and the joy begins, the day of Christ’s resurrection, the principle Christian feast of the entire liturgical year. This is the celebration of Christ’s victory over sin and death merited for us by his passion, death, and resurrection from the dead on Easter Sunday.

 OBLIGATORY DUTIES FOR CATHOLICS DURING LENT

 **Fasting & Abstinence:**  Our obligatory duty on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

**Abstinence:** Do not eat meat on the Fridays of Lent. Treat it as a day of penance.

**Confession:** Catholics are obligated to fulfill their Easter Duty by receiving Holy Communion at least once during the Easter season (from Easter Sunday to Pentecost), therefore the Sacrament of Penance for any mortal sins is required prior to this, and is strongly recommended as a Lenten penitential practice for any venial sins prior to the Easter feast.