



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

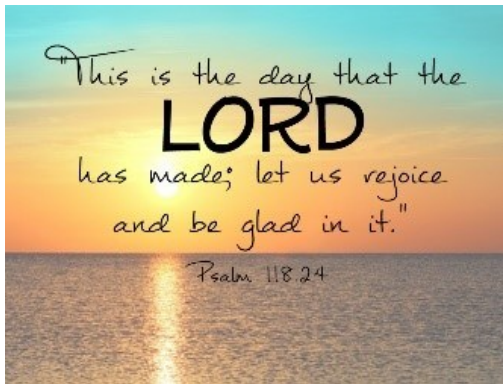
How is your Lent? How is your Lent, in 2022, going thus far?

Mr. Paul Dyer, the Upper Grade Center (UGC) religion teacher, asked the students of the UGC those and similar questions. As we near the midway point of our personal Lenten journey, how would we answer those questions?

In our growing and maturing faith, we know that Lent is not supposed to be easy. There is nowhere that I am aware of in the Bible, with the exception of the verses in Matthew’s Gospel “My yoke is easy and my burden light”, that we can find Jesus’ words assuring the disciples of all times that following him would be easy.

Mr. Dyer asked the students those questions as part of an after communion meditation. He reflected on the rich traditions of our faith in which we intentionally focus on getting rid of behaviors, food or drink, attitudes, and actions, that do not benefit us in our relationship with Jesus or one another. The more that we work at fasting from these things, the more time, energy, and money we have to re-focus on Jesus, on our faith, on our example and lived witness to others.

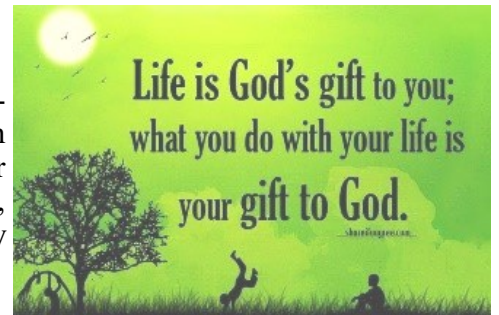
The ashes we received on March 2 have long been washed off of our foreheads. The desire and the resolve to make a “holy Lent” is still ever present before us. What is holding you back from fully entering into the tried and true practices of Lent? What are you convinced of that - if you were to change, if you were to stop, if you were to begin doing - would give you peace of mind, joy of Spirit, and hope in your heart as one of Jesus’ followers?



God gives all humanity on the earth, every living being, the gift of each day. Each day, every 24 hours provide us with the means to honor God and live as an example to one another of the importance of making sure that our faith is primary in our lives, not secondary.

The power of reflection is not, *what have I done so far*, in Lent 2022. The importance of reflecting and acting on the gift provided of *what will I do* with the remainder of Lent 2022 is the question to bring to prayer, to share with a trusted friend, peer, spiritual director, or parishioner. Yes, upon reflecting and then sharing with another, action is most important.

The saying “the proof is in the pudding” is what will truly demonstrate how we are grateful for the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives in Lent 2022. (Unless of course you gave up pudding for Lent.) May the energy of the Holy Spirit move us from complacency, laziness, procrastination, and sloth to make what remains a “holy Lent”!



May God bless you with a spiritually enriching and renewing Lenten season,

Fr. Mike Vacur