

## FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE



Our Lenten journey continues to unfold, bringing us ever closer to Palm Sunday and Holy Week. May we be guided by God's grace these days of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

As a child, the middle of five children, I would give my mom a hand in the kitchen when she was preparing meals. Mom worked miracles being able to have a cooked meal for her husband and growing family of three girls and two boys. Occasionally there were special meals and special desserts that Mom made. Every meal wasn't a Lithuanian feast, those were usually reserved for the holidays.

If you have ever helped your mom in the kitchen making a cake, you were excited about the finished dessert, you probably didn't want the raw ingredients on their own.

We may like cake but would you ever consider eating the ingredients of a cake separately? A spoon of flour? A raw egg? A little oil? Some cocoa? Cooking oil? Not too appetizing, are they on their own? OK, the sugar is always sweet!

Some of the cake ingredients by themselves wouldn't taste very good, but when everything is mixed together and cooked and frosted, the family has a delicious cake to eat! Romans 8:28 is a beautiful promise: "*God causes all things to work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His good purpose.*" Time is needed for most things in life to improve and be completed.

Progress continues to be made in the project of enlarging the baptismal font at St. Mary's. In the middle of the project many questions come up, while the project is being assembled. Why are they making a mess ripping up the carpeting? That new flooring and new underlayment sure filled the church with dust. How are they going to finish the liner of the font of unfinished fiberglass of different colors? Why was their flowing water in the unfinished liner last weekend? When are they going to put in the marble, covering the wooden framing around the liner? When will the alcove near the vigil light, a holding location for the workers, be cleared up? I am sure there are other questions as well you may have asked or may have heard.

The unfinished materials, in the different stages of construction are less than appealing to the eye for our church. In the coming weeks, when the pieces come together the beauty will be revealed. There are a number of stages and companies working to complete the font. The "full" completion date will be in April. The parish is receiving updates each week which will be shared with you in the coming weeks as well. Thanks for your patience as we pray together this Lent, and thanks to those who continue to show financial support to this project.

May the following prayer deepen your faith as we pray our way with one another through the Lenten season. This prayer is the First Principle and Foundation of St. Ignatius, paraphrased by Jacqueline Bergan and Sr. Marie Schwan:

Lord, my God  
When your love spilled over into creation  
You thought of me.  
I am from Love,  
of Love,  
for Love.

Let my heart, O God, always recognize, cherish and enjoy  
Your goodness in all of creation.  
Direct all that is me toward your praise.  
Teach me reverence for every person, all things.  
Energize me in your service.

Lord God, may nothing ever distract me from your love.  
Neither health nor sickness, wealth nor poverty  
honor nor dishonor long life or short life.

May I never seek, nor choose to be  
Other than you intend or wish. AMEN.

There is still time - until March 31 - to share your opinions about how we can make St. Mary's a better faith community. Please see the link on the following page to take the survey online. Paper copies are available in the church and also in the Parish Office.

Also, thank you for your support of the "**Walking on the Road with Jesus**" 2023 Annual Catholic Appeal of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

May we be guided by God's grace this Lent,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Mike". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.