



# Partners in Faith & Action

February 2017

## FEBRUARY CELEBRATIONS

Please join, as a family, with the NDV faith community in one or more of our School or Sunday celebrations of the Mass.

--Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> – Family Mass with CLOW at 9:00 a.m. Hospitality will follow the Mass.

--Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> – NDV First Grade students will be the readers and gift bearers at the 9:00 a.m. Mass. A reception will follow the Mass.

--March 1<sup>st</sup> is Ash Wednesday. The Fifth Grade students will be the readers and gift bearers at our 8:45 a.m. Mass. Full uniform please.



## FAMILIES GROWING IN FAITH

Remember, our next Families Growing in Faith gathering is Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. for a light supper in the Church Hall. The program starts promptly at 6:30 p.m. Please bring your Bibles.



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February is Black History Month. The first black Roman Catholic priest in the United States was Father Augustus Tolton (1854-1897). He was born a slave in Missouri, but during the Civil War, he escaped with his mother and siblings to the free state of Illinois. Fr. Peter McGirr, an Irish immigrant priest, helped him receive schooling during the winter months and gave him the opportunity to go to Rome to become a priest. When he became a priest, he served in Chicago where he was known as “Good Father Gus.” He was known for his singing voice, eloquent speech, and ability to play the accordion. (*Catholic Digest*, January/February 2017)

The history of the Church is full of many Black/African Catholic saints. You can find a list and information about them at

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/black.php>.

Among them is Saint Josephine Bakhita whose feast day is February 8<sup>th</sup>. She was born to a wealthy Sudanese Family. She was kidnapped by slave-traders at the age of 9, and given the name *Bakhita* (*lucky*) by them. She was sold and resold in the market places until finally she was purchased by Callisto Legnani, an Italian consul who planned to free her. She accompanied Legnani to Italy and worked as a nanny for the family of Augusto Michieli. She was treated well and grew to love the country. As an adult convert to Christianity, she joined the Church. She took the name of *Josephine* as a symbol of her new life. She entered the *Institute of Canossian Daughters of Charity* taking her vows on December 8, 1896 in Verona, Italy. She served as a Canossian Sister for the next fifty years. Her gentle presence, warm, amiable voice, and willingness to help with any menial task were a comfort to the poor and suffering people who came to the door of the Institute. The video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHRjmlDDzZl> tells more about her life.

## VALENTINE'S DAY

February 14<sup>th</sup> is Valentine's Day. We know that there was a St. Valentine, but who was he? There are three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus. Each was martyred. One legend was that St. Valentine was a priest and physician in Rome who was martyred circa 269 under the Emperor Claudius II. According to the legend, the Emperor decided that single men made better soldiers so he outlawed marriage. Valentine decided to continue marrying young couples, but in secret. Someone betrayed Valentine for breaking the law. He was arrested and condemned to death.



Other legends say that he was killed for helping Christians escape the Roman prisons where they were often beaten and tortured. In another

legend, perhaps the most famous, Valentine's jailer had a daughter who was blind. She brought Valentine food to eat and he healed her blindness. The night before he was killed he wrote to the little girl and signed it: "From your Valentine."

[http://www.catholic.org/saints/ff\\_images/50.jpg](http://www.catholic.org/saints/ff_images/50.jpg)

Videos about St. Valentine:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CaRgHQjC1WE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kDRh3U0tcU>

## THE CATECHISM AT 25

St. John Paul II approved and had published the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* in 1992, 25 years ago. The *Catechism* was born from the Second Vatican Council's mission for the Church and the vision of the 1985 Extraordinary Synod of Bishops. The bishops' task at the Synod was to see how well the Church had implemented the teachings of Vatican II. The Synod called for a universal catechism to reach the younger generations and generations to come. They said that since the world has become a "global village," there was a need for a universal catechism since there had not been one in more than 400 years, since the *Roman Catechism* of 1566 following the Council of Trent.

Some American Catholics grew up with the *Baltimore Catechism* which was a collection of memorized questions and answers to learn by heart. This is an example of a minor catechism, as opposed to a major or universal catechism.

Creating a universal catechism was a major undertaking because it had to remain faithful to the Deposit of Faith received from the Apostles, systematically overhaul the *Roman Catechism*, incorporate two millennia of Christian experience, and include ecclesial documents such as those from Vatican II.

The bishops wanted the catechism to include all Catholic doctrine regarding both faith and morals and the presentation must be both biblical and liturgical.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (the future Pope Benedict XVI) led a commission of cardinals and bishops from around the world to draft the new catechism. It took 6 years and input from more than 1000 bishops worldwide to complete the task.

As a reference work, the *Catechism* contains quotes from Scripture (both Old and New Testaments), quotes from Vatican II documents and documents from 16 other ecumenical councils, quotes from 22 popes, and quotes from more than 50 saints. It is divided into four parts: Part One—beliefs or creed, Part Two—Sacraments, Part Three—the Christian Life, and Part Four—Prayer. (*Catechist*, February 2017)



## MARDI GRAS

The time leading up to Ash Wednesday is rich with tradition. It is carnival time in Europe and in some cities in the United States, such as New Orleans. The word carnival means "farewell to meat," and during this time we indulge in rich foods because we know we will be giving up some of them during Lent.

The day before Ash Wednesday has several names. Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) comes from the early French settlers of New Orleans who brought their carnival festivities with them. The fat in the name referred to the kind of food that was prepared to use up ingredients that they would need to give up for the Lenten fast. (from *Pflaum Gospel Weeklies*)

Mardi Gras will be celebrated on Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at the NDV Parish Hall. There will be great food, beverages, raffles, and a sing-a-long. A Kids' Corner will have arts and crafts. Look for more information in the newsletter.



## ASH WEDNESDAY THE BEGINNING OF LENT

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, March 1st and ends before Mass on Holy Thursday evening. The following are fasting and abstinence regulations:

**Abstinence** from meat is observed on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent and Good Friday. It should be observed by all Catholics 14 years and older.

**Fasting** is observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by all Catholics aged 18 to 59. Fasting means one may only take one full meal on those days.

More about Lent and Lenten activities in next month's Partners.