The First Sunday of Lent
March 5
2017

“The Lord, your God, shall you worship and Him alone shall you serve.”

— Matthew 4:10
St. Barbara Parish welcomes “Misterium”, a prayer-theatrical group based at St. Hyacinth’s Basilica, who will perform the play *The Passion of Christ* here at St. Barbara Church on Tuesday, March 28th, immediately following the 6:00 pm Mass. The group “Misterium” has over 70 members whose purpose is to proclaim the religious truth through word, play and music. *The Passion of Christ* is a theatrical production of the story of Christ’s life, filled with compassion, service and salvation. A cast of non-professional actors performs passages taken directly from Scripture. The leader of the group, Ms. Cecylia Jablonska, would like to invite all parishioners and neighbors of St. Barbara, school parents, and students to take part one more time in reliving *The Passion of Christ*.

**Please note:** Due to a scheduling conflict by the theatrical group, the date has been changed from Saturday, March 4th to Tuesday, March 28th.

### Weekday Masses

**Monday, Wednesday and Thursday—CHAPEL**

**Tuesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday—CHURCH**

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**ALTAR & ROSARY MEETING TODAY AT 1:00 pm**

The Altar and Rosary Sodality will hold their monthly meeting this afternoon at 1:00 pm. Plan to come to church for the 11:30 am Mass and join us in the Senior Mobile for the meeting, a light lunch and a few games of bingo. Hope to see you all there! Visitors and newcomers are *always* welcome.

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**A Mass of Healing will be said this Tuesday, March 7th, at 6:00 p.m. in Church. This Mass is for the intention of all who need health blessings. Be sure to join us for this special Mass which takes place the first Tuesday of every month.**

If there is anyone whom you would like to especially remember at this Mass, please submit their name to the rectory at (312) 842-7979.

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**Lenten Fasting and Abstinence Regulations**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. The following fasting and abstinence regulations are observed:

- Abstinence from meat is observed on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and all the Fridays of Lent by all Catholics 14 years of age and older.
- Fasting is observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by all Catholics who are 18 years of age but not yet 59 years of age. Those bound by this rule may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted as necessary to maintain strength according to one's needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.
- The special Paschal fast and abstinence are observed on Good Friday and, where possible, on Holy Saturday. On these days, Christians prepare themselves by these disciplines in anticipation of the renewal of their baptismal commitment on Easter.
- From its earliest days, the Church has urged the baptized and the catechumens to observe the threefold discipline of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer as a preparation for the celebration of Easter. Failure to observe any penitential days at all or a substantial number of such days must be considered serious.
- During Lent, the Church encourages attendance at daily Mass, self-imposed times of fasting, and generosity to local, national, and worldwide programs of sharing.

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**Celebrating over a Century of Faith and Education**

*St. Barbara Parish is a Roman Catholic community celebrating a century of faith in the Bridgeport area. Our faith community welcomes all people, helping them grow spiritually through liturgy, prayer, and education, and socially through activities for all ages. Our school takes great pride in fostering these values in our children. We give witness to our faith by sharing with each other our God-given gifts and talents. We nourish and sustain our faith as a family by celebrating the sacraments and the presence of the risen Lord among us in the Eucharist.*
I would like us to look to the cross during Lent; to look to the cross in a different way. People try to avoid the cross –
seeing in it the source of sufferings, humiliation, despair and death.

At the beginning of Lent, let us look to the cross in a new way. I do believe that these reflections, based on God’s Word,
will help us to be witnesses to the cross, which does not terrify, but reveals God’s love. I encourage you to open your
Bible and meditate in the light of God’s Word.

### Look to the Cross for Forgiveness

It is not popular today to kneel before God and ask for forgiveness. Some say that sin does not exist anymore. If it does
not – where do sufferings and tears come from? If it does not – where do wars and terrorisms come from? Many times
we ask people for forgiveness, or they make us ask. So, we bow our heads, admit that we were wrong, made a mistake
and then, sooner or later, they will reproach our weakness and might use it to humiliate us. It is safe and rewarding to
look to the cross and cry, “Have mercy on me, God, in your goodness”; take away this sadness which dwells in my heart,
sometimes even on sunny days. When you ask for forgiveness, God gives you more: wisdom to see clearly what is
good and what is wrong. God gives you more: the joy in His salvation, a willing spirit in you, and you will praise His
healing power. (Psalm 51)

Looking to the cross for forgiveness, we realize that we need to ask not only for ourselves, but also for the world –
we feel like crying out to God out of the depths. Sometimes the world appears as an abyss, full of violence, corruption,
lies and crime. The abyss of lack of love. Asking for forgiveness, we learn that there is the One who never wants to de-
stroy people, even if their deeds are bad. “If the Lord marks our sins, Lord, who can stand!” God gives us another
chance over and over again. He wants us to experience His kindness and fullness of redemption. (Psalm 130)

Looking to the cross for forgiveness, God gives you the gift of life, which allows you to see the world and yourself
in the way it really is or, should we say, in the way God wants it to be. Very often, the world appears to be only an illu-
sion. People spend energy to look good - not to be good. Food looks good, but has no flavor; a perfect body, but no
heart inside; uplifting declarations, but no good deeds behind them. God desires to bring light into our lives. When you
stand before Him with all your physical, moral, spiritual and emotional weaknesses, God will never condemn you. He
will reveal to you how beautiful life can be when you live in truth, when you are forgiven. (John 1: 5-9)

Looking to the cross for forgiveness, we can feel like our heart is changing and God Himself is writing the law of
love. Your heart will start to feel, you will smile and your smile will reflect God’s light. Many people smile all day but,
when they come back home, their faces hurt because the smile was only a painful attachment. Our forgiving God will
change you so people will like to be around you. People will experience much warmth, goodness and care, with every
word you say. The forgiving God will create in you a heart flowing with joy and love. The person forgives but always
remembers. God forgives and does not remember. Once you say, “Please forgive me”, you will never hear from God
that you made a mistake or committed sin. (Jeremiah 31: 31-34)

Looking to the cross for forgiveness, we see God who is waiting. He will never say, “It is enough; I have no more
time.” We have choices as the prodigal son had. We can live with our weakness, sin, worry, frustration, sadness, dis-
content, or we can say, “I shall get up and go to my Father”. If you do so, you will experience how beautiful it is to see
your Heavenly Father who, filled with compassion, will run to you, embrace you, kiss you and forgive you.

(Luke 15:11-24)

Looking to the cross for forgiveness, we see Jesus and we are astonished by the goodness of God, Jesus is asking
for forgiveness for those who hated Him, persecuted Him, accused Him falsely, tortured Him and crucified Him. Jesus
asks because He knows that the Father is willing to forgive. There is only one question: Do people want to accept for-
giveness, or are their hearts hardened so much that they are unable to cry like the one who was crucified? “Jesus, re-
member me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus tells us from the height of His cross that there is no sin which
cannot be forgiven if you only ask for it. (Luke 23:32-34)

Look to the cross for forgiveness –
And do not be afraid of it.

Fr. Andrzej
Sun., Mar. 5 - Altar & Rosary Ladies’ Mtg.; 1:00 pm
- Baby Bottle Project Begins
Tues., Mar. 7 - St. Barbara Seniors Mtg.; 11:30 am
- Mass of Healing; 6:00 pm
Wed., Mar. 8 - 2nd Grade First Reconciliation;
6:30 pm
- St. Vincent de Paul Mtg.; 6:30 pm
Thurs., Mar. 9 - B SJ Mtg.; 6:30 pm
Fri., Mar. 10 - Lenten Mass followed by Stations of the Cross; 6:00 pm
- Holy Name Mtg.; 7:00 pm
Sun., Mar. 12 - 5th Grade Family Mass; 9:30 am

THE BABY BOTTLE PROJECT
Beginning today, our parish will be participating in The Baby Bottle Project benefiting The Women’s Centers of Greater Chicagoland. This non-profit organization directly assists mothers and families experiencing crisis pregnancies by offering emotional, financial, material, and spiritual support through counseling, clothing & monetary provisions, prayer, and other aid. Each year the three locations together have over 5,000 appointments with expecting mothers. By God’s Grace, The Women’s Centers have saved over 40,000 babies—and their mothers—from abortion since opening in 1984.

Please take a Baby Bottle home with you from the church today, fill it with your spare change, and return it the weekend of Palm Sunday, April 8-9.

This is a simple, but crucial fundraising effort for The Women’s Centers. Please note the Baby Bottles cost almost $1.00 per bottle and are recycled afterwards so please return upon completion of the project. Thank you for helping defend life, and remember to keep all pro-life undertakings in your prayers.

Also if you are making a donation by check, please make it payable to: The Women’s Center. Thank you!
HONOR ROLL CORRECTION
Last week's Honor Roll announcement inadvertently omitted Angela and Andrea Natividad. They were on the "B" Honor Roll for the 2nd quarter. Congratulations Andrea and Angela!

Safety First!
Last week, Officer Campagna visited St. Barbara School and spoke to Kindergarten through 3rd grade students about safety. He gave students “Officer Friendly” safety coloring books and spoke to them about stranger awareness, street safety, how to use 911, and child protective behaviors. This program was designed to introduce children to uniformed police officers and to assist with the development of a friendship with police officers.

“Bulldogs Make A Difference”
On February 28th, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 8th grade students worked together to create chew toys for the local animal shelter. Students created approximately 50 chew toys for their furry friends! They concluded their activity by playing a fun game of “Bulldog Says” in which seven great listeners earned prizes. The Anti-Cruelty Society fundraiser has raised almost $600 as of Wednesday, 3/2! Keep making a difference!
Weekly Collection - Feb. 25 - 26

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Envelopes (99)</td>
<td>$2,225.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday Loose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's Envelopes (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debt Reduction (57)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Collection</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,541.00</strong></td>
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YTD: $112,245.04 Weekly: $3,541.00

Goal: $224,000.00 Weekly: $6,400.00

% of Goal: 50% Weekly: 55%

Votives & Vigil Lights: $218.47

Jan. Give Central 1st: $2,462.00 2nd: $370.00

Electronic giving through GiveCentral.org is the safe and secure way to make your weekly donations to St. Barbara. Donate via credit card or electronic check (ACH). Sign up by visiting St. Barbara’s home WEB page and follow the prompts.

Liturgical Ministers

**SATURDAY, MARCH 11TH**
5:00 p.m.
Altar Servers: A. Torres, I. Echevarria, N. Gayton, X. Lopez
Eucharistic Ministers: A. Skokal, R. Carden
Lectors: D. Hailer, C. Hailer
Greeter: L. Echevarria

**SUNDAY, MARCH 12TH**
6:00 a.m.
Altar Server: G. Vanderford
Eucharistic Ministers: S. Guest, J. Balasa
Lector: J. Bertucci
Greeter: B. Webb
9:30 a.m.
Altar Servers: M. Gonzalez, A. Gonzalez, N. Perez, R. Cabrera
Eucharistic Ministers: F. Cabrera, J. Lukwinski
Lectors: 5th Grade Family Mass
Greeter: C. Whitehouse
11:30 a.m.
Altar Servers: J. Murrihy, K. Zotamba, A. Rodriguez, M. Rodriguez
Eucharistic Ministers: B. Pienta, D. Ramos
Greeter: D. Becatti
Baptisms: Parents must be registered practicing parishioners and attend a baptismal preparation session before a baptism will be scheduled. Call the rectory office for further information.

Communion Calls: Please contact the Rectory when someone who is homebound or in the hospital wishes a visit to receive Holy Communion or the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. The Anointing of the Sick is for anyone seriously sick and not only for those near death.

Ministry of Care: Eucharistic Ministers are available to visit, pray with, and bring Holy Communion to those who are sick and unable to attend Mass. Notify the Parish Office when this service is needed.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a program for anyone inquiring and seeking information about entering the Catholic faith.

Weddings: Weddings need to be scheduled at least six months in advance. Couples are reminded to secure the Church date before the reception hall.

Moving/New Cell #: Please contact the rectory with address change or telephone change.

Please pray for those homebound, hospitalized and in need of continued prayers...


Pastor: Fr. Wojciech Artur Marat
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Associate Pastor: Fr. Andrzej Beltowski
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School Principal: Mrs. Nicole Nolazco
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Business Manager: Mrs. Carol Spalla
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Director of Music: Ms. Eva Mrngan
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Tuition Admin.: Ms. Dolores Becatti
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Parish Secretaries: Ms. Dolores Becatti
Ms. Judy Lukwinski
Mrs. Carol Spalla
Religious Education: Mrs. Roberta Carden

MASS SCHEDULE
SUNDAY LITURGIES
Saturday………………………………….. 5:00 p.m.
Sunday……..6:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

WEEKDAY LITURGIES
8:30 a.m.: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday; 6:00 p.m.: Tuesday

HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION
6:00 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted

CONFESSION
Saturday 3:45-4:30 p.m.

FIRST FRIDAY DEVOTIONS
Mass at 8:30 a.m., followed by a short period of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Evening Mass at 6:00 p.m., followed by Exposition and Adoration, concluding with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:30 p.m.

THE ROSARY
Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. before the 6:00 p.m. Mass, and on Sunday at 5:30 a.m. before the 6:00 a.m. Sunday Mass.

OFFICE HOURS
Monday-Friday: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; 1:30-4:00 p.m.
The office is closed on Saturday and Sunday.