

MARCH 2010

Sacred Heart

Catholic Church

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A Letter From Our Pastor

Proud to be Catholic!

Dear Parishioners,

Since the earthquake in Haiti, so many of you have reached out to me to ask about my friends and colleagues, our twin parish (St. Gerard's), and the conditions in general. As the news from Haiti diminishes with the passage of time, I ask you all to keep the people of Haiti in the forefront of your prayers.

How proud I am to be Catholic! I am impressed with the outstanding work done by Catholic Relief Services (CRS). At this time, the Country Director has called all of CRS's food distribution trucks from all over Haiti to concentrate on Port-au-Prince. With their concerted efforts, food arriving at the airport is being transported to the food distribution sites throughout the capital city.

The Director of CRS, USA has made arrangements for all its Haitian employees stationed throughout the world to return to their home country and assist all other non-profit agencies as translators, mechanics, clerical workers, and through organizational assistance. CRS continues to work with USAid to ensure food shipments to the schools and programs throughout Haiti untouched by the earthquake. Such collaboration and organizational skill is so very necessary in a crisis situation.

How proud I am to be a Catholic at Sacred Heart Parish in Hopedale! By simply announcing a special collection to assist in Haitian Relief efforts, we collected over \$16,000 to assist CRS in its continued work. Our donations, pooled with the other parishes in the Diocese of Worcester, have raised almost a half-million dollars in aid relief. Imagine what



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Part-Time Singers Needed!

The Sacred Heart Seasonal Choirs

Marie Chabot has been singing since age 3. “I knew I wanted to sing from a very early age – probably when I first saw Julie Andrews in the movie *Mary Poppins*,” says Marie.

Music has always been a large part of Marie’s life. She took organ lessons throughout her school years and then added guitar, clarinet and cello along the way. She graduated college with a Theater major and Music minor, and she has sung in church choirs since junior high and substituted as an organist in parishes in her community.

Recently, Marie brought her musical background and God-given gifts to the Sacred Heart Parish community. In September of 2009, she began her role as the parish Music Coordinator. Marie’s responsibilities include choosing the music for our liturgical celebrations and playing the piano or organ accompaniment. And for special celebrations and functions throughout the year, Marie is also the director of Sacred Heart’s Seasonal Choirs.

The Seasonal Choirs are made up of adult and teen parishioners that sing at special Masses, such as our Christmas and Holy Week celebrations. The choirs begin rehearsing about six weeks before the holiday season, rehearsing after the 10:30 a.m. Sunday Mass each week.

Last Christmas Eve, Marie’s first at the parish, the Seasonal Choirs performed a 20-minute Christmas concert prior to the 10 p.m. Mass, and then led the congregation in song during that Mass.

Currently, the Seasonal Choirs are preparing for the Holy Week and Easter celebrations.

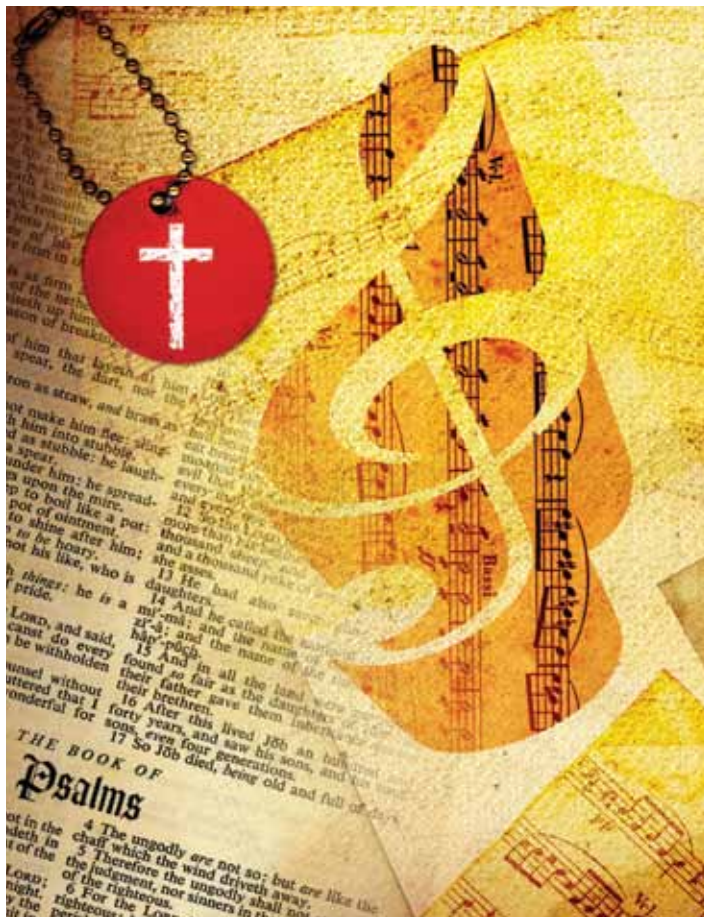
Marie explains that since the Seasonal Choirs don’t have year-round practices and only have a limited time to rehearse before singing the music, they have to be very focused on what they are doing in order to properly learn their repertoire. In order to help make the most of the practice time, Marie usually makes CDs of the music so the members can get a feel for what they will be singing.

“The Seasonal Choirs are a lot of work and require a bit of commitment, but they are also fun!” she says.

New Seasonal Choir members are always welcomed. No auditions or the ability to read music are required to become involved – just a love of singing and the ability to attend rehearsals.

“If you are interested, please come and check us out,” says Marie. “Sit in on a rehearsal and you may be surprised at how much you enjoy it.”

If you are interested in more information on the Sacred Heart Seasonal Choirs, please e-mail Marie Chabot at mchabot@shchopedale.org, or call her at 508-473-1900.





Living Lent in 2010

By Jeff Ayotte

Catholics often think of Lent as a time of “giving up” through fasting and abstinence, which it is, of course. Fasting and abstinence are two forms of penance used during the season of Lent. It is a traditional doctrine of Christian spirituality that part of repentance, of turning away from sin and back to God, includes some form of penance (Catholic.org).

This Lent, I am taking part in the traditional Lenten practice of fasting and abstinence. I have taken Fr. Bill’s words to heart with fasting and have tried to not take it lightly – to not let others know I’m fasting and to be of good cheer while fasting. However, this Lent, I am going to view it as a time of not just abstaining, but as a time of giving. As Jesus said, “Repay to God what belongs to God.” I know that God has blessed me abundantly, so I ask myself, “How can I be a better steward and give of my time, talent and treasure?” Like many people I know, my weekly schedule is relatively full. In brief, I work full-time as an RN while enrolled in a challenging master’s program that is at least a part-time commitment. Having these responsibilities as well as many others puts a premium on my time, and this is why I seek to share more of it with the Lord and others this Lenten season.

Lent is considered a season of penance in the liturgical year. So the first thing I did to kick off



Lent in 2010 was to go to Mass on Ash Wednesday to receive ashes. I understand that ashes are a symbol of penance, and they remind us, “We are dust, and unto dust we shall return.”

Prayer is a large part of my life as a Christian, and therefore I will be spending more time in prayer. At minimum, I will say a prayer before I go to work and before I go to bed. I will say a blessing with each meal. Also, I will meditate continually on the life of Jesus, as well as seek guidance from the Holy Spirit on what the Father’s will is in my life. I also will be praying for the many people who are close to me that need prayers, and others that I do not know personally, like those in Haiti. The Men’s Prayer Group has been a great way for me to pray with others, and I attend as often as my schedule permits. This past year, I have started to pray the Rosary, which I will continue to do during Lent.

During this Lenten season, I will participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I was inspired in prayer by the Holy Spirit to

recognize why each of the sins I have committed offends God. Once I confess and repent of my sins, they are completely forgiven. With Lent being a season of penance, I believe this is a great time to go back to confession to help prepare for the celebration of Jesus’ resurrection on Easter.

I try to read scripture often, and will devote more of my time to doing it during Lent. St. Jerome tells us that ignorance of Sacred Scripture is ignorance of Christ. I like to read and then memorize a piece of scripture like, “Do not let your heart be troubled, ask and you shall receive, knock and the door will be opened to you, seek and you will find.” Or the Apostle Paul’s definition of love in Corinthians, “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast.” This scriptural definition of love is especially helpful in recognizing whether I am being a loving person or whether I am being, well, something else.

So this Lenten season, in addition to “giving up” food, beverage, bad habits, etc., you can “give of” yourself to Him, too. Giving of time, talent and treasure is a way of giving what is owed to God. “The earth is the Lord’s and all it holds – the world and those who live there” (Ps 24:1).

Happy Lenten Season!



Walking With Jesus on Good Friday

What are you doing on Good Friday? If you aren't working, the day may end up as a casual, unsatisfying religious experience. But here's a suggestion: on the day that Jesus walked to His death, you can walk with Him – and with other Sacred Heart parishioners.

“Walk the Walk” is a short prayer walk on the morning of Good Friday. The walk will begin at the parish at 10 a.m. on Friday, April 2, and, depending on how much you want to walk, is a two- to four-mile walk.

“This is a great community event, and something that everybody can do on Good Friday,” says Pam Chaplin, the parish Ministry Coordinator. “It doesn't matter how old or young you are, you can still walk.”

The walkers travel together around Hopedale and make prayer stops. Some of the stops reflect the Corporal Works of Mercy, like stopping at the hospital, a food pantry, and schools to pray for those inside.

The walk has recently become more contemplative, with the new route going through Hopedale, including a stop at the Hopedale Pond. The walkers are also encouraged to meditate on a particular verse from Scripture as they walk.

“Walking is a very reflective activity,” says Karen Martin, the coordinator of this year's walk.

“Walk the Walk” is more than just a parish event, however. It also includes parishioners from both of our cluster parishes – Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Mary of the Assumption in Milford – and from the two other churches in Hopedale.

“It's wonderful to see people come out on such a grand scale and walk in solidarity, from moms pushing babies in



strollers to senior citizens,” says Karen. “We also carry a cross at the front, which is a neat witness.”

The walk ends at Sacred Heart, where everyone is invited to a Simple Meal at noon. Soups, chowders, homemade breads, and water are on the menu for the meatless meal on the fast day.

The meal is prepared by several parish volunteers, and they work hard: over 125 people were there for last year's lunch! Volunteer cooks are always needed. If you want to help make a soup, a chowder, or bread, please call the parish office at 508-473-1900.

Why should you be there? Not just to help yourself walk with Jesus, but to help others walk with Him, too.

“These events encourage not just a sense of community but a sense of prayerful, Christian community,” says Pam.

The walk and meal have a history dating back over 10 years. And we hope that this year, they help you to focus your thoughts on what is important on Good Friday – the death of the Lord.



Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

This month, we celebrate the feast of St. Patrick. Born in the year 385, Patrick grew up in the Roman province of Britain. He was captured at the age of 16 by Irish raiders, taken to Ireland and sold into slavery. And, despite the precarious nature of his captivity, Patrick managed to learn the language and customs of the Druid pagans who held him.

Throughout Patrick's captivity, the young saint would often turn to God in times of distress and need. Prayer became Patrick's refuge, and he would spend hours in conversation with God.

In all, Patrick remained in the hands of his captors for six long years. Then, in the summer of 407, he experienced a profound religious transformation. Commanded by God in a dream, Patrick was instructed to leave Ireland via the coast. There, on the rocky shores of the coast, sailors caught sight of Patrick and returned him to Britain and his family.

However, a short while later, Patrick experienced another profound dream. In the dream, Patrick heard the cries of the Irish people: "We beg you, holy youth, to come and walk among us once more." And although it would be years before he returned to Ireland, the prophetic nature of Patrick's dream was inevitable.

Patrick was not destined to stay in Britain for long; he moved to continental Europe and began studying for

the priesthood in a French monastery. In 432, Patrick was ordained a bishop and commissioned to take the Gospel to Ireland. He reached the Irish shores for a second time on March 25, 433. Patrick would spend the remainder of his life in Ireland, converting the Irish pagans for the next 30 years.

Patrick's legend spread far and wide, and by the grace of God, the saint converted thousands of Druids to the Catholic Faith. He built churches throughout Ireland and opened the eyes of ruthless barbarian kings to the grace and love of Christ. Legend has it that Patrick used an ordinary shamrock clover to explain the mystery of the Trinity to the uneducated Irish people. Other legends depict Patrick ridding the island of venomous snakes. Scientists now know that snakes never inhabited the Emerald Isle, but the story symbolically sheds light on Patrick's evangelical mission: ridding Ireland of pagan religions, as the cross replaced the popular Druid serpent.

Today, 93 percent of Ireland is Catholic. We celebrate St. Patrick's Day on March 17, the

day of his death. A holiday for all nations, St. Patrick's Day has become a universal opportunity to celebrate friendship and good fortune.





Parishioner Profile

The Siefring Family

Jeff Siefring's take on his family's sharing of their time, talents and treasure with our parish community is a humble one.

"We are just like every other family in Hopedale," says Jeff. "My wife often says, 'It takes a village to raise a family,' and we feel that way in helping around the parish. Many of our friends are there, and everyone just helps each other out."

Yet despite his humility, Jeff, his wife, Deb, and their four children have certainly made some wonderful contributions to parish life at Sacred Heart since their move to Hopedale from Ohio in 2000.

Jeff serves as an usher at the 8:30 a.m. Mass, and he is currently a member of the Pastoral Planning Team. Each month, Jeff meets with fellow parishioners to help set a direction for each ministry that reflects the overall parish mission.

"Being a part of the Planning Team has definitely helped me to know that the parish won't run unless everybody is involved and doing something to make it happen," says Jeff. "It is a very open committee, and everyone is willing to listen and share comments."

Deb has taught Faith Formation courses and helped out with sacramental preparation in the past. And the Siefring children are also getting into the act of stewardship, as Anna, Leah, Mitchell and Robbie have all served, or currently serve, as altar servers.

"When I was young, we all served Mass, and I was actually the head altar server," says Jeff. "And it didn't take the kids long to realize that Mass is a lot more fun if you are

serving and active than if you are just sitting there. Each one of our children learned that from watching their siblings, and just kind of followed along. And you have to give Fr. Bill a lot of credit; he is very good with teaching the children the importance of the Mass and giving everyone a chance to participate."

All of the Siefring children have also been enrolled in Faith Formation classes at Sacred Heart, and Anna, the oldest, is currently preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

"The students all seem to look forward to the Sunday afternoon Confirmation prep, and they just came back from the retreat and really enjoyed it," says Jeff.

In the professional sphere, Jeff works as a sales manager for an electronics company, and Deb is an accountant. In addition to their schoolwork and church service, all of the Siefring children are also active in a variety of team sports. And despite their busy schedules, Jeff says that his family's faith life at Sacred



Heart serves as not only a spiritual and social outlet, but also offers his children great examples of how to serve others in loving imitation of Christ.

"You want to teach Christian values and you want to be part of a community, and this gives you a chance to do that," says Jeff. "We recently had a second collection at Mass, and it was unbelievable to see how much money people were giving for relief in Haiti. It's good for the kids to see examples of people who really like to give to good causes, so that when they're older, that experience will hopefully stay with them."

MARCH 2010



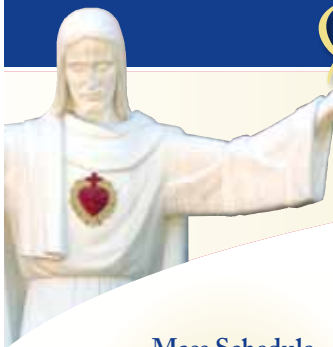
Sacred Heart Church Calendar

Please see page eight of the newsletter for daily and weekly Mass times. This calendar is compiled a month before publication, and dates and times of events may have changed. Please confirm with the parish office, or check our Web site, www.shchopedale.org.

MARCH 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 Feb 9:30a -10:15a Faith Formation Classes 9:30a -10:15a Coffee and Reflection Mass 8:30 & 10:30am 2nd Sunday of Lent	1 Mar 6:30p-9:30p Girl Scout Leader Meetings 6:30p-8:00p Lenten Supper	2 7:00p-8:30p Come Home to God's Mercy - Sacrament of Reconciliation	3 9:30a -11:00a Mom to Mom 11:30a Stations of the Cross 12:00p Lenten Lunch 6:30p-8:00p Lenten Supper	4 9:00a -3:30p Thrift Shop 7:30p-9:00p Women's Prayer Group	5 9:00a -12:00p First Friday Adoration 7:00p Stations of the Cross at Trinity Episcopal Church	6 8:30a AA Meeting 3:00p Reconciliation 4:00p Vigil Mass
7 9:30a -10:15a Faith Formation Classes 9:30a -10:15a Coffee and Reflection 10:30a Mass 10:30a Girl Scout Sunday 3rd Sunday of Lent.	8 6:00p -7:00p Daisy Troop 6:30p -8:00p Lenten Sabbath Suppers 7:30p Cub Scout Committee Meeting	9 10:30a Draper Place Communion Service 3:30p -5:00p Boy Scout Meeting 7:00p -8:30p Come Home to God's Mercy - Sacrament of Reconciliation 7:30p -9:30p Parish Life Night	10 9:30a -11:00a Mom to Mom 10:30a Mass at Continuing Care 11:30a Stations of the Cross 12:00p Lenten Lunch 6:30p Lenten Sabbath Suppers	11 9:00a -3:30p Thrift Shop 11:30a -2:30p Senior Lunch Club 7:30p -9:00p Women's Bible Study	12 7:00p Stations of the Cross at Sacred Heart, Hopedale	13 8:30a -9:30a AA Meeting 1:30p -4:00p First Eucharist Prep. 3:00p Reconciliation 4:00p Vigil Mass
14 9:30a -10:15a Faith Formation Classes 9:30a -10:15a Coffee and Reflection 10:30a Mass 11:45a -12:15p Anointing of the Sick 3:00p -5:00p Confirmation Prep 7 4th Sunday of Lent	15 6:30p -8:00p Lenten Sabbath Suppers	16 5:00p Mustard Seed 7:00p -8:30p Come Home to God's Mercy - Sacrament of Reconciliation	17 9:30a -11:00a Mom to Mom 11:30a Stations of the Cross 12:00p Lenten Lunch 6:30p Lenten Sabbath Suppers St. Patrick's Day	18 9:00a -3:30p Thrift Shop 6:30p -8:00p Men's Prayer Group 7:30p -9:00p Women's Prayer group	19 7:00p Stations of the Cross at Sacred Heart, Milford	20 8:30a -9:30a AA Meeting 3:00p Reconciliation 4:00p Vigil Mass First Day of Spring
21 9:30a -10:15a Faith Formation Classes 9:30a -10:15a Coffee and Reflection 10:30a Mass 5th Sunday of Lent	22 6:30p -8:00p Lenten Sabbath Suppers 7:30p -9:30p Pastoral Planning Meeting	23 10:30a Mass at Draper Place 7:00p -8:30p Come Home to God's Mercy - Sacrament of Reconciliation	24 9:30a -11:00a Mom to Mom 11:30a Stations of the Cross 12:00p Lenten Lunch 6:30p Lenten Sabbath Suppers	25 9:00a -3:30p Thrift Shop 7:30p -9:00p Women's Bible Study The Annunciation of the Lord	26 7:00p Stations of the Cross at Sacred Heart, Milford 7:00p Movie Night - <i>The Passion of the Christ</i>	27 8:30a -9:30a AA Meeting 3:00p Reconciliation 4:00p Vigil Mass 5:00p Seder Dinner
28 10:00a Mass Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday)	29	30 7:00p -8:30p Come Home to God's Mercy - Sacrament of Reconciliation -	31 9:30a -11:00a Mom to Mom	1 Apr 9:00a -3:30p Thrift Shop 6:30p -8:00p Men's Prayer Group Holy Thursday	2 Good Friday	3 8:30a -9:30a AA Meeting Easter Vigil





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Mass Schedule

Saturday

3 p.m. Reconciliation
4 p.m. Vigil Mass

Sunday

8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Masses
(September through May –
in effect after Labor Day)
9:30 a.m. Mass ONLY
(Memorial Day through Labor Day)

Weekdays

9 a.m. Mass – Monday through Thursday
9 a.m. Communion Service
and Adoration – Friday

Holy Days

7:30 p.m. Vigil Mass
(Evening before Holy Day)
9 a.m. Mass

Proud to be Catholic! *continued from front cover*

the total will be when that is pooled with the other 192 Roman Catholic Dioceses in the United States! There truly is strength in numbers.

Rebuilding Haiti will take years; many are suggesting a decade of work lies ahead. The need for assistance will continue in the months and years ahead. Many have asked what they can do to help. At this time, the greatest need is still money, so that professionals trained in crisis management, such as those working with CRS, can continue their work. It is never too late to make contributions. We will be happy to funnel all donations to CRS marked clearly on your check or envelope as “Haitian Relief.”

Our willingness to be co-laborers in aid efforts is what stewardship is all about. We are pooling our treasure with the time and talents of the many relief workers who are trained to rebuild in Haiti and so many other parts of the world. Stewardship is what we celebrate when we come together as community each Sunday, as we keep holy the Sabbath as Roman

Catholics. We come together to receive Communion. Communion means “common-union,” the willingness to unite our time, talent, and treasure to make a difference in the world. Our obligation as Catholics and disciples of Christ is to work together in the vineyard of the Lord, to make the world the place Christ says it ought to be.

As we continue to journey together this Lenten Season, my prayer for all of us is that we will open wide the doors of our hearts and our church to welcome all those who wish to be a part of something larger than our individual selves, and become the “Body of Christ” eager to walk together in common-union one with another. Can you imagine what strength there is in our unity? May we continue to witness the miracles daily!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Bill Konicki, IVD