

Dear Friends:

In just a few short weeks we will begin Lent. It is hard to believe that Lent is here so quickly. Ash Wednesday will be upon us before we know it and we will be scrambling to think of what it is that we are going to give up or what it is that we are going to do different this Lenten Season. Our new year's resolutions may have already been broken and now it is time to make another one. Hopefully, our resolution for Lent isn't just something that we do for the short season of Lent, but something that will make a difference in our spiritual life throughout the year. In order to help us make a lasting change in our life, start thinking of now of what commitment or sacrifice you can make during Lent to offer back in Thanksgiving to God for the new life given to us through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ.

One thing that I would like to invite all us to try to focus on this Lent is providing a more prayerful atmosphere in the church – especially before and after Mass during the season of Lent. One of the great things about St. Isidore Parish is the tremendous sense of family and community that we share. I don't want to do anything to hinder that community connection, but would invite you to consider making those connections, catching up with each other, sharing joys and woes out in the narthex instead of in the church proper. This will allow those who want to spend some extra time in prayer before or after Mass during Lent the opportunity to do so without a lot of distraction.

Another thing that I would invite those of you who regularly attend Mass from the narthex to do is to make a commitment to move into church. You will find that we are very nice people in there and don't bite (well not usually anyway)! You will also find that it will be a much more meaningful experience to be surrounded by a community of faith and actively participating with them in prayer and song during Mass. It amazes me the amount of people of who come to Mass and stake out a spot in the far end of the narthex where they can neither hear nor see Mass and feel they have met their obligation. I know a few people have given me specific reasons why they are unable to be in the church during Mass and I understand those reasons, but if it is not for medical reasons and if there is still room in the church, please enter into the church and join in the liturgical celebration. If you need help finding a seat, ask one of the ushers and they will be happy to help you find a spot. To encourage people to be seated in the church, we will no longer be providing audio of the mass in the narthex except when the church is full and the narthex is needed for overflow room.

May God bless you and your families this week!

Peace, Fr. Jerry