



Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

February 23rd, MMXX

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Month of the Holy Passion of Our Lord

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

There are now only two days left before we begin once again the Holy Season of Lent, or as it is known in Polish – Wielki Post – the Great Fast. Now is Mardi Gras time! Mardi Gras, translated literally means Greasy Tuesday and is also known as Pączki Day.

Pączki are the most popular of the Polish pre-Lenten foods served during the Carnival period preceding Ash Wednesday. On the day before Ash Wednesday, called Tłusty Wtorek or Fat Tuesday, heaping trays of the hot and rich fried cakes are sold in Polish bakeries everywhere. The custom of eating pączki began in old Poland when the lady of the house cleared her kitchen of all butter, eggs, fat and oil as they were not permitted to be eaten during the strict Lenten fast. These ingredients were combined to create an ethnic delicacy that would become popular not only throughout Polonia, but later the entire nation! Adding jelly fillings was a later development that added to the richness of the food. One of the most delicious pączki fillings found only in Poland and especially in the city of Kraków is marmalade made from roses. Its flavor cannot even begin to be described but once tasted will never be forgotten. Eating pączki is part of the final fling that poles enjoy before entering the long and somber season of Lent.

Just For Your Information....

The Polish word pączki is just like the word pierogi. It is the plural form, so a person can have for example a dozen pączki. If that person has only one it is called a pączek. The Polish word pączek, pronounced *pon-chek* is the singular form of the plural pączki, just as pierog is the singular form of the plural pierogi!

Happy Pączki Day! – Tuesday, February 25th!



Sunday, February 23rd – the Feast of St. Polycarp

St. Polycarp was born of Christian parents sometime between the years 75 and 80. He grew up knowing people who had known Jesus. That made him a “second generation Christian.” We know the names of very few people of this generation. Two others are St. Justin and St. Ignatius of Antioch, who met and talked with Polycarp on his way to Rome to be martyred. It was the apostle John himself who appointed Polycarp bishop of the city of Smyrna, now Izmir in Turkey. These links with Jesus made Polycarp precious to his people.

During his long service as bishop of Smyrna, Polycarp faced many challenges. Christians were a minority there. Most of the people of Smyrna enthusiastically worshipped not only the Roman gods but the living emperor as well. Polycarp also faced difficulties from within the faith. A parade of false teachers appeared, one after the other. Polycarp bravely spoke against them to protect his people from confusion.

Around the year 155, a great pagan festival was held in Smyrna. The Romans were hunting for known Christians who could be sacrificed. Polycarp was 86 years old, an old man, and his friends insisted that he hide. When Roman police found his hiding place, he offered them a meal. While they ate, Polycarp prayed for all Christians throughout the world.

Polycarp was taken to the Smyrna stadium. The festival crowds gathered the wood for his execution by fire. But, according to an ancient story, the flames would not burn him, so he was stabbed to death. Polycarp showed so much courage when he died that the emperor’s police burned his body so that Christians would not try to worship it. Polycarp’s burnt bones are entombed with honor in the church of St. Ambrose in Rome. The name Polycarp means “many fruits.” In northern lands, the sap begins to rise in trees around this time, which means the spring is almost here.

Ash Wednesday & the Weekdays & Fridays of Lent

Smearing ashes on our foreheads in the form of a cross may seem like an odd thing to do. They represent death and penance. In past times people put ashes on their faces when someone died to remind those around them to treat them with understanding. For us, Ash Wednesday is a kind of slap in the face to bring us to our senses, reminding us that we came from dust and will return to it one day. But the cross on our foreheads tells us there is more to be said about our final destiny. The Season of Lent reminds us of our dependence on God and His mercy.

In this bulletin is found a copy of the schedule we will be following during the season of Lent and Easter very soon. Everything we will be doing in the parish of Our Lady of the Scapular is on the schedule, so **DO NOT LOSE IT!** It probably should be pinned up somewhere in your house so you can easily refer to it. The official instructions on fasting and abstinence are included.

Lenten booklets with spiritual reading for every day of Lent are available in the church at the Sacred Heart Altar. We hope they will be of great spiritual benefit to our parishioners and that you will find the time in your busy schedule to spend a few moments each day and read the meditation prepared for that day.

At the present time we do not have anything like this for Polish speakers but in my opinion we have something just as good if not even better! That is the weekly praying of the traditional Polish Lenten devotion *Gorzkie Żale*. This will take place every Sunday afternoon at 3:00 PM. *Gorzkie Żale* was one of the primary ways our Polish ancestors grew strong in their appreciation of the sacred passion and suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus. It strengthened Polish people in times gone by for the personal and national suffering they endured. It has the potential to do the same for us today in these very difficult times, when the spiritual life of the world in general seems to be declining. But this will only happen if you come to the devotion! On a personal note I must say that I really love this devotion and attending it every Sunday afternoon in the parish where I grew up in Jackson had a profound effect on my life and helped to lead me to the holy priesthood.

Please make every effort to come to Mass on Ash Wednesday even though it is not a holy day of obligation. I know everyone wants to receive their ashes but receiving Holy Communion is even so much more important! Masses will be said here at 6:30 AM, 12:00 noon and at 7:00 o'clock in the evening, in both Polish and English. These will be the ONLY opportunities to receive the blessed ashes. Please keep in mind during the Season of Lent that the Holy Mass is available to you every day of the week. Going to Mass is the best thing possible for your soul during the holy season!

Every Friday during Lent, starting on March 8th, we will pray the Stations of the Cross in our church at 7:00 PM in the English language. Holy Communion will be distributed at the end of these devotions for those who wish to receive. Also a Fish Fry will take place each Friday of Lent beginning at 3:00 PM in our gym and social room. Please remember Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence and no meat may be eaten. Volunteers for this important fundraiser are always needed and appreciated! This weekly Friday Lenten Schedule of Stations and Fish Fry makes it possible for you to spend a very enjoyable afternoon and evening at your parish church every Friday!

Ash Wednesday is a day of Fast and Abstinence.

***Everyone over 14 years of age must abstain from eating meat
on Ash Wednesday and every Friday of Lent.***

***Everyone between the ages of 18 & 59 must fast on Ash Wednesday and
Good Friday. Only one full meal may be eaten & nothing between meals.***

GOING TO MASS DURING THE WEEK

Pope Saint Pius the tenth once said "The Holy Mass is a prayer itself, even the highest prayer that exists. It is the Sacrifice, dedicated by our Redeemer at the Cross, and repeated every day on the Altar." During the holy season of Lent the Church urges us even more than usual, to incorporate into our lives those practices which will help us to grow in holiness. Going to Mass is definitely one of them. Mass is offered in our church every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:30 AM and every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:00 PM. Of course we understand that the majority of our parishioners must go to work and are not free to attend Mass in the morning. Since we have Mass on Tuesday and Thursday evenings we would hope that folks who would go to a weekday Mass if they could, will take advantage of this more convenient hour. Of course, after a day at work it would be easier just to come home and take it easy for the evening, and getting in the car and going off to church would take some effort, but anything we undertake to improve ourselves does require some work. And there is a pay off for the time and energy invested in going to Mass. The most obvious and most important is Holy Communion, but there is also that opportunity to be in God's house for thirty minutes or so and to hear what God wants to say to us in the scriptures and the prayers of the Mass.

Benefiting from these also requires effort. Pope Pius X goes on to write, "If you wish to hear Mass as it should be heard, you must follow with eye, heart and mouth all that happens at the Altar. Further, you must pray with the Priest the holy words said by him in the Name of Christ and which Christ says by him. You have to associate your heart with the holy feelings which are contained in these words and in this manner you ought to follow all that happens at the Altar. When acting in this way you have prayed Holy Mass." Please at least consider coming to the Tuesday and Thursday evening Masses at 7:00 o'clock PM during Lent. Those who are wise enough to take advantage of this treasure will gain so much from it!

From time to time, when I have a few spare moments, (*which is really quite rare*), I like to read through our extensive collection of old time bulletins so as to get an even greater insight about the history of our wonderful parish. Our parish has always been very active with many societies, organizations and clubs. In times gone the parish church and the parish school were the center of most Catholics lives. Over the years the pastors have always tried to challenge parishioners to be active in parish life and to welcome new comers into the fold. And so...there appeared in the February 1952 *Skaplerzowo* the following "Catholic Questionnaire." It is somewhat dated to the era and yet...I think it could still be very accurate in helping a parishioner in the year 2020 at Our Lady of the Scapular evaluate themselves. And so here it is with minor notations to make it more relevant to our times. Take it and rate yourself.

- #1. Do I know the names of the priests here?
- #2. Did I ever talk with them personally?
- #3. Does the priest know me by name or looks?
- #4. Do I know at least 50 other parishioners?
- #5. Do I know off-hand the schedule and time of Masses?
- #6. Where I can find the rectory phone number?
- #7. Do I boost the parish by word or deed?
- #8. Is my name on the Parish records?
- #9. Is my correct address on parish files?
- #10. Do I have and use parish envelopes weekly?
- #11. Do I give my dime, seat offering, weekly?
- #12. Do I give \$1.00 at least once a month?
- #13. Did I give all my salvage to the church?
- #14. Was I to at least 10 Bingos last year?
- #15. Did I offer my services to the parish?
- #16. Did I help out in any raffle last year?
- #17. Do I save and read every "Skaplerzowo"?



How about offerings today for heat, special collections or CSA?

Please adjust this for modern times! \$10 a week is only \$40 a month!

We still can use your used items to sell at the re-sale shop

How about the many fund raisers necessary to keep our parish going?

We always need volunteers to get involved especially during Mass

The Festival is the ULTIMATE raffle!

Reading the Bulletin is one of the most important things you should do every week!