



Stronica Proboszcza

The Pastor's Page

March 8th, MMXX
Second Sunday of Lent
Month of Saint Joseph

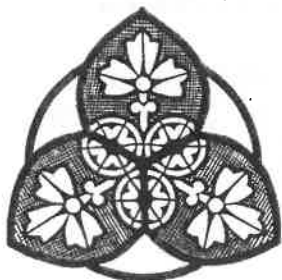
Rev. Mark A. Borkowski

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!
Praised be Jesus Christ!

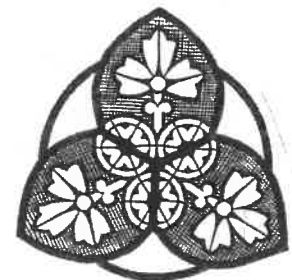
We have all now completed the first week and a half of the holy season of Lent. If you are keeping a count, 10 of the 40 days of Lent are gone. It is important to continuously evaluate ourselves during this special time of year. Have I been to Mass on any of these weekdays of Lent when there was no moral obligation but only the opportunity to show God my love and thankfulness for the gift of His Son and the Sacrament of the Eucharist? Have I gone to the Stations of the Cross at church or meditated and prayed over the suffering and death of Christ and what it means for me? Have I showed special kindness, compassion and patience to the people I live and work with as a sign of my sorrow for sin? Have I made some contribution from my own material blessings to help the poor among us? Have I volunteered my time or work in my community or parish to help with special projects going on? What am I planning to do for the other 30 days of Lent? Am I already planning for the Holy Days of Easter and how I will arrange my social life **around** my church attendance and not vice versa? These are important questions that should fill our minds this day if we are really serious about making this the best Lent ever.

As a very important part of your Lenten program I want to remind you that our annual solemn Forty Hours Devotion will take place on March 20th, March 21st & 22nd. This is an intense time of prayer in a parish during which we thank God for the precious gift of the Holy Eucharist, which is the center of our lives as Christians because it is Christ HIMSELF! You need to take part in these observances! You need to plan to take part in them NOW! Use your Lenten Schedule to find the dates and mark your calendar. Christ was able to give us the great gift of the Holy Eucharist because of His Sacred Passion. It was on the cross when His words at the last supper were truly fulfilled, "This is my body... this is my blood, given for you so that sins may be forgiven." We are expecting guests for our Forty Hours. It will be a joyful time in our parish. The closing ceremony will be followed by a "Polish" banquet in our hall. **Maryann Rogowski** is cooking again! Tickets are \$12 and are available now for purchase. Seating is limited.



Czas ucieka, wieczność czeka!

Time flies, eternity waits!



Gorzkie Żale – The Bitter Lamentations

Are you familiar with this 100% Polish Lenten Devotion. What is it you ask? Or better yet what are they? *Gorzkie Żale* translates literally as the Bitter Lamentations or Sorrows. It is a sung devotion that focuses on the passion and death of the Lord Jesus and the sorrows of His grieving mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The *Gorzkie Żale* devotion Polish people practice was first introduced in the city of Warsaw in 1707 at the church of the Holy Cross. This is a well known church in the city of Warsaw, staffed by the Vincentian fathers. Frederick Chopin was organist there at one time. In front of the church on *Nowy Świat* Street stands a famous statue of Christ carrying His Cross with one hand raised in a beckoning call. At the foot of the figure the Latin words *Sursum Corda/Lift up your hearts* are carved.

The missionary priests of St. Vincent de Paul who wrote the texts for this beloved devotion drew their inspiration from various *mystery plays* that dated back to the Middle Ages in Europe. The theme of course was the Passion of Christ, one so common on the Polish countryside which is dotted with roadside crosses, shrines and carved figures of the *Worrying Christ* or *Chrystus frasobliwy*. This folk carving common in the Polish village depicts Christ sitting with a scarlet cape on His shoulders and a crown of thorns on His head. For some strange reason our ancestors loved this Christ, maybe because He too was worried, maybe because He reminded them of a confessor, maybe because He too suffered.

It was this Jesus that was most human, who is Jesus sung of during the musical meditations of *Gorzkie Żale*. It was at Calvary that God became real, like one of us, even worse: *despised and scorned by men*. Here He truly *emptied Himself taking the form of a slave* and felt His humanity. This moving devotion helps all of us meditate with all creation on the death of the Savior of the world and the suffering of His sorrowful mother. The plaintive melodies set the tone for the soul to call out to Christ in the midst of our own trials and find meaning and peace of soul.

During Lent the *Gorzkie Żale* devotion will takes place every Sunday afternoon at 3:00 PM. *Gorzkie Żale* is a wonderful continuation of the Lenten Mass prayers.

The devotion begins with this poetic meditation:

O bitter sorrows, come and pierce our dark, cold hearts. Cause tears to flow freely from my eyes in fountains of sadness. The sun and the stars seem to be fainting, as they drape themselves in mourning. Angels are weeping tenderly, O who can explain such sorrow as theirs? The face of the earth breaks itself open as the dead begin to rise up from their graves. What is this I ask, what could be happening? Now all of creation is trembling! The pain of Christ's Passion causes me overwhelming, unspoken repentance. Jesus, strike and break open, without hesitation, our hardened hearts. O my Jesus, cleanse my soul from its sin in the blood of Your wounds. Lord, inflame my cold heart, now as I enter once more into Your Sacred Passion.

Every Friday of Lent is a day of Abstinence.

***Everyone over 14 years of age must abstain from eating meat
Why not come to our Fish Fry and support your parish and save yourself the
trouble of cooking? In the school building from 3PM until 7P***

*Kłaniamy Ci się Panie Jezu Chryste i błogosławimy Tobie
Żeś przez krzyż i mękę swoją świat odkupił raczył.*

The Stations of the Cross – Droga Krzyżowa

Stations of the Cross, whether conducted publicly or undertaken individually, are a strongly recommended Lenten devotion. The Stations focus our attention more sharply on the Passion and Death of Christ. They are a very ancient and beautiful act of piety, the origins of which go back to the custom of making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. A pilgrimage was a long and arduous journey for a religious purpose. Pilgrims to the Holy Land would stand in reverence and meditative reflection at the locations which according to tradition, were made holy by such incidents in Our Lord's suffering as His falls, His meeting with Veronica and His own Blessed Mother, etc. "Station" comes from the Latin word "sto" meaning "I stand." It is a place where people stand. Since it was not feasible for large numbers of people to leave their homes for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, however ardently they may have wished to do so, the next best thing was done – the pilgrimage was brought to the people. This took the form of the fourteen Stations of the Cross as we now use them. Please consider coming to the Stations of the Cross in our church every Friday of Lent at 7:00 PM. This devotion will conclude with the distribution of Holy Communion.

*We Adore Thee O Christ and we praise Thee.
Because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world!*

Your Parish

If your parish church is actually the dwelling place of Jesus Christ, Who is there to help you; if it possesses the altar, on which Christ renews every morning the sacrifice of His body and blood for you; if it is the place where you were baptized, confirmed, received your first holy communion, where your soul has been repeatedly washed from sin, where you were or hope to be married, where the remains of your loved ones were blessed before burial, where alone you will long be remembered in prayer and Mass after you are gone – If your parish church is all this to you, surely it has a greater claim on your time, your gratitude and your support than any other person or institution in the world. Think about it!

*Przypatrz się duszo, jak cię Bóg miłuje, Jako dla ciebie, sobie nie folguje,
Przecież Go bardziej, niż katowska dręczy, złość twoja męczy.*

*O my soul, how much God loves you. See how He does not even spare Himself, but
it is your malice that pains Him even more than the executioner's torture.*

Gorzkie Zale part II

So Why Do Catholics Eat Fish on Friday?

It would seem as if from almost time immemorial Catholics have been known in this world as “those people, who eat fish on Friday!” Even though it is officially only our practice on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent, still that is the way many a non-Catholic would see us. Actually the real practice is called abstinence and it means abstaining from eating “flesh meat,” such as beef, pork, or poultry. There is a far-fetched theory that has circulated for quite some time that Friday abstinence was a medieval invention designed to help the fishing industry of the time.

According to Canon Law, this weekly act of abstinence is a sign of penance on the day of Our Lord’s crucifixion. From a theological perspective the idea is that we abstain from the meat of animals whose blood has been shed on the day in which the blood of the Godman was shed. Fish became the exception to this rule because the fish became the symbol of Christ and the Holy Eucharist.

In the days when abstaining from meat was mandatory for all Catholics every Friday of the year, restaurants were quick to offer appropriate menus for the day and even to this day the Friday specials of most restaurants feature fresh fish catches and clam chowder. Even McDonald’s added the Filet-O-Fish sandwich to its menus in 1962 after Louis Groen, owner of the chain’s Cincinnati franchises, noticed that his restaurants experienced a sharp drop in sales every Friday.

It is important to remember that the early church took many of its customs and practices from the Jewish Faith. The Jews have many days of fasting and abstaining from meat on their calendar. The early Christians chose both Wednesday and Friday as days of penance. Wednesday, because Our Lord was betrayed by Judas on a Wednesday and Friday of course because on this day of the week the Lord was put to death.

There is yet one other explanation for the eating of fish, especially during the season of Lent. The forty days of Lent are often compared to the forty days and nights Noah and his family spent on the ark when the world was flooded. During this time they of course ate no meat as the animals were on board so as to be saved from death. Rather fishing and the eating of fish became the norm for their time afloat.

Lent

The word Lent is from the Anglo-Saxon *Lencten* (spring). *Lenctentid* (springtide) was the Saxon name for the month of March because March is the month in which days begin to lengthen (also a root of “lent”). This penitential season, falling as it does largely in the month of March, adopted and adapted the term and so we call this season Lent. In Polish, Lent is called *Wielki Post* which means the great fast. There was a time in the life of the Church when every day of Lent (except Sunday) was considered a day of fast. Also during this period of Church history both Wednesdays and Fridays were days of abstinence. Even though the rules have now been greatly relaxed Lent continues to be for us a challenging season of self denial and a time for all of us to humbly attempt to atone for the many sins we have all committed in this life.

Stations of the Cross every Friday of Lent!

At 7 PM Come and walk this sorrowful road with Our Lord and Our Lady

And receive Holy Communion for the good of your immortal soul!