

attention all faith formation classes

There will be **no** Faith Formation Classes on **Sunday, February 18, 2007** and on Wednesday, **February 21, 2007** because of the Winter Vacation for the Vernon School System. These classes will resume on Sunday, February 25th and Wednesday February 28th.

first reconciliation parents meeting

The parents of children preparing for their first celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be meeting on the following dates:

Monday, February 19 @ 7pm in the Fellowship Rooms

Tuesday, March 6 @ 7pm in the Parish Library

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rella at the Faith Formation office (875-4563) or by e-mail (rella@sacredheartchurch.net).

women of the bible series

The *Women of the Bible Series*, conducted by Rev. Dr. Karen Roy, will continue on **Tuesday, February 13, 2007 at 10:00am**. All sessions will meet in the Fellowship Rooms. Questions? Please contact Rella.

mardi gras news

Mardi Gras will be celebrated in the Fellowship Rooms this **Tuesday, February 20** at 6:30pm. Sign up sheets for the pot luck dinner are located at the entrances of the church. Included with the pot-luck dinner will be the selection of prayer partners for Lent. So plan on attending and take this opportunity to show off your wildest hats and beads!

lenten bible study

Disciples on the Journey will be presented as our Lenten Bible Study. Meetings will be held on Thursday morning beginning February 22nd. We are hoping to hold meetings on Sunday evenings for those who cannot attend on Thursday mornings. If you would like to attend on Sunday, please contact Fr. Stan or Rella. The first Sunday session begins on February 25th.

youth group

Some members of the Youth Group will be going to Cornerstone in order to prepare and serve lunch on Saturday, February 24th. We will leave the church parking lot at 9:50am.

first eucharist parents meeting

The parents of children preparing for their first Holy Communion will be meeting on the following dates:

Tuesday, February 27 @ 7pm in the Parish Library

Tuesday, March 13 @ 7pm in the Fellowship Rooms

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rella at the Faith Formation office (875-4563) or by e-mail (rella@sacredheartchurch.net).

readings for the week

Sunday: 1 Sm 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23/1 Cor 15:45-49/Lk 6:27-38

Monday: Sir 1:1-10/Mk 9:14-29

Tuesday: Sir 2:1-11/Mk 9:30-37

Wednesday: Jl 2:12-18/2 Cor 5:20-6:2/Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thursday: 1 Pt 5:1-4/Mt 16:13-19

Friday: Is 58:1-9a/Mt 9:14-15

Saturday: Is 58:9b-14/Lk 5:27-32

Next Sunday: Dt 26:4-10/Rom 10:8-13/Lk 4:1-13

operation rice bowl

For thirty-two years Operation Rice Bowl has been extending the love of the Catholic Community in the U.S. to our neighbors in developing nations around the world. Operation Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services' Lenten program that helps us be one with our brothers and sisters in other countries through prayers, activities, and offerings. As we **pray**, we recognize how Jesus is present to those who suffer. When we **fast**, we understand how devastating hunger can be. We **learn** how much is being done by Catholic Relief Services to provide clean drinking water, basic health care, good farming techniques, and income-producing projects. And we **give** in honor of the many blessings we have received so that others may have life. Our community is participating in Operation Rice Bowl this Lent. Please use the *Rice Bowl* stapled to your bulletin for your family.

welcome to sacred heart parish!

The following families have recently joined our parish family:

Richard & Stephanie Denicolo

David & Laura Donner

Edward & Cynthia Gagnon, Jr. & their children, Daniel & Hannah

James N. Oulundsen

We welcome these families to our parish and look forward to worshipping with them.

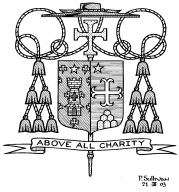
*To thank you
for all that you do
for Sacred Heart Parish...*

You are cordially invited to
an **OPEN HOUSE** at

157 Tallwood Drive, Vernon

TODAY

Sunday, February 18, 2007
2 – 4pm



Diocese of Norwich
Office of the Bishop
201 Broadway
Norwich, Connecticut 06360
(860) 887-9294

MOST REVEREND
MICHAEL R. COTE, D.D.

January 25, 2007

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

These forty (40) days of Lent prepare us for the celebration of the Paschal Mystery, the Lord's Passion, Death, and Resurrection. In this holy season, we renew our understanding of what God has done for us so that we may open our hearts anew to Jesus Christ and to His Risen Presence. By living Lent well, we greet and welcome Christ into our lives as the Lamb of God (cf. John 1:29) Whose sacrifice on the Cross atones for our sins and restores us to God's grace.

Whether through prayer, fasting, or almsgiving, Lent equips us with the means to understand more deeply the richness of God's love for us. "For God sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through Him the world might be saved." (John 3:17) Lent's penitential practices lead us to "ongoing conversion and deeper faith in the Lord who redeemed us." (U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults, P. 518) In His farewell discourses to the Apostles, Jesus seeks to strengthen our faith and to convince them (and us) of God's love for us. In His prayer to the Father, Jesus prays, "I have made Your Name known to them and I will continue to make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and so that I may be in them." (John 17:26)

By making time each day for prayer, the Rosary, the Way of the Cross, and the reading of Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospel of Saint John where Christ is presented as "the healer and life giver," (The Order of Prayer, Paulist Press Ordo, P. 56) Lent directs our attention to the richness of God's merciful love. His love empowers us to conquer sin and death.

Saint John's Gospel focuses our attention on the person of Jesus Christ and our need for Him as well as His gift of salvation. In redirecting our lives toward Jesus we experience a hunger for God that can only be satisfied through the reception of Penance and the Eucharist. By these Sacraments the burden of sin is lifted from our hearts, we are restored to the life we received in Baptism, and our life of faith is nourished and strengthened.

Lent shows us that without God life is empty. Without God the deepest hunger of our souls cannot be satisfied and life does not make sense. A well-lived Lent rescues us from floundering aimlessly along life's pathways. Our focus on Jesus and His life-giving Passion, Death, and Resurrection helps us to see that Jesus is the perfect lamb of sacrifice whose "precious Blood" is shed for our ransom "from the useless way of life..." (cf Peter 1:18-19)

In his Lenten Pastoral for 2007, our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, focuses the world's gaze on Christ crucified with the Biblical theme, "They shall look on Him whom they have pierced." (John 19:37) The Holy Father urges us to remain close to Jesus by standing with our Blessed Mother and Saint John near the Cross of Christ. In that

terrible moment of torment and death in which Jesus is pierced and nailed to a Cross, the love of God is fully revealed.

The Pope teaches that God's love is both, "the self-giving love of one who looks exclusively for the good of another...(and) the love of one who desires to possess what he or she lacks, and yearns for union with the beloved." The Holy Father continues, "The Almighty awaits the 'yes' of His creatures as a young bridegroom that of his bride." How could anyone understand this truth and remain separated from God? But as we know, our "yes" to God falters when we rely on ourselves and reject His love by choosing our way over His will. Lent is God's invitation to us to say "yes" to His will, His way, His love.

Pope Benedict enriches our Lenten reflection on Christ crucified as the paramount sign of God's love for us when he writes, "On the Cross, it is God Himself Who begs the love of His creature: He is thirsty for the love of every one of us.... The response the Lord ardently desires of us is, above all, that we welcome His love and allow ourselves to be drawn to Him." The Holy Father reminds us that our Lenten journey leads us to the renewal of our Baptism in which we received God's life. This Lenten journey shows us why we must seek the strength and nourishment of the Eucharist, Jesus' own Body and Blood. In union with Jesus through the Eucharist, we embrace God's love and we receive the courage "to open our hearts to others" and to "re-give" that love to our family members, friends, and neighbors, in short, to everyone.

Look at Jesus Whose Body they have pierced and remember that in the blood and water flowing from His side our salvation has been won. In the agony of Jesus' suffering and death, the Father's love for us is so convincingly and graphically real. The life of grace and the Eucharist symbolized by the water and blood continue to nourish our life of faith received at Baptism through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This Lent, I appeal to every member of this Diocesan Church, as often as you can, at least daily, to make some small sacrifice and to offer a prayer for peace, for an end to war, and for unity and harmony among all people. Our prayers and sacrifices should also be made for our heroic military, especially those who serve in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan. Throughout the Lenten and Easter Seasons, I call upon our clergy to include one petition for peace in the General Intercessions of each Sunday Mass. In our penitential practices, by uniting our sacrifices with Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, we can open our hearts to others, "especially to those who suffer most and are in need." (Pope Benedict's Lenten Pastoral)

By making such a commitment to peace and by "re-giving" God's love to others, we will come to Easter renewed by the essence of God's life, His love for us all. Lent, well lived, will revitalize our lives and faith, renew our hearts in love, and bring us to the joy of Jesus' Resurrection, His victory over sin and death. The joy we experience will come from a closer union with God and a deeper awareness of His merciful love. Then, Jesus' victory over sin and death will truly be ours.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop of Norwich

FEBRUARY 18, 2007

the work of the church

SATURDAY 5:00pm	VIGIL: 7 TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Mass: Onorata Labbadia , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family
SUNDAY 8:00am	7 th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Mass: Gertrude & Harold Rogers , requested by Michelle Farris & Joyce Melia
10:30am	Mass: Edward Simcoe , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family
MONDAY 9:00am	(ORTHODOX LENT BEGINS) Mass: Al Bousquet , requested by his family
MARDI GRAS 9:00am	(FAT TUESDAY) Mass: Michael Fandacone , requested by Jason Koropatkin

ASH WEDNESDAY	
9:00am	Ashes
11:00am	At Welles Village: Ashes (All are welcome)
7:00pm	Ashes

THURSDAY 4:30 – 6pm 7:00pm	CHAIR OF ST. PETER, APOSTLE Sacrament of Reconciliation , living room Mass: George Sedlik, Sr. , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family
FRIDAY 9:00am	POLYCARP, BISHOP & MARTYR Mass: Larry Kuhn , requested by Mary Kuhn
SATURDAY 5:00pm	VIGIL: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Mass: Robert Perodeau , requested by the Sacred Heart Parish Family
SUNDAY 8:00am	FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT Mass: Mitchell Szczapa, 1st Anniversary , requested by the Szczapa & Stewart Families
10:30am	Mass: Rose Ford, requested by her son, Greg

meetings

SATURDAY 9am – 4pm 7:00pm	Ladies Day Party Narcotics Anonymous* , Northeast Rooms
SUNDAY NO 2-4pm	Good Fellowship & Tasty Goodies after Mass Faith Formation – Levels 1 – 8 or Youth Group <u>Open House at 157 Tallwood Drive</u>
MONDAY 7:00pm	Offices Closed 1st Eucharist Parents Meeting , South Comm. Rooms
FAT TUESDAY 10:00am 6:30pm	Women in the Bible with Rev. Dr. Karen Roy, South Community Rooms <u>Mardi Gras</u>
ASH WEDNESDAY NO 8:00pm	Faith Formation Alcoholics Anonymous* , South Community Rooms
THURSDAY 10:00am 7:45pm 8:00pm	Bible Study , South Community Rooms Intercessory Prayer , Eucharistic Chapel Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book* , South Community Rooms
SATURDAY 7:00pm	Narcotics Anonymous* , Northeast Rooms
SUNDAY 9:10am 6:30pm 7:45pm	Good Fellowship & Tasty Goodies after Mass Faith Formation – Levels 1 – 5 Faith Formation Level 6 – Conf Prep Youth Group