

HOLY REDEEMER



GRACE NOTES

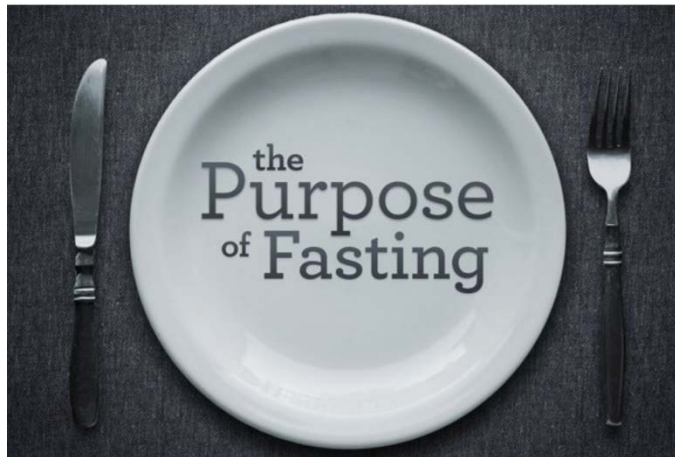
March 2024

Introduction...

This year Lent encompasses the entire month of March. The Lenten season commemorates the 40 days Jesus Christ spent fasting in the desert and enduring temptation by Satan before beginning his public ministry. Similarly, Catholics use the 40 days of Lent to prepare for the celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

The three pillars upon which Lent is built are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and Catholics are urged to incorporate all three in their approach to preparing for Easter.

Prayer -- Prayer is simply our conversation with God, and during the season of Lent we are called to deepen our prayer life. That could mean beginning a habit of daily prayer, setting aside time each day to share our hopes, joys, fears, and frustrations with God. Praying first thing in the morning, while the house is still quiet, or talking to God while on our commute to work are simple ways to integrate prayer into everyday life.



Fasting -- Lent has traditionally been the season where we give something up, such as those things or habits that may have become a roadblock to our relationship with Christ. Fasting from food can be a reminder of our abundance and a way to walk in solidarity with people around the world who struggle with daily hunger and starvation. Limiting social-media exposure or fasting from the 24-hour news networks can be a way to quiet our minds and open our hearts to transformation. Fasting from undesirable habits such as anger, judgment or jealousy can also heighten our Lenten experience.

Almsgiving -- Charitable giving is a very ancient practice. Indeed almsgiving was a common practice long before the time of Jesus. The Lenten call to almsgiving means making the needs of other people our own. Sharing our material goods is often just the beginning of real Christian giving. We are also called to share our time tending to people in need. Non-traditional approaches to almsgiving can include volunteering, tutoring a child, or giving blood.



Together prayer, fasting, and almsgiving lead us to the heart of what Lent is about -- a deeper engagement with God.

On the Shoulders of Giants – The Apostles

Isaac Newton said that all he had accomplished in life was due to “standing on the shoulders of the giants” who came before him. Each month we will remember one of the giants upon whose shoulders the parishioners of Holy Redeemer are perched.

For the past year Grace Notes has been focusing on the Apostles and individually illuminating each of their life stories. So far we’ve profiled eleven of the original Apostles: Andrew, Simon Peter, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the Lesser, Jude Thaddeus, and Simon the Cananaean. This month we’re profiling perhaps the most famous – and certainly most infamous -- of all the Apostles, Judas Iscariot.

According to several sources, Judas was born in Kerieth, a small town in southern Judea. Indeed, Judas' epithet "Iscariot" is usually thought to be a Greek rendering of a Hebrew phrase meaning "the man from Kerieth." He was the only son of wealthy parents. Simon, his father, moved the family to Jericho when Judas was young. Simon was a businessman and young Judas became his assistant. When Judas matured, he became interested in the preaching of John the Baptist. However, Judas' parents were both Sadducees who opposed John's teachings, and after Judas joined John his parents disowned him.



While Judas was following John he was approached by the apostle Nathaniel about joining Jesus' group. He thus became the twelfth and last apostle to be selected. His role was treasurer of the group, an assignment he faithfully discharged until the end.

Judas was known to question Jesus' motives on several occasions. The best known example was cited in John 12:3-8. "Mary took a very expensive bottle of perfume and poured it on Jesus' feet. She wiped them with her hair, and the sweet smell of the perfume filled the house. A disciple named Judas Iscariot was there. He was the one who was going to betray Jesus, and he asked, 'Why wasn't this perfume sold for 300 silver coins and the money given to the poor?' Jesus replied, 'Leave her alone! She has kept this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor with you, but you won't always have me.'"

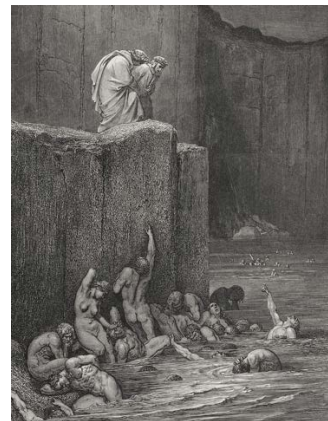
All four canonical gospels record that Judas betrayed Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, revealing his identity to the crowd that had come to arrest him. The Gospel of Matthew (26:15) states that Judas committed the betrayal in exchange for thirty pieces of silver. The Gospel of Luke (22:3) and the Gospel of John (13:27) suggest that he was possessed by Satan.



According to Matthew (27:1–10), after learning that Jesus was to be crucified, Judas returned the money he had been paid for his betrayal to the chief priests and hanged himself. The priests used the money to buy a field to bury strangers in, which was called the "Field of Blood" because it had been bought with blood money. The Book of Acts (1:18) suggests a more florid end for Judas, wherein Peter is quoted as saying that Judas used the money to buy the field himself and, he "[fell] headlong... burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

Not all biblical scholars agree that Judas' motivation for betraying Jesus was money. Several authors have proposed as a less cold-blood explanation for Judas' motive, namely that he was simply disappointed with Jesus' leadership, as when Jesus refused to be crowned "King of the Jews" at the feeding of the five thousand. Ultimately Judas may have expected Jesus to overthrow Roman rule of Judea. According to this view, Judas is a disillusioned disciple betraying Jesus not so much because he loved money, but because he loved his country and thought Jesus had failed it.

Whatever his motivation, the name "Judas" is now synonymous with treachery and betrayal, and he is referenced as such in works as varied as the movie "Seven Days in May" and Dante's book "Inferno." In the latter work, Judas is punished for all eternity in the Ninth Circle of Hell, where he is devoured for eternity by Lucifer. Worse still, Dante named the *innermost* region of the ninth circle – the region reserved for traitors of masters and benefactors -- "Judecca," after Judas.



Next month's installment promises to be a bit cheerier and will be devoted to the man who replaced Judas as the twelfth apostle, Mathias.

Reflections on Holy Redeemer's Day of Reflection and Faith-Sharing

On Saturday, February 17th Holy Redeemer Parish sponsored a "Day of Reflection and Faith-Sharing." The event – which was held at Our Lady of Grace Chapel – began at 9 A.M. and ended in the late afternoon so that participants can attend the 4 PM Vigil Mass.



The event was a tremendous success, with 81 people turning out for the day's activities. In addition, at the conclusion of the Day of Reflection and Faith-Sharing more than half of the attendees signed up to participate in subsequent small faith-sharing groups. "Small groups" are typically composed of 8-10 people who meet weekly for about an hour to pray, discuss scripture, and share their experiences related to their faith.

Allison Gingras, an award-winning author and speaker, served as the event's moderator, sharing her personal faith journey with the participants, including the power of small groups and how participating in a small group was transformational for her. If you have not signed up for a small faith-sharing group and wish to do so, please contact Beth Norcross at the rectory and let her know that you wish

to be included. Beth's email address is beth.norcross@holyredeemerchatham.org and her telephone number is 508 945-0677.

The parish will also sponsor a series of seven weekly discussions beginning in April, during which small groups will meet to share their thoughts on "Jesus and the Eucharist." Additional details will be provided shortly.

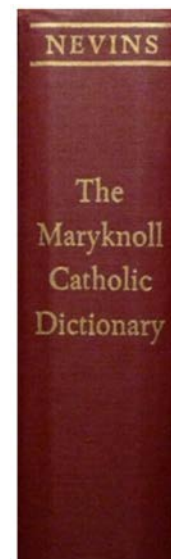
Jeopardy for Catholics

Here's the way this works. Each month we will focus on three elements of Catholicism as noted in the "The Mary Knoll Catholic Dictionary," and ask you to name them. As always, your answers must worded in the form of a question. This month it's the Book of Leviticus, often considered the "rule book" of the Old Testament. While some of the rules in the Book of Leviticus could use some updating, such as "Thou shall not trim thy beard" and "Thou shall not mix fabrics in clothing," others such as limiting the sort of creatures that could be eaten were typically based on legitimate health concerns at the time.

Here goes.

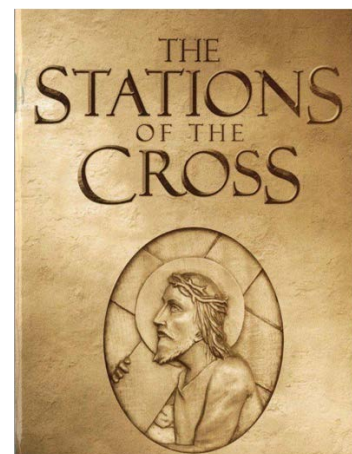
- **Number 1:** The Book of Leviticus forbids doing this to your skin.
- **Number 2:** The Book of Leviticus demands doing this in the presence of the elderly.
- **Number 3:** The Book of Leviticus forbids doing this to grain at the edges of your field.

The answers are provided on the final page of Grace Notes.



Why Do We Pray the Stations of the Cross?

Remembering the Stations of the Cross, which follow the path of Christ from Pontius Pilate's praetorium to his tomb, has been a popular form of Lenten devotion in parishes for centuries. Such devotion began with Mary, who daily visited the scenes of her son's passion. After Constantine legalized Christianity in the year 312, this pathway was marked with its important stations.



In 1342, the Franciscans were appointed as guardians of the shrines of the Holy Land, and the faithful began praying at the following stations: At Pilate's house; where Jesus met His mother; where He spoke to the women; where He met Simon of Cyrene; where the soldiers stripped Him of His garments; where He was nailed to the cross; and at His tomb.

When the Moslem Turks blocked the access to the Holy Land, reproductions of the stations were erected at popular spiritual centers. At that time, the number of the stations varied. Some versions included the house of Dives (the rich man in the Lazarus story), the city gate through which Christ passed, and the houses of Herod and Simon the Pharisee.

At the end of the 17th century, the erection of stations in churches became more popular, and in 1731 Pope Clement XII permitted stations to be created in all churches. He also fixed the number at 14.

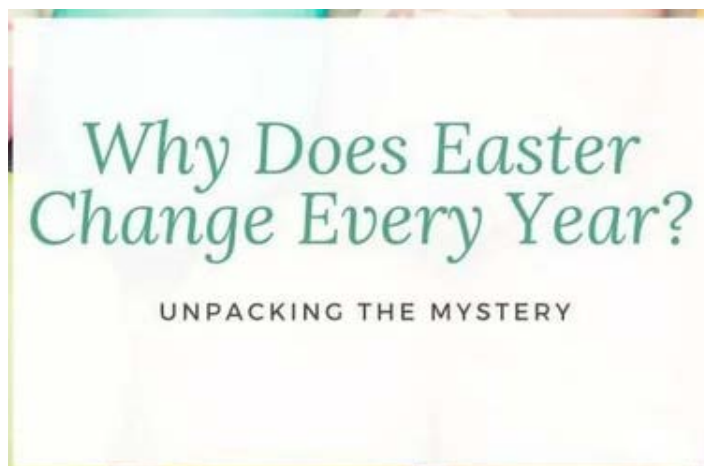
The Church has recently stated that even though the Stations of the Cross represents a private devotion focusing on the passion of Christ, it should end in such a way as to convey hope in the resurrection. This has led some to consider a 15th station or simply a concluding prayer focusing on the resurrection.

Holy Redeemer's Stations of the Cross services are conducted every Friday at 4:30 PM during Lent (with the exception of Good Friday). Given the ongoing renovation at Holy Redeemer, the services are conducted at Our Lady of Grace. Following the services, the Hospitality Ministry sponsors a "Soup Supper" in the basement of Our Lady of Grace.

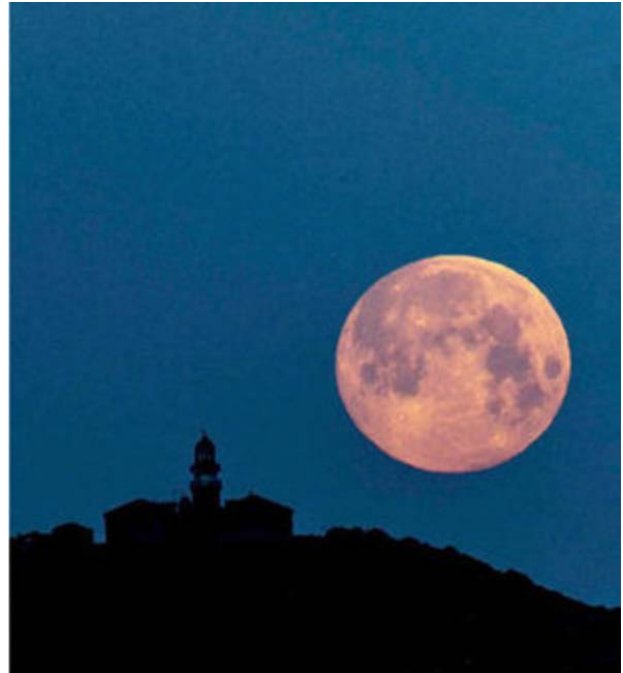
Why Does the Date for Easter Change Every Year?

Here's another *why* topic.

There are holidays you can count on, like Christmas which is always on December 25th, or St. Patrick's Day, is always on March 17th. And though the date for Thanksgiving might vary, it's always on the fourth Thursday of November. Then there's Easter. While Easter is always on Sunday, it can be celebrated as early as March 22nd or as late as April 25th. Which means that the dates for Ash Wednesday and Lent can also vary by more than a month from year to year. It seems like a pretty random way to celebrate the Church's most holy time of the year, and yet they're nothing haphazard about the system used to determine the date for Easter. Indeed, it's the product of a very interesting mathematical equation that goes back centuries.



Easter's exact date varies so much because it depends on the moon. The holiday is set to coincide with the first Sunday after the Paschal Full Moon, which is the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Although the equinox's exact date can wobble slightly each year, the Church always recognizes the vernal equinox as March 21. So why does Easter come after the Paschal Full Moon? It's because the early Christians wanted Easter to be linked with Passover, since Christ's death and resurrection happened after the Jewish holiday. Since the Jewish calendar is tied to solar and lunar cycles, the date for celebrating Easter was likewise required to fluctuate each year. Ditto for Ash Wednesday, which is always celebrated exactly 46 days before Easter (40 days of Lent, plus six extra days, since each Sunday is skipped).



In truth it's even more complicated than that. We've already mentioned that the Church makes an assumptions about when the vernal equinox occurs. The Church also makes some additional assumptions regarding longitude and time zones. Then there are those pesky Leap Years that have to be addressed.

For anyone interested -- or for those with an advanced degree in mathematics or quantum mechanics -- the calculation use to determine the exact date for Easter is show below. Spoiler Alert: This calculation is only valid through 2099.

Calculate $D = 225 - 11(Y \text{ MOD } 19)$.

If D is greater than 50 then subtract multiples of 30 until the resulting new value of D is less than 51.

If D is greater than 48 subtract 1 from it.

Calculate $E = (Y + \lfloor Y/4 \rfloor + D + 1) \text{ MOD } 7$. (NB Integer part of $\lfloor Y/4 \rfloor$)

Calculate $Q = D + 7 - E$.

If Q is less than 32 then Easter is in March. If Q is greater than 31 then Q - 31 is its date in April.

For example, for 1998:

$$D = 225 - 11*(1998 \text{ MOD } 19) = 225 - 11*3 = 192$$

D is greater than 50, therefore:

$$D = (192 - 5*30) = 42$$

$$E = (1998 + [1998/4] + 42 + 1) \text{ MOD } 7 = "2540" \text{ MOD } 7 = "6"$$

$$Q = 42 + 7 - 6 = "43"$$

Easter 1998 = "43" - ' 31 = "12" April'

Movie Review – The Shoes of the Fisherman

It's a bit dated (having been released in 1968), but "The Shoes of the Fisherman" still packs quite a punch, with a timeless message about the Catholic Church's potential to lead a troubled world in times of conflict. The movie is also fascinating given that its premise that an Eastern European is elected as the first non-Italian pope is 400 years pre-dates the election of Pope John Paul II by a decade. Indeed, the name of the new pope is "Kiril," which is eerily similar to John Paul II's given name of "Karol."



The film Russian bishop Kiril Lakota (played by Anthony Quinn) is summoned to Moscow from the Siberian labor camp where he has been imprisoned for 20 years to meet with the Soviet premier (played by Lawrence Olivier). The world is on the brink of nuclear war and the premier believes that sending his famous prisoner to the Vatican may help advance the cause of peace.

Upon arriving in Rome Kiril is made a cardinal by the current pope (played by John Gielgud), who soon thereafter dies, setting the stage for Kiril's ascent to the papacy.

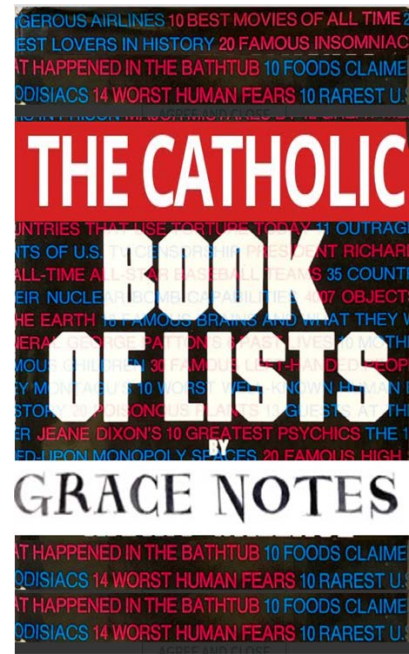
Quinn's Pope Kiril places great stock in the power of words to change the world and makes a memorable speech to that effect during a private summit with world leaders aimed at preventing war. His approach resonates with John Paul II's later faith in the spoken word to move the world: a faith that served him well during his 1979 trip to Poland, when his words helped launch the Solidarity movement, dealing a substantial blow to the Iron Curtain.

Based on Morris L. West's bestseller, "The Shoes of the Fisherman" is both an urgent tale of geopolitical intrigue and a fascinating look at Vatican procedure. The movie is currently streaming for free on YouTube.

Lists Every Catholic Should Know

In 1977 David Wallechinsky published his famous “The Book of Lists,” which included lists as diverse as “the 10 Most Intelligent Breeds of Dog,” and “14 Nations with More Sheep Than People.” Catholics are no strangers to lists, many of which we learned in catechism classes or CCD, and nearly all of which have more relevance to our daily lives than intelligent dog breeds and countries with strange human-to-sheep ratios. With that in mind, Grace Notes will begin including lists that every Catholic should be familiar with. We’ll start with a timely list for March, namely the 14 Stations of the Cross.

- Station No. 1: Jesus is Condemned to Die
- Station No. 2: Jesus is Made to Bear His Cross
- Station No. 3: Jesus Falls the First Time
- Station No. 4: Jesus Meets His Mother
- Station No. 5: Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross
- Station No. 6: Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face
- Station No. 7: Jesus Falls the Second Time
- Station No. 8: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem
- Station No. 9: Jesus Falls the Third Time
- Station No. 10: Jesus is Stripped
- Station No. 11: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross
- Station No. 12: Jesus Dies on the Cross
- Station No. 13: Jesus is Taken Down from the Cross
- Station No. 14: Jesus is Laid in the Tomb



Getting to Know the Congregation – Dianne Connelly

Dianne Connelly may be the friendliest and most easy-going person you’ll ever meet. But that doesn’t mean she is without strong convictions. “You can’t live in the past” is one of them. And she doesn’t. Dianne’s “present” is filled with numerous activities, many focused on Holy Redeemer. She’s a Eucharistic Minister, a Lector, a member of the Hospitality Committee and a member of the Parish Council. Dianne’s “future” includes membership in the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

And though Dianne doesn’t dwell on things that have come and gone, no one could blame her if she did, because the 80-year-old treasure chest that is Dianne’s past is filled with bejeweled memories and crowning achievements.



Born in Milton, Massachusetts, Dianne was one of four children and the only daughter. The family bought a summer home on Harding Beach when Dianne was ten, and she began attending mass at Holy Redeemer, which was then a mission church. All told Dianne has been a member of the parish for over 55 years. In 1965 she graduated from Boston University with a bachelor's degree in nursing; an occupation to which she would devote the next half century. She began her working career at University Hospital (now Boston Medical Center), where she was assigned to a rehabilitation unit dealing with paraplegics and quadriplegics. While many would have immediately requested a less demanding assignment, Dianne thrived. Most of the patients were young, victims of motorcycle or water-skiing accidents. "We laughed and we hugged, and we encouraged each other to maintain a positive attitude." It's an attitude Dianne still maintains.

On one of her family's summer trips to Harding Beach Dianne's friends arranged a date for her with a pharmacist working at Monomoy Pharmacy (now the home of Wheelhouse Bike Company). While most blind dates are fodder for disaster movies or comedies, Dianne and the pharmacist – Fred – promptly fell in love and were married in 1968.



"Fred was a great pharmacist and an even greater talker. He wanted to make sure that anyone who received a script from him understood exactly how it should be taken, and what kind of side effects might occur. He especially loved talking with youngsters, and they loved hanging out with him."

After Dianne and Fred were married she took a position at the Chatham Medical Offices, which was conveniently located next door to the Monomoy Pharmacy. "Everything was close by, even our children's schools. If I wanted to watch my daughter's field hockey game it was only a five-minute walk."

Dianne and Fred had three daughters: Kathleen (who lives in Hawaii), Marcia (who lives in central California) and Carolyn (who lives in South Chatham). Carolyn (as well as her husband Tim) is following in her mother's footsteps and serves as a Eucharistic Minister at Holy Redeemer.

After nearly twenty years at the Chatham Medical Offices Dianne turned her attention to senior care and took a position at Liberty Commons. She later moved to Cranberry Point Nursing Center in East Harwich where she developed the Center's first Alzheimer's Unit. "I loved taking care of Alzheimer's patients. They thrived on smiles and kisses and music. And so did I."

Dianne's devotion to Alzheimer's patients later took her to Wareham, where a former boss was renovating The Tremont nursing home and wanted her to replicate her previous success developing an Alzheimer's Unit. And so began a 17-year daily commute from Chatham to Wareham, to not only build the unit but lead activities, create support groups, and address the thousand additional responsibilities associated with caring for Alzheimer's patients and their families.



The experience also afforded Dianne a chance to meet Father Sullivan, who was then serving as the Pastor of St. Patrick's in Wareham and also as the chaplain at The Tremont.

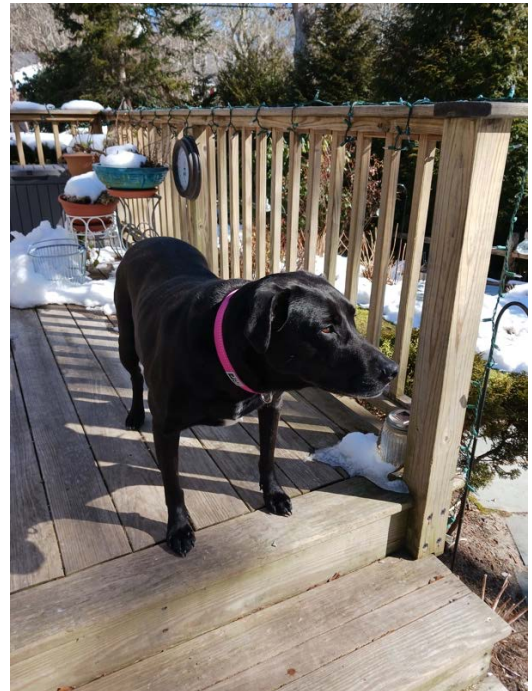
In 2018 Dianne's husband Fred experienced a severe fall, resulting in a broken vertebrae in his neck. Dianne retired from her position at The Tremont to care for him. Four years later EMTs were called to the house to rush Fred to the hospital; an event which included both amusing and heartbreaking moments. First the amusing. The three EMTs who came for Fred turned out to be former patrons of Monomoy Pharmacy; as youngsters he had befriended all three and they had spent hours chatting with Fred at the Pharmacy. They assured Dianne they would take good care of Fred during the trip to Cape Cod Hospital.

Unfortunately Fred died shortly after he arrived at the hospital. And tragically Dianne was not able to be with him when he passed. It was the time of the COVID pandemic and if there was one thing worse than dying from COVID it was the safety precautions that limited contact between family members in the hospital.

For most of us, knowing that a loved one is dying on the other side of a door that we can't open is our worst nightmare. "The Bereavement Ministry at Holy Redeemer really helped me deal with that," Dianne confided. "Marilyn Wheldon and her crew did a great job. My soul is at Holy Redeemer. I find calmness and peacefulness there. And my faith grows from all the people I meet."

In addition to 53 years of marriage, three children and wonderful memories, Fred also left another legacy, which was totally unexpected. After his fall Fred missed not having a dog around the house and was determined to get one. Dianne and Fred finally decided that they would adopt a rescue dog. They left their name at the shelter and waited for a call. The call finally came: the day after Fred died. The shelter had an eighty-pound, five-and-a-half-year-old black lab-mix named "Juno." "Did they want her?" the shelter asked. Dianne explained that "they" was now just "she," and of course she wanted her. Because you can't live in the past.

Dianne's family, all her many friends, and perhaps especially Juno, are now her present. And she's also ready for whatever the future may hold.



...Conclusion

We began this newsletter by describing the three pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We'll conclude each of the next several newsletters with a story about each of the pillars. This month it's prayer. And the story we've chose is called "The Empty Chair."

A man's daughter asked the local priest to come and pray with her father. When the priest arrived, he found the elderly man lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows and an empty chair beside his bed. The priest assumed that the old fellow had been informed of his visit.

Seeing the empty chair the priest said, "I guess you were expecting me."

"No, who are you?"

"I'm the new associate pastor at your local church," the priest replied. "When I saw the empty chair, I figured you knew I was going to show up."

Oh yeah, the chair," said the bedridden man. "Would you mind closing the door?"

Puzzled, the priest shut the door.

"I've never told anyone this," the man said. "Not even my daughter. But all of my life I have never known how to pray. At church I used to hear the priest talk about prayer, but it always went right over my head."

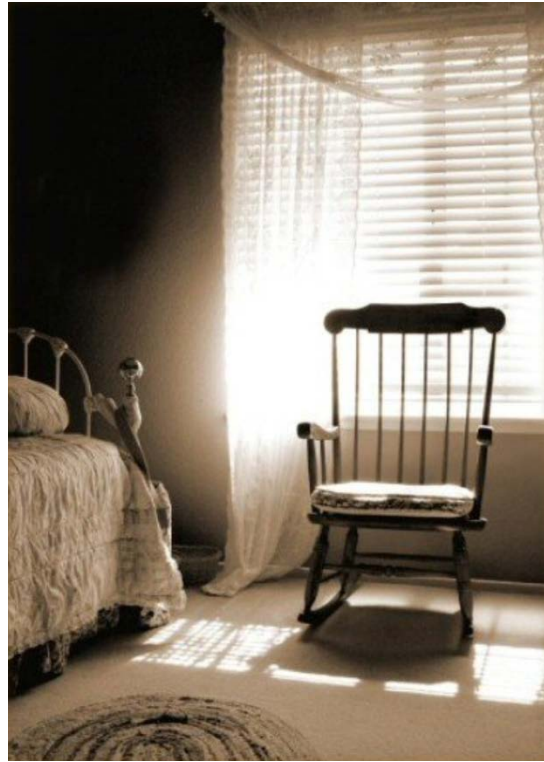
"I abandoned any attempt at prayer," the man continued, "until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me, 'Joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with Jesus. Here's what I suggest. Place an empty chair in front of you, and in faith see Jesus sitting in the chair. It's not spooky because Jesus promised, 'I'll be with you always.' Then just speak to him and listen in the same way you're doing with me right now."

"So I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it a couple of hours every day. I'm careful, though. If my daughter saw me talking to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send me off to the funny farm."

The priest was deeply moved by the story and encouraged the man to continue on his journey. Then he prayed with him and returned to the church.

Two nights later the daughter called to tell the priest that her father had died that afternoon.

"Did he seem to die in peace?" the priest asked.



"Yes, when I left the house around two o'clock, he called me over to his bedside, told me one of his corny jokes, and kissed me on the cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him dead. But there was something strange. In fact it was kinda weird."

"What was that," the priest asked.

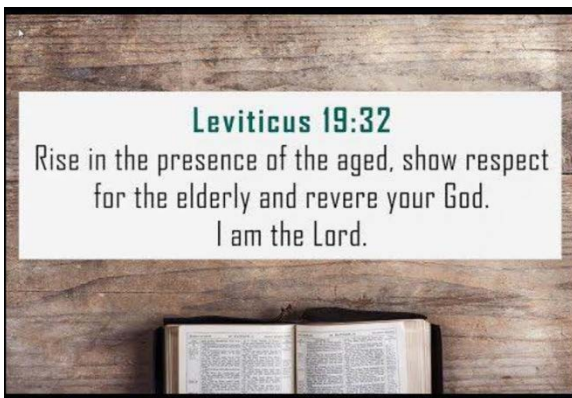
"Apparently, just before Daddy died, he leaned out of bed and rested his head on a chair beside the bed."

Answers to Jeopardy for Catholics

Answer to Number 1: What is getting a tattoo?



Answer to Number 2: What is standing?



Answer to Number 3: What is harvesting the grain? NOTE: The grain at the edges of the field was to be left for the poor.

