

*Pope Francis's 2015 Lenten Message*

## Make Your Hearts Firm

Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for communities and every believer. Above all it is a “time of grace” (2 Cor 6:2). God does not ask of us anything that he himself has not first given us. “We love because he first has loved us” (1 Jn 4:19). God is not aloof from us. Each one of us has a place in his heart. He knows us by name, he cares for us and he seeks us out whenever we turn away from him. He is interested in each of us; his love does not allow him to be indifferent to what happens to us. Usually, when we are healthy and comfortable, we forget about others (something God the Father never does): we are unconcerned with their problems, their sufferings and the injustices they endure ... Our heart grows cold. As long as I am relatively healthy and comfortable, I don't think about those less well off. Today, this selfish attitude of indifference has taken on global proportions, to the extent that we can speak of a globalization of indifference. It is a problem which we, as Christians, need to confront.

When the people of God are converted to his love, they find answers to the questions that history continually raises. One of the most urgent challenges which I would like to address in this Message is precisely the globalization of indifference. Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians.

Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience. God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation. In the earthly life, death, and resurrection of the Son of God, the gate between heaven and earth, opens once for all.

The Church is like the hand holding open this gate, thanks to her proclamation of God's word, her celebration of the sacraments and her witness of the faith which works through love (cf. Gal 5:6). But the world tends to withdraw into itself and shut that door through which God comes into the world and the world comes to him. Hence the hand, which is the Church, must never be surprised if it is rejected, crushed and wounded. God's people, then, need this interior renewal, lest we become indifferent and withdraw into ourselves. To further this renewal, I would like to propose for our reflection three biblical texts.

### First The Church

**“If one member suffers, all suffer together” (1 Cor 12:26)** The love of God breaks through that fatal withdrawal into ourselves which is indifference. The Church offers us this love of God by her teaching and especially by her witness. But we can only bear witness to what we ourselves have experienced. Christians are those who let God clothe them with goodness and mercy, with Christ, so as to become, like Christ, servants of God and others.

This is clearly seen in the liturgy of Holy Thursday, with its rite of the washing of feet. Peter did not want Jesus to wash his feet, but he came to realize that only those who have first allowed Jesus to wash their own feet can then offer this service to others. Only they have “a part” with him (Jn 13:8) and thus can serve others.

Lent is a time for letting Christ serve us so that we in turn may become more like him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. There we become what we receive: the Body of Christ. In this body there is no room for indifference. For whoever is of Christ, belongs to one body, and in him we cannot be indifferent to one another. “If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy” (1 Cor 12:26).

The Church is the *communio sanctorum* not only because of her saints, but also because she is a communion in holy things – the love of God revealed to us in Christ and all his gifts. Among these gifts there is also the response of those who let themselves be touched by this love. In this communion of saints, in this sharing in holy things, no one possesses anything alone, but shares everything with others. And since we are united in God, we can do something for those who are far distant, those whom we could never reach on our own, because with them and for them, we ask God that all of us may be open to his plan of salvation.

### Second, Parishes and Communities

**“Where is your brother?” (Gen. 4:9)** All that we have been saying about the universal Church must now be applied to the life of our parishes and communities. Do these structures

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## Make Your Hearts Firm

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enable us to experience being part of one body? A body which receives and shares what God wishes to give? A body which acknowledges and cares for its weakest, poorest and most insignificant members? Or do we take refuge in a universal love that would embrace the ‘whole world’ while failing to see Lazarus sitting before our closed doors (Lk 16:19-31)?

In order to receive what God gives us and to make it bear abundant fruit, we need to press beyond the boundaries of the visible Church in two ways. **First by uniting ourselves in prayer with the Church in heaven.** The prayers of the Church on earth establish a communion of mutual service and goodness which reaches up into the sight of God. Together with the saints who have found their fulfilment in God, we form part of that communion in which indifference is conquered by love.

The Church in heaven is not triumphant because she has turned her back on the sufferings of the world and rejoices in splendid isolation. Rather, the saints already joyfully contemplate the fact that, through Jesus’ death and resurrection, they have triumphed once and for all over indifference, hardness of heart and hatred. Until this victory of love penetrates the whole world, the saints continue to accompany us on our pilgrim way.

Saint Therese of Lisieux, a Doctor of the Church, in a letter she wrote back in 1897 expressed her conviction that the joy in heaven for the victory of crucified love remains incomplete as long as there is still a single man or woman on earth who suffers and cries out in pain: *“I trust fully that I shall not remain idle in heaven; my desire is to continue to work for the Church and for souls”*. We share in the merits and joy of the saints, even as they share in our struggles and our longing for peace and reconciliation. Their joy in the victory of the Risen Christ gives us strength as we strive to overcome our indifference and hardness of heart.

**Secondly, every Christian community is called to go out of itself and to be engaged in the life of the greater society of which it is a part, especially with the poor and those who are far away.** The Church is missionary by her very nature; she is not self-enclosed but sent out to every nation and people. Her mission is to bear patient witness to the One who desires to draw all creation and every man and woman to the Father. Her mission is to bring to all a love which cannot remain silent. The Church follows Jesus Christ along the paths that lead to every man and woman, to the very ends of the earth (cf. Acts 1:8).

In each of our neighbors, then, we must see a brother or sister for whom Christ died and rose again. What we ourselves have received, we have received for them as well.

Similarly, all that our brothers and sisters possess is a gift for the Church and for all humanity.

**Dear brothers and sisters, how greatly I desire that all those places where the Church is present, especially our parishes and our communities, may become islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference!**

### Third, Individual Christians

**“Make your hearts firm!” (James 5:8)** As individuals, we are tempted by indifference. Flooded with news reports and troubling images of human suffering, we often feel a complete inability to help. What can we do to avoid being caught up in this spiral of distress and powerlessness?

First, we can pray. Let us not underestimate the power of so many voices united in prayer! The 24 Hours for the Lord initiative, which I hope will be observed on March 13-14 throughout the Church, is meant to be a sign of this need for prayer.

Second, we can help by acts of charity, reaching out to both those near and far through the Church’s many charitable organizations. Lent is a favorable time for showing this concern for others by small yet concrete signs of our belonging to the one human family.

Third, the suffering of others is a call to conversion, since their need reminds me of the uncertainty of my own life and my dependence on God and my brothers and sisters. If we humbly implore God’s grace and accept our own limitations, we will trust in the infinite possibilities which God’s love holds out to us. We will also be able to resist the diabolical temptation of thinking that by our own efforts we can save the world and ourselves.

As a way of overcoming indifference and our pretensions to self-sufficiency, I would invite everyone to live this Lent as an opportunity for engaging in what Benedict XVI called a ‘formation of the heart.’ A merciful heart does not mean a weak heart. Anyone who wishes to be merciful must have a strong and steadfast heart, closed to the tempter but open to God. A heart which lets itself be pierced by the Spirit so as to bring love to our brothers and sisters. And, ultimately, a poor heart, one which realizes its own poverty and gives itself freely for others.

During this Lent, then, brothers and sisters, let us all ask the Lord: *“Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum”*: Make our hearts like yours (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent or prey to the globalization of indifference. It is my prayerful hope that this Lent will prove spiritually fruitful for each believer and every community. I ask all of you to pray for me.

+Pope Francis

### Ash Wednesday

Lent begins this Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Ashes will be distributed at morning Mass at 8:30. There will be a Scripture Service at 12:00 noon and an Evening Mass at 7:00.

Ash Wednesday is a day of complete fast and abstinence from meat.

# All Things Considered

Climate Change: Our Call to Conversion, which was the topic of our recent Adult Education series, was well attended and received. My thanks to **Sue Schrieber, OP** and **Julie Telang** for conducting these sessions with such skill and enthusiasm. We are considering a follow-up to this series to be scheduled when our Holy Father releases his new encyclical on the environment. For those sessions, we'll use the actual encyclical itself as our study text.

A papal encyclical is rare. It is among the highest levels of a pope's authority; it's a big deal. Since *Rerum Novarum*, the encyclical on 'Capital and Labor' of Pope Leo XIII in 1891, there have been only 13 others – most of them have been significant statements of theology and Church practice that have shaped the way we look at things, the Church and world today.

We have been getting hints from Pope Francis as to the content of his new encyclical in various talks he has given in recent months. In recent months, he has argued for a radical new financial and economic system to avoid human inequality and ecological devastation. In October he told a meeting of Latin American and Asian landless peasants and other social movements: "An economic system centered on the god of money needs to plunder nature to sustain the frenetic rhythm of consumption that is inherent to it. The system continues unchanged, since what dominates are the dynamics of an economy and a finance that are lacking in ethics. It is no longer man who commands, but money. Cash commands.

"The monopolizing of lands, deforestation, the appropriation of water, and inadequate agro-toxics are some of the evils that tear man from

the land of his birth. Climate change, the loss of biodiversity and deforestation are already showing their devastating effects in the great cataclysms we witness."

If the actual encyclical is anywhere as direct in its language and challenges, then we should prepare ourselves for a real barn-burner. The question is, can Pope Francis achieve a feat that has so far eluded secular powers and inspire decisive action on climate change? If he does, it may be his lasting legacy not only of his papacy but also for our planet.

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My thanks to all those who participated in any way in the Valentine's Day Dinner Dance and Auction. Once we get a total of the revenue, we'll let you know how we did. But in addition to being a financial benefit to the parish, the event is a benefit to the bonds of friendship that are being built in our parish all the time.

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Another excellent way of building friendships and strengthening our community is through our Lenten Dinners which start up again this week. When it comes to a parish fish fry, let's just say that ours at St. Ambrose is often imitated, but seldom duplicated!

These dinners are a painless way of bringing new people into the parish. So invite someone you work with, or a neighbor to join you for one of these dinners. And, while you are nourishing your body, consider nourishing your soul too. Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is celebrated at 7:00 on the Friday's of Lent. So, come for an early dinner and stay for devotions, or come for devotions and then have a later dinner.

In order to keep prices as low as reasonable, we depend on lots of volunteer labor. If you can help bus

tables, we want you to let us know by contacting our volunteer coordinator, **Mary Oberly** at [moberly007@comcast.net](mailto:moberly007@comcast.net) or call us at 313-822-2814.

"To bus a table" comes from, "busboy," an American term, that originated when waiter's helpers were called *omnibus* boys, omnibus in this case meaning "having to do many tasks." I mention this because volunteers need to be ready and willing to do an omnibus of activities that very well may change from week to week.

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We enter Lent with ashes on our heads, and we fast in many ways – perhaps by eating less food and foregoing treats. We give alms, which means that we find ways to share what we have: our time and our goods. In these ways we refresh our baptismal commitment and try to grow more deeply in the Christian life.

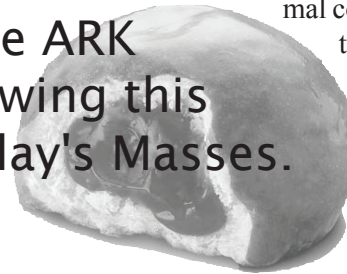
Take advantage of the special Lenten schedule at St. Ambrose, including the Thursday night mass, the extra times for confession, and Stations of the Cross with Benediction.

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We're planning a beautiful Laetare Sunday – Lent's midpoint – with a concert by the students from Wayne State's music school entitled *Spring Strings*. To ease our budget, I'm looking for a family or business to sponsor the event. The musicians are performing free of charge, but there is a minimum \$500 donation that is to be given to the Musical Outreach Fund of the University. And, if we offer hospitality after the concert, the costs associated with doing that would also be \$500. If you or your business would like to put your name on the concert and pay for one both of these costs, please contact the rectory, or speak with me after mass this weekend. Printed posters and the program will be going to press this week.

TRP

PAÇZKI  
in the ARK  
following this  
Sunday's Masses.





## Lenten Observances



- Lent is the liturgical season which runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.
- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of *total* fast and abstinence from meat.
- All the Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence from meat.
- The **Law of Abstinence** from meat binds persons from the completion of their 14<sup>th</sup> year — from the day after their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, throughout life.
- The **Law of Abstinence** forbids the use of meat, but not eggs, milk or products or condiments made of animal fat. Permissible are soups flavored with meat, meat gravy and sauces.
- The **Law of Fasting** binds persons from the completion of their 18<sup>th</sup> year to the beginning of their 60<sup>th</sup> year, i.e., from the day after their 59<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- The **Law of Fasting** allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and evening, observing as far as quantity and quality are concerned — approved local custom. The order of meals is optional; i.e. the full meal may be taken in the evening instead of at midday. Also: (1) the quantity of food taken at the two lighter meals should not exceed the quantity taken at the full meal. (2) the drinking of ordinary liquids does not break the fast.
- In keeping with the spirit and meaning of the Lenten fast, Catholics are encouraged to observe the Good Friday fast through Holy Saturday and until after the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

## The Buzz

It is said that all of us have somewhere in the not-too-far back of our minds an image of a perfect world. What does yours look like? Who would be in it ... who out? Why? What would the economic system be; how would politics work; what would characterize your ideal of international relations?

Visualize your personal and family relationships; how would everybody be treating one another? How different would that be from what it is now? What would the perfect Catholic Church be like? Who would be in it ... who out? Why?

Who or what is preventing your perfect world from existing right now, or from growing toward perfection? Is there someone messing things up?

In biblical times, leprosy and lepers didn't fit. There was always something deeper and darker in dealing with it than strictly as a health issue. In Mark's Gospel, every ailment was associated with demons. Demons, and thus lepers too, should be "out"; that's why it took priests to declare them "clean" and able to come back "in". Jesus broke all the rules when He touched the leper in today's Gospel passage. Anyone who did such a thing before a cure was declared, dabbled with demons and was to be treated as "out". Jesus identifies *outwardly* with the *outsider* and brings him *into* the health of His world of *insiders*.

Jesus' whole mission was about "in"clusion; think of all the categories of cures and reconciliations that flowed from His Good News. However, this also brings into the light the nature of the deepest opposition and hatred He faced from His most vehement adversaries. He was messing up their ideal world. God's world is bigger than they would allow.

Lent is just about here. Each recent Sunday has asked us to examine our ideal world and to compare it to God's vision for it. Are you ready to do this in your Faith, in your family, in your work and neighborhood? You have a couple of days to think over whether you will dare to enter such a Lent.

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Today is the last Sunday before Lent begins, and we joyfully celebrate our own version of Mardi Gras days with the music at our liturgy and after-mass hospitality which includes those holy, ritual pastries known as *paczki*.

Then, it's my understanding that local schools have winter break this week. Wherever you vacation, find a Catholic church to attend on Ash Wednesday or on the weekend; [www.masstimes.org](http://www.masstimes.org) is a great resource for travelers.

If you're in town, St. Ambrose kicks off Lent with a lot of energy: Ash Wednesday of course, our Lenten Thursday 7:00 evening masses begin the next day, and on Friday the return of our famous Parish Lenten Fish Dinners in the ARK — along with Stations of the Cross and Benediction in the church. Why not participate in all of these events?!

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Finally, the schools' winter break reminds me that it's that time of year again to put before you this suggestion/request: try to make any plans for an Easter break that would not begin until after you celebrate the Easter Triduum (April 2-5) with your faith-family at St. Ambrose. Trust me on this one, or at least ask around: if you put your whole self into the energy of Lent here, something will be missing if you leave early. And we'll miss you too!

So have a great Lent, and enjoy the *paczki* with me in the ARK after this Sunday's mass.

Chuck Dropiewski

## A Family Perspective by Bud Ozar

Family life is about decisions. The leper in today's gospel knew this when he said to Jesus. "If you will, you can make me clean." Jesus knew this when he said, "I do will it." Love is not an emotion. It is a decision to be with and for another person in "good times and bad," even when we don't feel like it.



THE  
ST. AMBROSE  
LITURGICAL  
CHOIR

*Seeking singers and instrumentalists!*

OUR ST. AMBROSE LITURGICAL CHOIR IS LOOKING FOR SINGERS TO JOIN WITH THEM THIS LENT AND EASTER. ST. AUGUSTINE SAID: "FOR HE THAT SINGETH PRAISE, NOT ONLY PRAISETH, BUT ONLY PRAISETH WITH GLADNESS: HE THAT SINGETH PRAISE, NOT ONLY SINGETH, BUT ALSO LOVETH HIM OF WHOM HE SINGETH. IN PRAISE, THERE IS THE SPEAKING FORTH OF ONE CONFESSING; IN SINGING, THE AFFECTION OF ONE LOVING." OVER THE CENTURIES THIS HAS BEEN SIMPLY SHORTENED TO: "THOSE WHO SING PRAY TWICE."

WE WILL BE SINGING PRAYERFUL AND POWERFUL MUSIC AND INVITE YOU TO JOIN US. FOR THOSE WHO PLAY INSTRUMENTS, WE ARE FORMING A SMALL BAND FOR PALM SUNDAY TO ACCOMPANY OUR OUTSIDE PROCESSION AND MAYBE TO PLAY DURING THE EASTERTIME FESTIVITIES TOO.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING FOR THIS TIME PERIOD, PLEASE CONTACT MARILYN BIERY THROUGH THE CHURCH OFFICE AT STAMBROSE@COMCAST.NET OR COME UP TO THE CHOIR LOFT AND INTRODUCE YOURSELF!



## LENTEN BUFFET DINNERS

Join us in the ARK at St. Ambrose  
for dinner every Friday in Lent,  
starting this February 20<sup>th</sup> through Good Friday on April 3<sup>rd</sup>,  
from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

The menu includes a salad bar, soup du jour, fried or baked cod, tater tots, macaroni with cheese, a weekly special entrée, along with rolls, vegetable, coffee and tea.

**\$15 per adult • \$10 for children aged 6 to 10.**  
Carry-out service available (313) 822-1594.



## E-Donations

St. Ambrose Parish is equipped on our website to make electronic transfers from your checking account or credit card. Christian Financial Credit Union brings our parishioners and friends the ability to make an electronic contribution to St. Ambrose on a regular or one-time basis.

Your checking account or credit card can be used to make a single donation; or you may set up automatic weekly, monthly, or quarterly contributions on a specific schedule. We hope this financial service allows you an easy way to manage your stewardship response to St. Ambrose. A set electronic contribution also helps our parish maintain a steady revenue during months when many are traveling and away from the parish. Parishioners go on vacation. Our parish does not.

Visit [stambrosechurch.net](http://stambrosechurch.net) for more information on electronic giving, or call our office for personal assistance.

## The Beehive

The the parish weekly bulletin of the  
St. Ambrose Catholic Community  
Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

**Pastor:** Rev. Timothy R. Pelc  
**Pastoral Minister:** Charles Dropiewski  
**Religious Education:** Elizabeth Haley  
**Minister of Music:** Marilyn Biery  
**Office Manager:** Theresa Harthen

### Sacramental Celebrations

**Masses:** On the Lord's Day –  
Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday - 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.

**Baptism:** Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

**Penance:** As announced and by appointment.

**Marriage:** Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

**Funeral:** Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

### Directory

**Parish Office:** 15020 Hampton  
Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230  
**Tel:** (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838  
**Email address:** [stambrose@comcast.net](mailto:stambrose@comcast.net)  
**Religious Education:** (313) 822-1248  
**Ark Scheduling:** (313) 822-2814  
**School Archives:** 313-237-5846  
**Parish Website:** [stambrosechurch.net](http://stambrosechurch.net)

## Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

### Monday, February 16

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer

### Tuesday, February 17

#### Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Gertrude Schumacker  
Michael Borkowski, Jim Niemiec

### Wednesday, February 18

#### Ash Wednesday

8:30 a.m. - Mass & Distribution of Ashes  
12:00 p.m. - Scripture Service  
7:00 p.m. - Mass & Distribution of Ashes

### Thursday, February 19

7:00 p.m. - Mass - Fr. Ernesto Pocari  
Attilio & Zaira Maio

### Friday, February 20

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Marie Rack  
James McKenna

### Saturday, February 21

4:00 p.m. - Mass - For All People

### Sunday, February 22

#### First Sunday of Lent

8:30 a.m. - Mass - For All People  
11:15 a.m. - Mass - For All People



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## Scriptures for the 6<sup>th</sup> Week of Ordinary Time & the Beginning of Lent

### Monday, February 16

- Gn 4: 1-15, 25
- Ps 50: 1, 8, 16bc, 17, 20-21
- Mk 8: 11-13

### Tuesday, February 17

- Gn 6: 5-8; 7: 1-5, 10
- Ps 29: 1a, 2, 3ac-4, 3, 9c
- Mk 8: 14-21

### Wednesday, February 18

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

### Thursday, February 19

- Dt 30: 15-20
- Ps 1: 1-4, 6
- Lk 9: 22-25

### Friday, February 20

- Is 58: 1-9a
- Ps 51: 3-6b, 18-19
- Mt 9: 14-15

### Saturday, February 21

- Is 58: 9b-14
- Ps 86: 1-6
- Lk 5: 27-32

### Sunday, February 22

- Gn 9: 8-15
- 1 Pt 3: 18-22
- Mk 1: 12-15

## First Sunday of Lent February 21<sup>st</sup> and February 22<sup>nd</sup>

4:00 p.m. - Saturday - Celebrant: Fr. Bede Lector: Mary Urbanski  
Eucharistic Ministers: Della Cimini, Elizabeth Puleo-Tague, Mary Helen Quigg-Hillyer  
Altar Servers: Frankie Pangborn, Sean Hall

8:30 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrant: Fr. Bede Lector: Bob Gatzke  
Eucharistic Ministers: Colleen Drummond, Colleen Gatzke, Christopher Harrison,  
Joan Jackson, Maggie Jackson, Bernadette Pieczynski, Joellyn Valgoi  
Altar Servers: Patrick, Charlie, Daniel, & Eleanor Bernas

11:15 a.m. - Sunday - Celebrant: Fr. Pelc Lector: Grace Muawad  
Eucharistic Ministers: Anne Billiu, Doris Fleming, Mary Ghesquiere,  
Michele Hodges, Sue & Roger Playwin, Patty Yaden  
Altar Servers: Aidan Davila-VinLuan; Brian, Conor, & Delaney Garvey

## Your Envelope ... Speaks the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of ..... \$10,127.00  
**On Sunday, February 8, 2015**

in envelopes we received .....\$8,538.39  
in the loose collection .....\$500.00  
in electronic donations .....\$1,200.00  
in children's envelopes.....\$16.00  
for a total of .....**\$10,254.39**

**Over budget for the week ..... \$127.39**

FY 14-15 under budget ..... \$25,769.61

Number of envelopes mailed ..... 800

Number of envelopes used ..... 183

*Please use your envelopes  
or contribute on-line regularly.*

*We need to clear up our budget shortfall.*

## Our Sick

Please pray for our parishioners who are seriously ill or hospitalized: Roma Affelt, Kay Balas, Elizabeth Howard, Maria Chinchilla, Mary Ellen Greenup, Bonnie McKenna, Karen Culver, Joseph MacEachern, Mary Myers, David Schumacker, Mary Morreale, Bernice Phillips, Carter Billiu, Bob Ramsey, Fred Schroeder, Ann Sullivan Kay, Mary Pat Egan, Pat Blake, Dominic Centorbi, Irene Scopel, Ray Oberly, Milton Aitchison, Donald & Marilyn Miriani, Kathleen Elberson, Felix Checki, Maureen Barron-Brioc, Ginger Weiksnar, Laura Bush Terry, Fr. Phil Naessens, Lennie O'Brien, Maryjane Cullen, Bp. Joseph Imesch, Andrew Chavez, Angela Hansen, Roger TenHoopen, Barbara Mann, Elizabeth Robert, Bernadette Gutowski, and Alex Peabody.

## Discernment Day

Is Jesus calling you or someone you know to become a priest? Consider attending the Day of Discernment with Archbishop Allen Vigneron. This Day of Discernment is for men aged 17 to 55 seeking a better understanding of their vocation from the Lord. It takes place on February 21<sup>st</sup> at Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit. Visit [detroitpriest.com](http://detroitpriest.com).

## Youth Mentors

A few hours a month can make a big difference in a young person's future! Caring adults willing to share some time with children between eight and 14 years of age are needed by the Hispanic Outreach Services program at Catholic Charities of Southeast Michigan (CCSEM).

Volunteer mentors for these Pontiac-area children should be at least 21 years of age and have their own transportation. No need to speak Spanish. CCSEM will provide training and match you with a child who would benefit from your time and attention.

Go for a walk, toss a ball around, go sledding, read a book, help with homework - all it takes is the ability to be with a child on a regular basis. Schedules are flexible and group activities are available.

Learn more by contacting Jane Fanta at (248) 338-4250, ext. 3705 or [fantaj@ccsem.org](mailto:fantaj@ccsem.org)



## Religious Education Update

As so many of our families are away during the annual winter break at school, Sunday School classes will not be in session until March 1<sup>st</sup>. At that time, our fifth graders will gather for the program, Circle of Grace, that for them focuses on media.

The very next day, Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, those preparing for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist will meet to continue preparation for these sacraments. This session is especially important!

We team with St. Clare in Catholic Youth Organization sports. We're now looking for 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls who are interested in playing softball in the CYO League. Please call Coach Tony Agosta at 248-709-6376 for more information.

Betty Haley

## Lenten Prayer at St. Ambrose

On the Thursdays of Lent, our morning Mass shifts to a 7:00 evening time slot in order to give more people an opportunity to attend the liturgy during the weekdays of Lent – leading up to Holy Thursday.

Preceding Thursday night Masses (at 6:00pm), as well as preceding Saturday afternoon Masses (at 2:30pm), confessions will be heard.

Our plans for Lent once again include Friday night Stations of the Cross and our popular Fish Dinners. The first Stations and Fish Dinner of the season will be THIS FRIDAY. Come for an early dinner and stay for Stations of the Cross. Or, come to Stations of the Cross and then enjoy a later dinner. Grace abounds!

## Collection Basket

As we prepare ourselves for the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, we might consider a Greek word that resonates during the season: *metanoia*.

Just the sound of it is challenging and commands our attention. Literally, the word means “to change one’s mind.” In our Christian tradition it has come to be connected with repentance and more importantly, to conversion. But perhaps the online Merriam Webster dictionary defines it most beautifully: *metanoia* – a transformative change of heart. To Catholic stewards, that phrase perfectly defines our yearning during Lent. We yearn to be transformed by a change of heart.

Actually, that kind of change can be a scary proposition. It sounds risky. It’s certainly life-changing. If *metanoia* actually took place within us, if we allowed that kind of heart-based transformation into our lives, would our lives be different?

Are we ready to be transformed during this Lenten season? Yes, we want to be good during Lent, attend extra Masses, lay off the chocolate, make sure the family attends Holy Week liturgies. But *metanoia*?

Transformation alters us, opens our hearts in radical ways. We witness it in the doctor or nurse who travels to Africa to take care of Ebola patients during their vacation time; in the couple who adopted, with very little time for discernment, three kids who had been orphaned and needed to be kept together; in the family that makes a decision to tithe despite their financial worries. Transformation requires courage. It is not a thing casually approached.

Perhaps our Lenten resolve shouldn’t be limited to the usual small sacrifices or token pieties, but to a deep commitment to a daily prayer that asks for the courage to be transformed by a change of heart. Let this simple prayer suffuse our Lent: **“Even if it takes time, Lord, make me smaller in the world, bigger in the kingdom.”** *Metanoia* – let us rise to the challenge of the Christ who beckons us to follow him this Lent into the desert.

Reprinted from catholicstewardship.com.

## Spring Strings

*A concert by the Wayne State University Strings  
under the direction of Professor Kypros Markou  
hosted by St. Ambrose Parish.*

***Laetare Sunday  
March 15<sup>th</sup>  
at 4 p.m.***

*The program will include music by  
Corelli, Telemann and Vivaldi, plus  
Mozart’s “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik,”  
Tchaikovsky’s “Andante Cantabile” and  
Nielsen’s “Underlige Aftenlufte.”*

*The concert, featuring WSU student  
soloists, is free and open to the community.*

