

A Note from the Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

I am focusing on prayer in these notes but in several different ways.

First of all, we are off to a slow start with suggestions for a Lenten plan of action (like we did for Advent) but the thought is to focus on forgiveness and repentance. Please look for the insert and seek to bring to prayer our own need for forgiveness and our need to forgive others. Isn't that what Jesus first asked of his disciples when he taught them the *Our Father*? Jesus asks the same of us as well.

Then there is a great opportunity coming next Saturday morning. All are welcome to a morning Retreat directed by the Sisters of Life here in our parish. After the regular 9:00am Mass, there will be refreshments and two talks by the Sisters. The first will be *Jesus in Our Hearts* and the second *Jesus in Our World*. The morning will wrap up with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Confessions will be available. Babysitting will also be provided free of charge. This morning Retreat is open to everyone and I am certain it will be a prayerful, up-lifting time. Please come to be strengthened in faith!

Lastly, I hope all our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the St. Valentine's Day/Ash Wednesday school shooting in Florida. Prayers for those who were killed, wounded or traumatized. It was another American tragedy and we have to pray that such senseless violence will cease. There are those who are mocking or discounting the promise of thoughts and prayers. They say that real action to change things is necessary. They imply that thoughts and prayers amount to nothing. Perhaps for those who do not believe that is the perception. However, many families affected by violence are grateful for those thoughts and prayers.

We first have to think of those in need and those who suffer. We then ask the Lord to bless them. Prayer is often the best way we recognize God's power and remain united to those who need help. Prayer should precede other actions.

Let prayer be an integral part of our everyday life during Lent and all year long. Never be afraid to let people know you believe in God's power and that you are indeed thinking and praying always.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Monsignor Giandurco". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name.