

December Newsletter: March 21, 2025

Assumption Catholic School

Desk of Mrs. Shumny

Dear ACS Families,

We're officially kicking off Quarter 4—it's the home stretch! As we move toward the end of the school year, consistency is key to ensuring student success. Please continue to emphasize the importance of arriving on time each day, completing homework, and staying engaged in learning. A strong routine now will help your child finish the year strong!

Open communication is also essential. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out. Parent-Teacher Conferences are coming up on Thursday, March 27th—please be sure you have confirmed your scheduled time. We look forward to discussing your child's progress and goals for the remainder of the year!

I want to thank Father Mike for all his years of running our ACS Scholastic Book Fairs. He has passed the torch to Mrs. Mavica! Thank you to all the parents and grandparents who volunteered and to all the students who made purchases - you made the spring book fair a success.

Thank you for your continued support!

Reminders:

1. Parent Teacher Conference is next Thursday AND no class on Friday.
2. FSA: Spring Clothing Drive Open until April 23rd - get started on your spring cleaning!
3. Summer Program: Although we have not received the 21CCLC Grant, we are still committed to providing a high-quality summer program. Our academic expectations will remain similar to last year, with students continuing their IXL Math and Language Arts work. Mornings will focus on academic support, while afternoons will be filled with fun activities. Additionally, we are planning two exciting field trips, which will be included in the program cost. Lunch arrangements will stay the same—students will bring their own lunch on Mondays, and we will provide lunch for the rest of the week. We look forward to a great summer ahead! WE HAVE LIMITED SPACE!
4. Please send back the 25-26 Registration Paperwork ASAP, payment not due until June
5. Pierogies for Easter on sale! Pick up at Kitchen door Wednesday, 4/16 3-4pm and 7-8pm

Any questions or concerns please reach out, I am here to help in any way I can.

God Bless,

Mrs. Shumny

Upcoming Events

Clothing Drive Open and accepting donations!

TODAY, March 21st: END MP 3

TONIGHT, March 21st ACS Roller Skating Night- **Tickets only available at ACS table at Roller Magic in South Amboy**

Sunday, March 23rd: OPEN HOUSE 12-2PM SHARE WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS

Tuesday, March 25 Gertrude Hawk scheduled to be delivered

Thursday, March 27th: 12:30 dismissal, no clubs, yes aftercare, PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE times went home

Friday, March 28th: No Students, teachers at Diocesean Teacher Professional Development Day

Easter Break is April 21st to April 25th!

Save the Date: April 24th is Kindergarten and 8th grade graduation picture day

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Family and School Association Corner:

Our LAST FSA Meeting is May 15th - Families still in the tuition raffle so far:

Ballantyne, Bucior, Carmona, Chendorain, Mitchell, Rodruguez,J/M, Scarpa, Torres,A ($1,000 first prize, $500 second winner, $250 third winner)

FSA Board Meeting! DiscussionTopics: March 20th

Great meeting -shared upcoming events/fundraisers. Mrs. Shumny led FSA Board filled in details.

1. Prayer
2. 3/17 St. Patrick's - thank you to Culinary and FSA for jello cups and treats - funded by FSA
3. 3/14 Healthy Lunch FSA fundraiser day $4 - made over $300
4. Scholastic Book fair - Mrs. Mavica (Father Mike thank you so very much - so many years!)
5. 3/21 Roller Skating night - Mrs. (Jess) Prosch-Mitchell - you can purchase tickets at the door FROM THE ACS TABLE AT THE DOOR!

6. 3/22 and 3/23 12-2pm Open House - invite Family and Friends - most of our new families come from work of mouth

7. 3/28 Diocesean wide professional development day - first time the Diocese of Metuchen teachers will all be together at Diocese wide workshops.

8. 8th grade trip -Planning under way!

9. School picnic - June 10th TENTATIVE

10. Dates: May 5 - Tacos with Dad, May 6 - Teacher Appreciation Day- LUNCH from FSA, May 12th Mother Day Tea

11. Easter Super raffle -Mrs. Scarpa
CALCULATION: $20 TICKET X 8 Tickets per estimated 138 families = $22,080 (if everyone sells the minimum requirement)
$22,080 50% ACS $11,040 Prizes: $11,040 1st winner: $5520 2-6th (5 prizes) winners $1104 each

Of course if more sold all percents increase - this would give the school the same profit as the spring Gertrude Hawk - maybe a little more

12. Easter Perogies sale - spoke to the owner $7 a dozen just like Bazaar (Expense of $2100) we will sell for $12 like the Bazaar then profit of $1500 ($3600-$2100)

13. Clothing Drive - makes about $250-$400 depending on how much we donate - ENDS Wed 4/23

<u>Other topics brought up: Suggestions?</u>

Garage Sale - Father Ivan said no, our insurance premiums would be more than the profit made

Color Run - parent forwarded Mrs. Shumny information

Father Ivan spoke about Lenten Retreat - April 10th for grades 6-8 and how the FSA not only supports academics, it also helps with spiritual programs. He reminded us that it is the Lenten season and a time to reflect and get closer to God. He shared how all our events are tied together and how well the St. Ann's auction did and how wonderful that the Christmas Bazaar builds momentum and we share ideas.

Mrs. Palhais, FSA President, reminded parents it's never too early to start thinking of Christmas Bazaar 2025! So if you have any prizes or ideas or want to help solicit business please reach out.

Book fair was open and we ended our meeting in prayer.

Parish Corner:

Looking to join a parish? Look no further! Join us at Ukrainian Assumption parish any Sunday at 11:30am.

MARY
The perfect Lenten companion

By Robert Fastiggi, OSV News



The Virgin Mary and Christ Child are depicted in the icon of the Theotokos – or Mother of God – from the Byzantine-Ruthenian chapel at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.
—OSV News photo by Nick Crettier, courtesy the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

The season of Lent directs us to recall our own baptism and prepare for the celebration of the paschal mystery of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ. It is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and it helps us grow closer to Jesus.

In celebrating Lent and in every season of the liturgical year, it is good to recall the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, that the "Church honors with special love the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son."

"In her," the council fathers wrote, "the Church holds up and admires the most excellent fruit of the redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be" ("Sacrosanctum Concilium," No. 103).

Mary is the perfect companion for Lent, and Lent is a perfect time to deepen our love, knowledge and veneration of the Mother of God. Lent is also a season of conversion, and here, too, we receive great help from Mary who, as the Mother of Mercy, points us to her divine Son, Jesus Christ, who came into the world to reconcile sinners to himself (cf. Lk 5:31-32).

In his general audience on Ash Wednesday in 2014, Pope Francis highlighted the special protection and help of the Blessed Virgin for the journey of Lent: "On this journey, we want to invoke with special trust the protection and help of the Virgin Mary: May she, who was the first to believe in Christ, accompany us in our days of intense prayer and penance, so that we might come to celebrate, purified and renewed in spirit, the great paschal mystery of her Son."

These words of Pope Francis help us to appreciate one reason why Mary is the perfect companion for Lent: She is the model of the perfect disciple because she entrusted herself completely to God.

At the Annunciation, Mary tells the angel: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). In 1974, Pope Paul VI taught that Mary is "worthy of imitation because she was the first and the most perfect of Christ's disciples" ("Marialis Cultus," No. 35).

In his Angelus address for the second Sunday of Lent in 2006, Pope Benedict XVI highlighted Mary as the model of believers who listen attentively to God: "The Virgin Mary herself, among all human creatures the closest to God, still had to walk day after day in a pilgrimage of faith, constantly guarding and meditating on in her heart the Word that God addressed to her through holy Scripture and through the events of the life of her Son, in whom she recognized and welcomed the Lord's mysterious voice. And so, this is the gift and duty for each one of us during the season of Lent: to listen to Christ, like Mary. To listen to him in his Word, contained in Sacred Scripture. To listen to him in the events of our lives, seeking to decipher in them the messages of Providence."

At the wedding feast of Cana, Mary told the servers: "Do whatever he tells you" (Jn 2:5). In a similar way, Mary directs us all to be faithful to Christ, her divine Son. If we wish to draw closer to Christ during Lent, there is no better way than by entrusting ourselves to Mary, our spiritual mother.

As our spiritual Mother, Mary not only leads us to Christ, but she also protects and guides us from sin. Lent is a perfect time to renew our devotion to Mary as our spiritual mother who cares for us in the midst of challenges and difficulties.

One of the oldest known prayers to Mary is known as the "Sub Tuum Praesidium" ("Under Thy Protection"), which goes back to the third or fourth century. One translation of it reads: "We fly to Thy protection, O Holy Mother of God; Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin. Amen."

Because Lent is a time to turn away from sin, it is also an ideal time to recognize the gift that Our Lord himself gave us, giving us his own mother as our mother while he was dying on the cross (Jn 19:25-27). Pope St. John Paul II recognized that Jesus gave Mary as mother not only to the beloved disciple but to all of the faithful.

Mary's spiritual motherhood is the basis for the "Marian dimension" of the life of each of the disciples of Christ. John Paul II wrote in 1987: "The Marian dimension of the life of a disciple of Christ is expressed in a special way precisely through this filial entrusting to the Mother of Christ, which began with the testament of the Redeemer on Golgotha. Entrusting himself to Mary in a filial manner, the Christian, like the Apostle John, 'welcomes' the Mother of Christ 'into his own home' and brings her into everything that makes up his inner life" ("Redemptoris Mater," No. 45).

Lent is a time to deepen our prayer life, and Mary provides the best example of prayer in her canticle, known as the Magnificat (Lk 1:46-55). This canticle expresses the attitudes of praise, gratitude and humility that are at the heart of all authentic prayer to God. St. Paul VI speaks of Mary as "the virgin in prayer" who "praises the Lord unceasingly and intercedes for the salvation of the world" ("Marialis Cultus," No. 18). As our spiritual mother, Mary not only teaches us how to pray, but she prays for us "now and at the hour of our death."

In the Gospel of Luke, Simeon told Mary that her heart would be pierced so that "the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed" (Lk 2:35). This prophecy was fulfilled during Christ's passion when Mary stood beneath the cross witnessing her Son's crucifixion (Jn 19:25-27). Vatican II tells us that Mary "faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, grieving exceedingly with her only begotten Son, uniting herself with a maternal heart with His sacrifice, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this Victim which she herself had brought forth" ("Lumen Gentium," No. 58).

Lent, along with the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, Sept. 15, is also a special time for venerating Mary as our sorrowful mother. This is done in the Stations of the Cross, which often includes the singing of parts of the medieval hymn the "Stabat Mater," whose most memorable verses are: "At the cross her station keeping, Stood the mournful Mother weeping, Close to Jesus to the last. Through her heart, his sorrow sharing, All his bitter anguish bearing, Now at length the sword had pass'd. Oh, how sad and sore distress'd. Was that mother highly blest, Of the sole-begotten One!"

Because Lent points to Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil, Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows assumes particular importance. But even under the cross, Mary remains a teacher and a model. She shows how all of the faithful, like her, can unite their sufferings to the passion of Christ for the redemption of the world.

Mary's "unique contribution to the Gospel of suffering" (described by St. John Paul II in "Salvific Doloris") shows us that suffering is not meaningless. Lent is a special time to remember the sorrows of Mary and to join ourselves to her in offering her divine Son "in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world" (Chaplet of Divine Mercy).

There is no better companion for the journey of Lent than Mary. As she leads us closer to Jesus, she will serve – as we pray in the "Salve Regina" – "our life, our sweetness, and our hope."

Robert Fastiggi, Ph.D., is a professor of systematic theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. He is former president of the Mariological Society of America.

Walk alongside the Sorrowful Mother

While the Stations of the Cross are well known, there is the parallel pious exercise known as the "Via Matris" or "way of Mary."

This devotion centers on the seven sorrows (or dolors) of Mary, which have a sure Scriptural foundation:

1. The prophecy of Simeon (Lk 2:34–35);
2. The flight into Egypt (Mt 2:13);
3. The loss of Jesus in the Temple (Lk 2:43–45);
4. The meeting of Jesus and Mary on the way to Calvary (Lk 23:27);
5. The crucifixion of Jesus (Jn 19:25);
6. The descent of Jesus from the cross (Mt 27: 57–59); and
7. The burial of Jesus (Jn 19: 40–42).

The Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy, issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in 2002, states that the "Via Matris" harmonizes well "with certain themes that are proper to the Lenten season." It also notes that the Via Matris provides "stages on the journey of faith and sorrow on which the Virgin Mary has preceded the Church, and in which the Church journeys until the end of time."