

February 3, 2019 - The Gift of the Mass

The greatest **gift** Jesus keeps giving us every day is **the Mass**, including **the Eucharist**. The Mass is the most important celebration of our Catholic Faith. Every Mass provides an encounter with Jesus Christ. As I have said many times, the Mass is **Heaven on Earth**. We all tend to take the mysteries of the Mass for granted. As part of the proposed **spiritual renewal** for our parish, we have just decided to focus our six weeks of **Lent** (from Ash Wednesday, March 6, through Palm Sunday, April 14) on one single theme: seeking for every parishioner to have a **better understanding of the Mass and a more meaningful participation** (Scriptures, Prayers, Gift of the Eucharist, Role of Community).

This decision is based on a thorough review of the feedback received from many of you, including: 50 participants from **the Gift** (our major spiritual formation program given last Fall, over six weeks, focusing on **the Holy Spirit**), 40 participants from the discussion of the book **beautiful HOPE** on January 17, all members of our Parish Council, our entire staff, and a large number of our volunteers.

The time has come to share the dates/framework of the main spiritual formation program for our Lenten journey entitled "**The Gift of the Mass**" (more detail on the content in the coming days! Stay tuned!):

- All six weekly sessions: 7 pm Thursdays, and 10 am Saturdays (you choose one)
- Session duration: 1.5 hours
- Babysitting available for each session
- No costs to participants
- First session: Thursday, March 7 or Saturday, March 9 (you choose one)
- Last session: Thursday, April 11 or Saturday, April 13 (you choose one)

The format of each session is similar to the successful one of **the Gift** of last Fall: Fellowship, Prayer, Praise and Glory singing, Video, and Small Group Discussions. We are asking Deacon Rich to be the overall coordinator as he was for **the Gift**, while Mike Spurgeon will be leading the design and teaching of this new Lenten program.

We encourage everyone to consider participating in this six-week Lenten journey. This year we will not have a 3-day Lenten Mission given by an outside speaker. **The Gift of the Mass** will be our parish Lenten Mission, totally prepared and organized by OLHOC members. Your participation will give more meaning to key themes of Lent: Pray, Sacrifice, and Encounter with Christ. Please mark your calendars. To help us plan this major event, we would appreciate it if you could let our Office (office@olhoc.org) know if you intend to participate.

As for **the Gift**, which was done successfully, we need volunteers to assist with logistics (food, audio, set up tables) and/or to be considered as potential leaders of the small group discussions. If interested, please contact Deacon Rich or Mike Spurgeon directly.

I am excited that this Lent, we are able to provide a new spiritual formation program focused on the Mass. We have established a Steering Committee (including leaders of our on-going faith/spiritual formation activities) that will facilitate the detailed design of this new program and its delivery. I plan to be closely associated in the deliberations of this Committee. I also plan to be present at all weekly Lenten sessions. I fully enjoyed **the Gift** sessions last Fall and am looking forward to those of **The Gift of the Mass**.

May the **Holy Spirit** continue to guide our Spiritual Renewal at OLHOC!
Let us continue to pray daily to the **Holy Spirit**!

Come Holy Spirit, guide me and console me. Tell me what I must do.
Inspire me with what I must say.
I promise to submit myself to You in all that You ask of me.
Let me only know Your will and do Your will. Amen!

*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*