

The Fatima Faithful newsletter is published once a month and is available in the bulletin, on our website, and accessible through Facebook. Let us know what you think! Email newsletter@ourladyoffatima.org with suggestions and pictures. The Newsletter Team: Vicki Johnson, Angie Feltz and Guest Columnists.

Take a Closer Look at 7 Tips for Prayer

[Excerpts taken from Sr. Mary Grace at Seek 2023.] Prayer is not just a good Christian habit that serious Catholics employ: it's the blueprint of our lives as Christians. Without prayer we don't simply get lost, we lose out on living life fully alive. Prayer is our response; it's a God choice. You know, it's not about getting it right, it's a God choice, choosing the God who chose us first! Peace flows when we reposition our prayer from asking myself to asking God, what have you got planned for my life?

1) Any prayer should start in his sight which can simply mean calling to mind Jesus is always looking at us with love. Watch for your God moments-God loves me and no conditions apply. **2)** Name your desire, that which is in the deepest part of you. What is it that I REALLY want? Remember God can handle our 'stuff.' God's will for our life is our desires and we can trust him. **3)** Give yourself a Eucharistic life. Prayer in front of the Eucharist is a treasure we will never exhaust. Trust that God's plans are at work 100% of the time even if it's not obvious to us at any given moment. **4)** Rule of disengagement: do not engage with the lies that are meant to hold us down. Turn down the 'amp' of lies. Turn up the sound of truth, the power of Jesus given to us by God. **5)** Never go solo. We can't forget we are following someone, not just some way of life. Keep this close – "I refuse to give up on God." We can bring Jesus into everything, every part of our day no matter how mundane, challenging or joyful. **6)** Know your rest rate. Here's an interesting result from a recent scientific study: swapping your screen for scripture before retiring at night can help you rest better. Leisure (the time when you are not working and you can relax and do things that you enjoy) is also restful which allows us to come 'alive' again. **7)** Take up the weight of the Word, the Good News. This is what God has given us in Jesus. Remember God has chosen you for his home and we are more human with prayer.

WHY ABSTAIN? by Deacon Bill Jacobs

Most of us are familiar with the three disciplines for Lent—fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. As part of this penitential season, we seek to accomplish these three tasks as best as we are able.

When we think of fasting, our mind first thinks of severe fasting—eating nothing at all. We have heard stories of great saints or famous people who have fasted in this way for extended periods, for various reasons, sometimes at the expense of their health.

But for the rest of us, that kind of fasting is only required of us on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday—one large(ish) meal and two smaller meals on those important days. The rest of the time, we are expected merely to *abstain* from meat on the other Fridays of Lent.

But what's the big deal about that? So we have fish or pizza for dinner instead of burgers or chicken. It's not like we're going hungry or anything. What exactly does the long-standing tradition of abstaining accomplish? Since this discipline restricts our choices for these Fridays, it teaches us self-control. It trains our will to overcome our appetites. In a small way, it helps us to build spiritual resilience.

Historically, meat was expensive and often difficult to obtain. By abstaining, we are showing our solidarity with the poor, remembering how they often cannot afford such luxuries. Abstaining can be paired with almsgiving, to further show our awareness of those in need.

Abstaining can teach us of the importance of relying on spiritual goods rather than material ones. By depriving ourselves of something we like, we open up room for prayer and spiritual growth.

It can also keep our time in Lent from being a concrete reality, rather than

something too abstract. Instead of just imagining what fasting is like, we can experience it in a small but practical way. It also serves to remind us throughout the forty days that Lent is real, is still with us, and gives us a "spiritual checkpoint" to review how we are doing with our other disciplines of prayer and almsgiving. We can all appreciate the beautiful worldwide community that is the Catholic Church.

The Church calls us to this discipline of abstinence. By obeying the Church's decree, we are fostering unity with our fellow Catholics around the world.

The decree from the Church that calls us to abstain is not just a suggestion, but a binding church law. It applies to every Catholic that is 14 years of age or older. Since this is Church law, anyone who deliberately ignores this law, with a full understanding of what they are doing, commits a sin. This sin, depending on the situation, could be venial, or even mortal! This does not apply, of course, to those who accidentally forgot, or were ignorant of the rule, or who are seriously ill and unable to comply. Praise the Lord for the healing power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation!

Some people will carry out this abstinence discipline for every Friday of the year. Since Friday is traditionally the day of Jesus' crucifixion, it helps to remind them of the suffering he endured.

All of us seek to grow closer to Christ as Easter approaches. We want to prepare our minds, our hearts, and our bodies to experience the wonder of this monumental event. Let us pray to the Holy Spirit that our enthusiasm does not flag, so that we might stay strong in prayer, in almsgiving, and in the discipline that comes from fasting and abstinence.

The Helping Hand

Books: The Hours of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ by Luisa Piccarreta.

Fr. Richard Rooney, Let's Pray not just Say the Rosary

Formed: Heart of Prayer with Bishop Andrew Couzzens

Foretold with Dr. Sean Innerst

Chime Travelers for the whole family

Welcome to Hope Springs Audio drama (ages 8-12)

Podcasts: Abiding Together

Practicing Catholic



Ash Wednesday



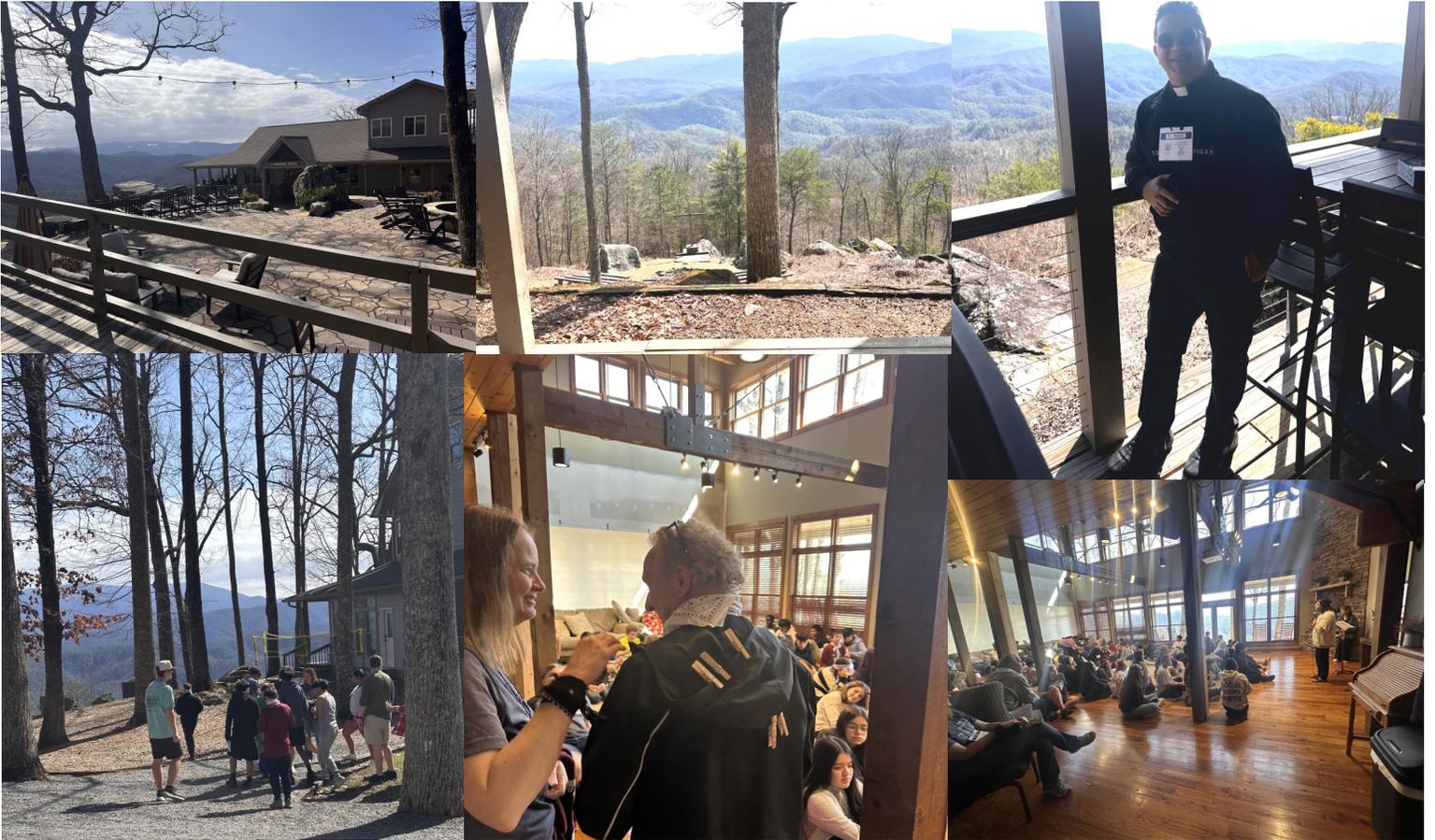
Spanish Retreat with Retreat leader Catalina Martinez



Council of Catholic Women Family Games Day



Confirmation Retreat



Family Outdoor Stations



CWV Burritos



Monsignor Gahagan Lenten Music



Swap for the Best Bargains in Town by Mary Cawthorn

Tired of your old, but still perfectly good dishware? Have the kids outgrown their last year's clothes or uniforms? Looking to find another tool, toy, or piece of sports equipment but don't want to spend money on it? Then a swap meet is your answer! Swap meets connect people who want to hand off items that are still in good shape and at the same time search for new treasures of their own - no money necessary! All while meeting and enjoying the company of new and old friends.



A swap meet is a perfect way to move from a consumer mindset to a conservation mindset. Many of our possessions outlive the initial thrill they provided us when we bought them but are still in good condition. Instead of throwing them away and filling our landfills, why not trade them for your friends' no longer loved items? This avoids using up valuable land designated for landfills, producing the methane gas of decomposing waste, and the high carbon cost of the manufacture and transportation of new goods. In his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis not only exhorts us to care for our common home (Earth), but to realize that we are all brothers and sisters in the whole human family. A swap meet allows us to build community, as we join our Parish family in acting to care for God's creation.

The Care for Creation Ministry is hosting a swap meet on April 25th at OLOF to celebrate Earth Day. Participants will be able to set up a table with clean, gently used housewares, toys, tools, sports equipment, kids clothing, seeds and plants. You can bring as much as you like, but all non-traded items will have to return home with you.

Share in the fun of discovering what special gems your OLOF neighbors may have to offer. No money will exchange hands, only the thrill of finding the best possible bargain around.

Further information on registering for the Earth Day Swap Meet will be available in the bulletin closer to the time of the event. Mark your calendars today for April 25th and join in the fun!



Saint of the Month by Rayanne Wise

St. John of God was known for being impulsive. He left home at 8 to travel with a priest until he was adopted by the manager of a large estate where he worked as a shepherd. At 27, he enlisted in the Spanish army against France. During his time as a soldier, John took part in drinking, gambling, and pillaging until he was thrown from a horse and almost captured by the French. Fear of being captured or killed, John vowed to change his life and sought to help as many people as he could. Being tricked by resentful soldiers, John was expelled from the army. He then went back to his foster home to work until he heard of the war with Moslems invading Europe. After that war, John decided to find his birth parents and discovered that both had died in his absence. At age 38, John went to Africa and met a noble family who had been exiled. John offered to serve them and nursed the family back to health. He earned money for them by building fortifications. During this work, John and the other workers were beaten and mistreated by Catholics, causing John's faith to be shaken. He left Africa after the family received a pardon. Discovering that he enjoyed reading, John became a book peddler and sold holy cards. At 41, John had a vision that took him to Granada, where he sold books from a shop. Upon hearing a sermon on repentance, John's extreme reaction caused townspeople to believe he was a lunatic so he was put in a Royal Hospital. After 40 days of being whipped daily, his penance was declared over. Helping at the hospital while recovering, John decided to start his own hospital for the poor wanting to help as many people as he could. When the Royal Hospital caught fire, John carried and lead patients to safety. Quickly John ran to the roof to separate the burning portion of the building from the rest to stop the fire. St. John of God died on March 8, 1550, after catching pneumonia from jumping into a river to save a boy. He is the patron saint of booksellers, printers, and firefighters.



Spotlight on 2 Ministries and Their Work of Mercy

Quilters and Crafters were organized to provide an opportunity for fellowship and sharing talents. All are welcome to sit and sew, work on their own craft, project and participate in show and tell! Prayer quilts and prayer shawls have become a priority. They are available to anyone in need: Parishioners, family members, friends who are ill, battling debilitating diseases, scheduled for surgery or recovering from surgery. Once a quilt or shawl is requested either by calling the office with the relevant details or by contacting one of the group members, it is prayed over and blessed by one of our priests. It is also very helpful when various ministries remind their folks about this beautiful gift!



If you are interested in joining our group (and we would love to have you), reach out to one of our members or just show up - We meet at 10 AM on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays in the Columbus Room of our Social Hall. For additional information, contact Joan Speck by email at (msja1945@gmail.com) or Nadine Pierce 928-775-2597.

A behind-the-scenes ministry is celebrating its third anniversary, Handmade Cards for the Homebound. It is a ministry of love and encouragement.



We are in a society that does not get actual greeting cards anymore and we crave the physical contact a card brings. A handmade card, filled with joy, warmth and creativity, can bridge the gap of loneliness, especially for the homebound or incarcerated who can feel alone and isolated. These small tokens of kindness serve as a reminder that they are a cherished member of the community. Creating these cards is an opportunity, not just to give, but to connect. It's also a time to tap into your artistic side. All the pieces necessary to put the cards together are given out and we make the cards. After the cards are made, we pray over them, asking God for His healing touch for each person receiving them. The homebound look forward to receiving our monthly wishes and some keep the cards. As we gather around a table with many craft supplies, we are reminded how powerful our collective energy and efforts can be. If you enjoy coloring and gluing, then this ministry is perfect for you. We meet in Room 125 on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 1 pm. If you would like to join us, please email Lois Schering at (schering4@aol.com).