

Our Lady, Help of Christians

Parish Newsletter

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Father Alan C. Mackey, pastor

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MASS TIME CHANGES OR ADDITIONS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

- * **March 19:** The Solemnity of St. Joseph - Mass at 10:00 am followed by the St. Joseph's Altar blessing and lunch (please see note below)
- * **March 25:** Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Confessions: 4:45 pm - 5:15 pm; Mass: 5:30 pm

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- * **March 6 - PARISH SPRING CLEANING DAY after Mass and Devotions.** The Altar & Rosary Society is holding a BIG Spring Cleaning Day to do a thorough cleaning of our entire church building. Please consider donating your time to help in this effort to make the church "worthy of His Real Presence". If you have questions, please contact Barb Patterson at: apatt4@aol.com.
- * **March 19 - Solemnity of St. Joseph - The austerity of Lent is interrupted as we keep a beautiful Feast in honor of St. Joseph.** (The fasting and abstinence of Lent are relaxed for Solemnities) As part of the traditional observance of St. Joseph's day, a St. Joseph's altar will be set up in St. Therese Hall, blessed immediately following Mass, and enjoyed by all after the blessing. You are invited and encouraged to donate an item for the altar - there will be a sign-up sheet posted in the hall - and stay to enjoy lunch and the goodies on the table.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ST. JOSEPH ALTAR

Sicilians, Italians and Italian-Americans have a great devotion to St. Joseph, a devotion going back many years to a time of a great famine in Sicily. The situation was so bleak that for many families the main sustenance was the humble Fava bean, which was used primarily to feed cattle. The people prayed asking St. Joseph to intercede and end the famine and their prayers were answered. In thanksgiving for St. Joseph's intercession, a celebration was held. Wealthy families hosted large buffets and invited everyone to the celebration, especially the poor and sick.

This original celebration has lasted through the years in the form of the St. Joseph's Altar which consists of a three tiered table (representing the Trinity as well as the three members of the Holy Family); a statue of St. Joseph is placed on the top tier.. There are several traditional foods associated with the St. Joseph's Altar which include traditional breads and pastries baked in symbolic shapes, pastas (*with browned bread crumbs sprinkled on top to represent the sawdust of St. Joseph's carpenter shop*), grapes, olives, dried figs (*remembrances of Sicily*), and cream puffs. Though the Lenten abstinence/fasting is relaxed for the day (a Solemnity on the calendar), there is no meat on the Altar. The Fava bean is also present on the table as a remembrance to take home. It is fondly believed that a pantry with Fava beans will never be bare!

Join us for our first ever St. Joseph Altar honoring St. Joseph - consider signing up to bring a food item for the Altar.

Sources for learning more about the St. Joseph Altar

- * <http://www.thankevann.com/stjoseph/> - an excellent website for learning about St. Joseph's Altar
- * <http://catholiccuisine.blogspot.com/2009/03/foods-for-st-josephs-altar.html> - recipes for celebrating the Solemnity of St. Joseph with foods traditionally associated with a St. Joseph's Altar

- * **March 25 - Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary** - Again, the austerity of Lent is relaxed as we observe and solemnly celebrate a Feast in honor of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. (The fasting and abstinence of Lent are relaxed for Solemnities) There will be Mass at 5:30 pm on March 25.
- * **Every other Friday of Lent** - There will be an evening Stations of the Cross (6:00 pm) followed by Benediction on **March 13 at 6:00 pm** and **March 27 at 6:00 pm**
- * **Adult class will meet on March 11th at 6:00 pm** - (Confessions will precede the meeting from 5:00 - 5:30 pm)
- * **Ladies Morning of Reflection** will be Saturday, March 21 immediately following the 8:00 am Mass.
- * **There will be a Mens Prayer and Reflection time** on Thursday, March 18 at 5:30 pm. Confessions (5:00 - 5:30 pm) will precede the prayer and reflection time.
- * **The Lost and Found basket in the hall is getting full!** Please take some time this month to look through the basket to claim anything that might be yours! All leftover items will be donated to needy families at the end of the month.



Mass Schedule

Sunday:

Low Mass - 8:00 am
Confessions - 9:00 am
Rosary - 9:30 am
High Mass - 10:00 am

Monday:

Mass - 7:00 am
Confessions - After Mass

Tuesday:

Mass - 7:00 am
Confessions - After Mass

Wednesday:

Confessions - 8:15 - 8:45 am
Mass - 9:00 am

Thursday:

Adoration & Confessions - 8:00 am
Benediction - 8:45 am
Mass - 9:00 am

Friday:

Adoration & Confessions - 8:00 am
Benediction - 8:45 am
Mass - 9:00 am

First Friday:

Mass - 7:00 am
Mass - 9:00 am

Saturday:

Confessions - 7:30 - 7:50 am
Mass - 8:00 am

First Saturday:

Rosary & Meditation - 8:45 am

Holy Days of Obligation:

10:00 am & 5:30 pm (*unless alternative times announced*)

Prayer to Our Lady, Help of Christians

O Mary, powerful virgin, thou art the mighty and glorious protector of the Church; thou art the marvelous help of Christians; thou art terrible as an army in battle array; thou alone hast destroyed every heresy in the whole world. In the midst of our anguish, our struggles and our distress defend us from the power of the enemy and at the hour of our death receive our souls in paradise. Amen.

The Altar & Rosary Society

of

Our Lady, Help of Christians Parish, Huntsville, Alabama



*W*ould like to invite all women of the parish to join us in keeping house for Our Lord in imitation of Our Lady.

*W*e are a service society dedicated to caring for the church building, all sewing and linen care for the parish, as well as various projects such as making and giving away of Brown Scapulars and raising funds for our Seminarian Support project.

*I*f you would be interested in more information or in joining The Altar & Rosary Society of Our Lady, Help of Christians Parish, please contact Barb Patterson at: apatt4@aol.com.

A Virtue for Every Month :: March :: Mortification

Source: *A Year With the Saints: A Virtue for Every Month of the Year, Imprimatur 1891*

St. Francis de Sales

It should be our principal business to conquer ourselves, and, from day to day, to go on increasing in strength and perfection. Above all, however, it is necessary for us to strive to conquer our little temptations, such as fits of anger, suspicions, jealousies, envy, deceitfulness, vanity, attachments, and evil thoughts. For in this way we shall acquire strength to subdue greater ones.

The mortifications which come to us from God, or from men by His permission, are always worth more than those which are the children of our own will; for it must be considered a general rule, that the less our taste and choice intervene in our actions, the more they will have of goodness, solidity, devotion, the pleasure of God, and our own profit.

St. Alphonsus Rodriguez

The principal thing upon which we have to turn our attention, that we may mortify it and eradicate it from our hearts, is the predominant passion - that is, the affection, inclination, vice, or bad habit, which reigns most in us, which makes us its captive, which brings us into greatest danger, and most frequently causes us to fall into grave transgressions. When the king is taken, the battle is won. And until we do this, we shall make no great advance in perfection.



O Jesus, have pity on my poor soul and sustain it by Your grace.

Source: *Divine Intimacy*, #231, Father Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D., Imprimatur 1964

Parish Notes

Interested in joining the parish - Please submit a Membership Form to the office. Forms can be found on the informational table in the hall.

For weddings and funerals - Members of the parish should contact Father Mackey directly.

Funerals: Please contact Father Mackey before coordinating with a funeral home.

Weddings: Contact Father Mackey at least 6 months prior to a projected wedding date.

Communion for the sick: Contact Father Mackey if you would like him to bring Holy Communion to you or a loved one.