

Strona Proboszcza

The Pastor's Page

March 25th, 2007

Fifth Sunday of Lent

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Month of Saint Joseph

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Dear Parishioners & Friends of Sweetest Heart of Mary,

Today we begin the final period of Lent known as Passiontide. It is that time of Lent when we focus our attention in our prayer and meditation more closely and lovingly on the sacred Passion of Christ. The actual physical pain Jesus endured at the end of His life was horrendous! The recent film "The Passion of the Christ" has made this very clear and so realistic for viewers. Added to this physical pain was the very real psychological and spiritual pain He endured, which is also clearly evident in this fine film. Yes, Christ's death was a cruel and violent torture, which He endured out of pure love for humanity. If you have not yet viewed Mel Gibson's masterpiece, "The Passion of the Christ," the season of Passiontide would be the perfect time. It is now available for purchase on DVD. It will certainly effect your celebration of Easter and the Paschal Mysteries in a profound way! Passiontide extends through Holy Week and culminates during the Triduum on Good Friday.

This period in the liturgical year is dramatically observed in our church by the veiling of the sacred images according to long standing Catholic tradition. The crosses remain covered until after our Good Friday services and the statues until Holy Saturday. What is the meaning of this practice? The crosses are veiled because Christ during this time no longer walked openly among the people, but hid Himself. Christ's divinity was hidden when He arrived at the time of His suffering and death. The images of the saints also are covered because it would seem improper for the "Servants" to appear when the Master Himself is hidden. The veiling of the images creates an unmistakably somber atmosphere in the church. In a certain way we feel alone, much as Christ did when the time came for Him to make the ultimate sacrifice. He cried out, "My God, why have You forsaken me?"

**Któryś za nas
cierpił rany,
Jezu Chryste,
zmiłuj się
nad nami.**



**© Jesus Christ,
who suffered
and was wounded
for us,
have mercy
upon us.**

A word about last week's Forty Hours

What a beautiful tribute to our Lord present among us in the Most Blessed Sacrament! The representation from all three churches of the cluster was very good. Everyone did their part and things went very smoothly. The soloist during the Gorzkie Zale was Sister Kazimera Znyk, VS. She is a Vestiarki Sister from Poland ministering in Hamtramck. Also in the choir loft was the seminary student body from Orchard Lake Ss. Cyril & Methodius. Their combined voices made the services especially beautiful. All the clergy present remarked of the beauty of the church and the ceremonies. The preacher for our services, Fr. Szymon Stefanowicz is a Pauline monk from the monastery at Jasna Gora in Czestochowa. He also remarked at how beautiful all the services were in our church last weekend and how friendly all the folks of are cluster were. Love of the Holy Eucharist really draws a parish community AND a cluster together.

Symbols of the Sacred Passion in Our Church

During the period of restoration of our magnificent high altar, our readers were informed that drastic changes were made to the altar in 1939 by the pastor at that time, Monsignor Michael Grupa. At that time the lower portion of the altar, the tabernacle and the central niche of the lower part of the original altar were removed and replaced with marble. The cost of this project was \$10,000. At the time this project was considered a great improvement that made the altar more permanent, noble and in a certain way more solemn. Historians and art experts will testify that this "improvement" in a sense ruined the integrity of the original artwork of the neo-gothic "Victorian" altar. For better or for worse the altar that we have now is ornamented with thirteen symbols of the sacred passion of our Lord. If you have never noticed them please look for them surrounding the central niche where a marble representation of the crucifixion is found. Above this crucifixion scene in gold is inscribed in Latin: *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*, which is Holy, Holy, Holy.

1. Thirty pieces of silver – paid to Judas to betray the Lord
2. Mallet – used to pound the nails into the Lord's hands and feet
3. Empty cross with scroll, foot rest, cloth and skull
– the skull at the foot of the cross represents the skull of Adam, the first man. There is a legend that the hill of Calvary is the place where Adam was buried. The scroll at the top of the cross reads: I.N.R.I. which is in Latin: Iesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum
– Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews.
4. Ladder with sponge on reed – used to provide our Lord with vinegar as He hung upon the cross in agony.
5. Sword and staff crossed, rope – used to bind our Lord and lead Him to prison.
6. Pitcher and bowl – used by Pontius Pilate to wash his hands after condemning Jesus to death.
7. Crown of thorns – used to torture and mock our Lord as a King.
8. Seamless garment and dice – once worn by our Lord and gambled for by soldiers as He hung upon the cross.
9. Scourge – used to torture our Lord as he was tied to the pillar.
10. Rooster crowing – warning to Peter that he had denied our Lord three times as predicted.
11. Lantern – used to search for our Lord to arrest Him as He prayed in the garden of olives.
12. Nails – used to fasten our Lord to the cross.
13. Pincers – used to remove the nails from the cross as our Lord's dead body was removed.

