

From the Pastor's Desk

Hope is a very powerful thing. If I have said it once, I have said it a thousand times. Hope is a transtemporal virtue. Simply put, that means that it involves the past, present and future. This realization helps us to define hope. In essence, hope is the memory that God has acted on our behalf powerfully in the past and since we believe that God is ultimately consistent, God will act again on our behalf in the present and in the future. How has God acted powerfully in our past? Well, it is our core belief that God has taken a great interest in us, his *sinful* creatures. His interest in us was so great that he became one of us to return us to the way of loving that had been outlined for us in the Torah (the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures) but *forgotten* over time. That was the purpose of Jesus' mission, a mission that was rejected – yet Jesus was so committed to that mission that he was willing to die to see it to fulfillment. And because of that Jesus rose from the dead through the power of God's Spirit and offered to us the unparalleled gift of eternal life with God. That is no small commitment, that action of God on our behalf. Because of that we know that God desires only our good. And so, we know that we call upon God to intervene in our lives, God will do so in a powerful way. It may or may not be in the way that we expected; however, it will be the fulfillment of our hope, because God is consistent and will act in a manner that will move us forward in the journey toward eternal happiness with him.

This reality, brothers and sisters, is the reason for our hope. How we come to know this is not instinctively or primarily because someone else tells us to be so. Yes we are taught about hope, but we only come *to know* hope through our intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, and that relationship grows through prayer. I have challenged you throughout Lent to grow in your prayerful relationship with Christ. If you have not yet committed to that Lenten discipline, today is the day to do so. If you do not know where to begin or you require greater motivation, let the Church help you. Make time to come to daily Mass even one day during the week. Be part of the praying of the Rosary on Tuesday evening or 30 minutes before Saturday evening Mass. Come to adore the Blessed Sacrament on Wednesday evening or Friday afternoon for 10 minutes or more. Investigate one of the Thursday Prayer groups. Participate in the Stations

of the Cross on Friday afternoon. If you are saying to yourself, I cannot find the time, remember that Christ found the time for you...to the point of loving you unto death. Can you really find an excuse that merits not taking *some* extra time with the Lord this Lent? Really, can you?

Jesus is actively awaiting getting to know you better this Lent. Please do not disappoint him. Even if you do not participate in any of the many opportunities provided by our parish, please give the one **once crucified in love, now risen in glory** **FOR YOUR SALVATION**, just a few extra moments of your time. You will not be disappointed – your hopes will be fulfilled. Your life will be forever changed... and changed for the better.

JUBILEE YEAR 2025 - LENTEN CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

As part of our Jubilee Year Works of Mercy, Visitation Parish is committed to working to assist those individuals who are in need in a tangible way. For the remainder of the Lenten season, we will be collecting items for the Emergency Shelter Services of the **Women's Help Center, Inc.** of Cambria County. The services of this agency provide a safe haven for survivors fleeing violence in their homes and individuals experiencing a housing crisis. Emergency shelter services are temporary and free of charge. Beginning next weekend and every weekend until and including Palm Sunday, we will be collecting the following (new) items:

- Bath, Hand, and Face Towels
- Pillows
- Sheet Sets (Full and Queen)
- Cleaning Supplies
- Laundry Supplies
- Personal Hygiene Supplies (adult and children)
- Paper Products
- Food Wrap and Food Storage Bags

We are confident in your generosity in this Jubilee Project that promotes hope for those in our community who are in need. Please give as your means allow. Items will be collected in the main vestibule of the Church. Thank you for reaching out to your neighbors in need..

“Lent is the time of grace that liberates the heart from vanity. It is a time of healing from addictions that seduce us. It is a time to fix our gaze on what abides.”(and that my friends is Christ {JJS}) [sic], Pope Francis, March 6, 2019.