

# The Parish Community of St. Kevin

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## Lent and Easter 2015

Dear Members of the St. Kevin's Parish Community,

Our greetings to you in this sacred season!

As we continue to journey through these forty days of Lent, we value this opportunity **to communicate with you and to share with you** news of *the ongoing pilgrimage* of the Parish Community of St. Kevin.

### Parish Discernment Process

The first news to communicate with you has to do with the *Parish Discernment Process* that we are now engaged in. As we have already shared through Bulletins and Announcements, our Bishop, Bishop Gerard Bergie, is leading the diocese in a total review of the evangelization project in all of the parishes in the diocese. The idea in this discernment process is for each parish to have a good look at itself by considering the question: *how well are we sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with the members of the parish and with the folks in our area or parish neighbourhood.*

Already, members of our parish have come together to share their experience of being a member of the St. Kevin Parish Community. Parishioners have told their own unique stories relating to St. Kevin's. They have highlighted points of our history; they have expressed their pride in the great number and variety of our different parish ministries; they have helped us understand how we might do a few things more effectively. In the second weekend of April at all of our Masses, we will have a general assessment of our parish needs and concerns, a questionnaire, designed to help us plan better for the future. Each parish in Welland is now engaged in the same process. And what we are doing now all other parishes in the diocese will be doing in the near future. The information gleaned from our story-telling and needs assessment questionnaire will be shared with the bishop and with the facilitator of the discernment process. So far we are pleased with this discernment process. It is helping us to deepen our commitment to evangelize, to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

## **Making Ready for Easter**

You will find with this letter the complete schedule for the last days of Lent, Holy Week and Easter here at St. Kevin's. The times for liturgy and prayer are clearly indicated, but we would like to underscore four important liturgical moments.

- **Sunday March 29 – Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord.**  
The solemn beginning of Holy Week as we relive Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and experience the hosannas of the crowds with palms in their hands. And then suddenly, we are confronted with the first reading of the passion and death of Jesus, the signal that we too, as his disciples today, must embrace our cross as we make our way through life's journey.
- **Monday of Holy Week – March 30 at 7:30 p.m.** Our communal celebration of the Sacrament of Penance. The 40 days of Lent call us *to turn away from sin and believe the Good news*. The Sacrament of Penance is a very rich moment of conversion and of encountering again the mercy and forgiveness of the Lord. Several priests will join us to help with confession.
- **Holy Thursday – April 2 at 7:30 p.m. The Celebration of the Lord's Supper. We invite everyone in the Parish to this beautiful liturgy.**  
Our tradition here at St. Kevin's is to encourage everyone who serves our parish in any kind of ministry to be present as we give a new mandate for service. It makes good sense to do this commissioning in the Holy Thursday liturgy that highlights how Jesus taught us to serve through the washing of feet. The washing of feet is the model for all ministry.
- **Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday Evening – April 4 at 8:00 p.m.** The Easter Vigil is the highpoint of all feasts and liturgies throughout the year. It is our great hope that more parishioners will join us. If you can, direct your pilgrimage through these final days of Lent to the Easter Vigil, this holiest of evenings.

### **In conclusion . . .**

We conclude our conversation with you by extending our joyful greetings to all of you as we look forward to celebrating the power and the glory of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

May you and your family and loved ones enjoy renewed faith and much peace this coming Easter season.

Yours in the peace of Christ,

Father Vijay Amirtharaj, CSC and Father Jim Mulligan, CSC

## St. Kevin's, the Spiritual Home for Close to 10,000 Catholics

It is worth noting as we reflect on our parish mission that St. Kevin's is the spiritual home for close to 10,000 Catholics! It is here, in our *sacred space* and in our *community* that a person is baptized and receives the other sacraments of initiation, Confirmation and First Communion. It is here that new families begin with the blessing of marriage, the gift of new hope. And at the end of life, it is here that we bid farewell to loved ones with our prayer and express our faith in eternal life—our faith that for the believer in Jesus, life at death is only changed, not ended. This indeed becomes hope for loved ones suffering from grief and the assurance that a person's own earthly pilgrimage leads ultimately to the community of the Holy Trinity and the communion of saints.

For us Holy Cross priests here at St. Kevin's, (Father Vijay and Father Jim), it has been our experience that many find St. Kevin's to be a very warm and welcoming *spiritual home*. The needs of the members of the parish are remembered daily at our 8:00 a.m. Eucharist. The doors of the church are open throughout the day for believers to spend some quiet time with the Lord. All of this is essential to being a *spiritual home*, the sacred place one can always return to and be welcomed.

### Reflecting on Share Lent – One human family – food for all!

One billion among us go hungry, and countless others are sacrificed to the idols of greed, violence and war. More than a year ago **Pope Francis** invited the church to “declare a war on world hunger”. He reminded us that we are *one human family* and that there should be food for all. The Parish's annual *Share Lent* collection is a powerful symbol of hope and becomes the most important expression of almsgiving that we have over the course of each year. This year's *Share Lent* becomes urgent; too many are hungry in our world. *Development and Peace* is a member of *Caritas*, the Catholic Church's instrument of development for the global south.

You will find the *Share Lent* envelope in this mailing. Please use it and **be as generous as you can. We must work hard to overcome donor fatigue.** You will also find a prayer card inviting us to sow much love so that everybody will have a place at the family table. Jesus made it so clear that we must recognize that the goods of the earth were meant for everyone and that we will be judged on how we share ... or neglect to share. *Share Lent* becomes hope for the poor. As usual, the *Share Lent* collection will take place **Palm Sunday weekend— March 28 - 29.** *From those who are given much, much will be expected!*

**You may bring your Share Lent contribution to Mass on Palm Sunday  
or to any Sunday Mass during the Easter Season.**

# Schedule for Holy Week 2015

## Passion Sunday / Palm Sunday March 28<sup>th</sup> – March 29<sup>th</sup>

Mass Times: Saturday 5:00 p.m.; Sunday 8:00 a.m.; 10:00 a.m.; 12 noon; 5:00 p.m.  
Palms will be distributed to each person as they enter the Church and blessed during the Liturgy.

**Sacrament of Penance: Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> Communal Celebration at 7:30 pm**  
Communal Preparation with several priests for confessions.

## Sacred Triduum

### Holy Thursday April 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:30 p.m.** Reception of Oils; Washing of Feet;  
Commissioning of Ministries – all parishioners involved in any ministry are encouraged  
to participate in this beautiful liturgy.

**Hours of Adoration: 8:30 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.**

### Good Friday April 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Celebration of the Lord's Passion at 12 noon and 3:00 p.m.**  
**Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m.**

### Holy Saturday April 4<sup>th</sup> Easter Vigil

**At 8:00 p.m.** Blessing of the new fire and Paschal Candle  
and Initiation of Catechumens/Candidates *[NO 5:00 p.m. Mass today]*

### Easter Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup>

**Masses at 8:00 a.m.; 10 a.m.; 12 noon;**  
**5:00 p.m.** – Initiation of the RCIC children

