

On Ash Wednesday I mentioned the “three tasks” of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Today as we hear the account of Jesus’ Transfiguration, we see reason behind those tasks.

On the mountain of Transfiguration, Elijah, the prophet, and Moses, the law-giver, speak to Jesus about his “Exodus,” which is his suffering, death and resurrection. Lent prepares us to renew our participation in that great mystery of our faith. We first entered the “Pascal Mystery” by baptism. Holy Week is the privileged time when we renew our baptism. We renounce Satan – and all his false promises - and we profess our faith in God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then, at Easter, we receive over us the holy water that renews the cleansing and healing power of baptism.

One of the best ways of preparing for the Easter renewal of baptism is by accompanying our catechumens and candidates. Last Sunday we had the Rite of Sending at the 9:30 Mass. Then, on Monday evening, Ranelle, Janishay, Nydia and Fernanda participated in the Rite of Election at St. James Cathedral. Below is a picture of them with their sponsors. **Next Sunday we will have First Scrutiny** (pre-baptismal exorcism) at the 9:30 Mass. It will be a powerful moment for all of us. The Second and Third Scrutinies will take place on March 14 and 21. The following Sunday (March 28) is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. At the **Easter Vigil** (April 3, 8 p.m.) the four I mentioned - along with some others - will receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. I encourage you to make plans to attend the Easter Vigil.



Janishay Bernal, who is one of our catechumens, gave a beautiful testimony at the **Generations of Faith** last Wednesday. She spoke about her gratitude to God for calling her to faith and

giving her a new family here at St. Mary of the Valley. Her words inspired all of us to give thanks to God for our faith, the sacraments, and for our parish family.

You may have noticed some new individuals and families at our weekend Masses. They received an invitation, perhaps through **Catholics, Come Home** or (even better) through a St. Mary parishioner. I encourage you to invite others to “come home” – and to give them a welcome when they do. Remember the basics: a smile, a greeting and then learn the person’s name – and offer your help with any question or concern they might have.

During Lent you are invited to participate in **40 Days for Life**. I thank those who accompanied Sr. Barbara and me last Thursday. On March 10 a group of St. Mary youth will spend an hour of prayer in front of the Everett Planned Parenthood facility. Please go to <http://www.40daysforlife.com/everett/> for more information and to sign up for a prayer time.

I would like to thank the households that took home **Vocation Cross** last weekend: Sr. Barbara at the 5 p.m. Mass, Sharon Roloff and the “Duvalians” at the 9:30 Mass (picture below) and Santiago Peña at the noon Mass. This week Nattie & John Brickell, the Halliburtons, the Jacobs and Bonifacio & Martha Lezama will be taking the Vocation Cross and saying the Prayer for Priests in their homes.



Some concluding notes: This coming Thursday we have the monthly **Mom's Night Out**. It is a beautiful opportunity for mutual support and growth in the faith. (Ask any of the moms pictured below: Teresa, Amy, Rocelia, Rose, Elizabeth, Mariana, Maggie, Yolanda, Evelyn, Lynnette, Alicia, Barbara, Teresa, Meri, Arielle, Susan and Anne.) On Friday evening there will an opportunity for **confessions** from 7 to 8:45 and from 10 p.m. until all are heard. On March 19 we have the **Anointing of the Sick** at our 9 a.m. Mass and that evening the **Lenten Penance Service**. For all liturgical ministers (altar servers, lectors, ushers, Communion ministers, musicians and choir members, sacristans, greeters, etc.) we will have a **Liturgy Workshop** on March 13, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Finally, we are in the process of forming a **Lending Library**. I have a number of books, tapes, CD's and videos available in the parish office. Next week I will give more information on how you can participate.



Teresa, Amy, Rocelia, Rose, Elizabeth,
Mariana, Maggie, Yolanda, Evelyn, Lynnette, Alicia
Barbara, Teresa, Meri, Arielle, Susan, Anne