



# Stronica Proboszcza



## The Pastor's Page

March 3<sup>rd</sup>, MMXIX

Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Month of Saint Joseph*

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus!  
Praised be Jesus Christ!

**T**here are now only two days left before we begin once again the Holy Season of Lent, or as it is known in Polish – Wielki Post – the Great Fast. Now is Mardi Gras time! Mardi Gras, translated literally means Greasy Tuesday and is also known as Pączki Day.

Pączki are the most popular of the Polish pre-Lenten foods served during the Carnival period preceding Ash Wednesday. On the day before Ash Wednesday, called Tłusty Wtorek or Fat Tuesday, heaping trays of the hot and rich fried cakes are sold in Polish bakeries everywhere. The custom of eating pączki began in old Poland when the lady of the house cleared her kitchen of all butter, eggs, fat and oil as they were not permitted to be eaten during the strict Lenten fast. These ingredients were combined to create an ethnic delicacy that would become popular not only throughout Polonia, but later the entire nation! Adding jelly fillings was a later development that added to the richness of the food. One of the most delicious pączki fillings found only in Poland and especially in the city of Kraków is marmalade made from roses. Its flavor cannot even begin to be described but once tasted will never be forgotten. Eating pączki is part of the final fling that poles enjoy before entering the long and somber season of Lent.

### *Just For Your Information....*

The Polish word pączki is just like the word pierogi. It is the plural form, so a person can have for example a dozen pączki. If that person has only one it is called a pączek. The Polish word pączek, pronounced *pon-chek* is the singular form of the plural pączki, just as pierog is the singular form of the plural pierogi!

*Happy Pączki Day! – Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>!*

**Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> – Memorial of St. Katherine Drexel**

Katherine Drexel was from a wealthy and well known Philadelphia family. Her parents were good to the poor. Her father made large donations to charity and her mother helped poor families to pay their rent every month. As a child, Katherine reflected on this. She wanted to help the poor when she grew up but

wasn't sure how to do so.

Katherine and her family traveled all over the United States and Europe. On one unforgettable trip, the Drexels traveled to the state of Washington on a private train. Katherine was shocked by the poverty she saw on Indian reservations there. Later, while visiting Rome, the family spoke with Pope Leo XIII. Katherine begged him to send missionaries to help neglected Native American communities like the ones she had seen. To her shock, he said, "My child, why don't you become a missionary yourself?"

Eventually Katherine Drexel did just that. Then as always, talented and committed workers were more urgently needed than donations. In 1891, with 13 other women, she founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. They worked to provide for the needy, and over time Katherine donated 12 million dollars of the fortune she had inherited.

Katherine and her sisters first opened a boarding school for Pueblo Indian students in Santa Fe, New Mexico. In time they founded missions for Indians in 16 states. They began a secondary school for African American students in New Orleans. This school was the forerunner of Xavier University. Other universities in the South were not open to black students in those days because of segregation laws.

In the years after the First World War, when African American people moved from the South to work in northern cities like Detroit, the sisters also started schools in Chicago, Boston and New York City.

It wouldn't have been easy to recognize Reverend Mother Katherine as the same person who had once toured the West on a private train. As she traveled across the country spending her fortune on schools, she tried to live as simply as she could. Her clothing was threadbare. She bought the least expensive railroad tickets and carried her lunch in a brown paper bag. Katherine Drexel died on March 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1955 at the age of 96. People of all races from across the United States journeyed to Philadelphia for her funeral. She was canonized on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

## **Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup> – Feast of St. Casimir – Patron of Poland & Lithuania**

This saintly Polish prince, who died in his twenty-sixth year from tuberculosis on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1484, after a life lived according to the gospel and in virginal chastity, is an official patron saint for both Poland and Lithuania. His name, Casimir, *Kazimierz* in Polish, means "the Maker of Peace." He was born on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1458 at the Wawel Castle in Kraków. He received his religious education from his mother, Elizabeth of Austria, and his education from Fr. Jan Długosz. After an adolescence of great piety and austerity, he was elected king of Hungary at the age of thirteen as a rival to the monarch Matthias Corvino. But after the Hungarians were reconciled to their own king, Casimir renounced the throne and accepted the office of regent of Poland while his father, King Casimir Jagiellończyk was in Lithuania. In that office, in spite of his youthfulness, he exemplified great prudence and virtue. In the midst of the corruption of the royal court he practiced a life of charity and chastity. Every day Casimir recited the lengthy hymn composed perhaps by St. Bernard in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *Omni die dic Mariae*, of which the English version is entitled "Daily, daily sing to Mary." There is another legend that says Casimir himself composed this beautiful and well known hymn! He had made a copy of this hymn and it was found under his head when his tomb was opened in 1604. He refused marriage with the daughter of the emperor of Germany, Henry III, and in 1483 became vice-chancellor in Lithuania, but shortly thereafter he died of tuberculosis and was buried under the altar of the Blessed Virgin in the castle at Wilno. There was a popular devotion to him and he was canonized in 1521 by Pope Leo X. To this day the Lithuanians and Poles honor him. After the Reform of 1602 Pope Clement VIII reissued the bull of canonization of Pope Leo X, which had never reached Poland. In 1948 Pope Pius XII named St. Casimir the special patron of all youth.

In the Archdiocese of Detroit, the second Polish parish to be established was under the Patronage of St. Casimir. *Parafia świętego Kazimierza* was founded on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1882. It was the first parish to break off from the first Polish parish in Detroit, St. Albertus or *Świętego Wojciecha*, and became the “mother church” of all Polish parishes on the west side of Detroit. The founding pastor of St. Casimir Parish was Fr. Paul Gutowski. The parish was located at the corner of 23<sup>rd</sup> Street and Myrtle.

The parish began with seventy families who were members of St. Albertus but found it too much of a burden for their children to make the long trip to attend St. Albertus Parish School, which at the time was the only Polish speaking grammar school in Detroit. And so, with the permission of Bishop Borgess, in 1883 a combination church and school building was built. The Felician sisters who taught in the school were also forced to live in this building until a convent could be built for them much later. In one year the parish grew from seventy families to 340, with 182 children in the parochial school. In 1889 a new and much bigger church building was begun. When it was completed in 1890 it was a grand sight with two beautiful bell towers and a magnificent dome! It was built in a Romanesque style, popular in that era.

As the parish grew in size, eventually a high school was added. Many Westside Catholics of Polish descent graduated from St. Casimir’s High School. Unfortunately in 1961 St. Casimir’s Church was demolished due to structural difficulties that could not be repaired. A new smaller and humbler church was built in 1962. Eventually due to population shifts the High School closed in 1969 and later in 1990 the parish was closed. However the spirit of St. Casimir parish still lives strongly in the hearts of all who were educated and who worshipped in Detroit’s second Polish Parish, *Świętego Kazimierza!*

## Ash Wednesday & the Weekdays & Fridays of Lent

Smearing ashes on our foreheads in the form of a cross may seem like an odd thing to do. They represent death and penance. In past times people put ashes on their faces when someone died to remind those around them to treat them with understanding. For us, Ash Wednesday is a kind of slap in the face to bring us to our senses, reminding us that we came from dust and will return to it one day. But the cross on our foreheads tells us there is more to be said about our final destiny. The Season of Lent reminds us of our dependence on God and His mercy.

In this bulletin is found a copy of the schedule we will be following during the season of Lent and Easter very soon. Everything we will be doing in the parish of Our Lady of the Scapular is on the schedule, so **DO NOT LOSE IT!** It probably should be pinned up somewhere in your house so you can easily refer to it. The official instructions on fasting and abstinence are included.

Lenten booklets with spiritual reading for every day of Lent are available in the church at the Sacred Heart Altar. We hope they will be of great spiritual benefit to our parishioners and that you will find the time in your busy schedule to spend a few moments each day and read the meditation prepared for that day.

At the present time we do not have anything like this for Polish speakers but in my opinion we have something just as good if not even better! That is the weekly praying of the traditional Polish Lenten devotion *Gorzkie Żale*. This will take place every Sunday afternoon at 3:00 PM. *Gorzkie Żale* was one of the primary ways our Polish ancestors grew strong in their appreciation of the sacred passion and suffering of our Lord and Savior Jesus. It strengthened Polish people in times gone by for the personal and national suffering they endured. It has the potential to do the same for us today in these very difficult times, when the spiritual life of the world in general seems to be declining. But this will only happen if you come to the devotion! On a personal note I must say that I really love this devotion and attending it every Sunday afternoon in the parish where I grew up in Jackson had a profound effect on my life and helped to lead me to the holy priesthood.

Please make every effort to come to Mass on Ash Wednesday even though it is not a holy day of obligation. I know everyone wants to receive their ashes but receiving Holy Communion is even so much more important! Masses will be said here at 6:30 AM, 12:00 noon and at 7:00 o'clock in the evening, in both Polish and English. These will be the ONLY opportunities to receive the blessed ashes. Please keep in mind during the Season of Lent that the Holy Mass is available to you every day of the week. Going to Mass is the best thing possible for your soul during the holy season!

Every Friday during Lent, starting on March 8<sup>th</sup>, we will pray the Stations of the Cross in our church at 7:00 PM in the English language. Holy Communion will be distributed at the end of these devotions for those who wish to receive. Also a Fish Fry will take place each Friday of Lent beginning at 3:00 PM in our gym and social room. Please remember Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence and no meat may be eaten. Volunteers for this important fundraiser are always needed and appreciated! This weekly Friday Lenten Schedule of Stations and Fish Fry makes it possible for you to spend a very enjoyable afternoon and evening at your parish church every Friday!

## ***Ash Wednesday is a day of Fast and Abstinence.***

***Everyone over 14 years of age must abstain from eating meat  
on Ash Wednesday and every Friday of Lent.***

***Everyone between the ages of 18 & 59 must fast on Ash Wednesday and Good  
Friday. Only one full meal may be eaten & nothing between meals.***

### **Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, - Feast of Ss. Perpetua & Felicity, martyrs**

Perpetua and Felicity were two of a small group of Christians who were arrested in Carthage in northern Africa. As catechumens they encouraged each other and prayed together in prison together with three other companion catechumens, Revocatus, Secundulus and Saturninus. Finally their teacher Saturus was imprisoned with them and there in the prison cell he baptized them before they were martyred. All the prisoners were lead out into the amphitheater. First they were flogged by gladiators and then they were thrown to a wild cow and were tossed on the horns of the savage beast. Finally Perpetua and Felicity were beheaded.

In that part of the Roman Empire, the authorities were no longer trying to eliminate all the Christians. But every so often, a few Christians were killed to discourage anyone else from becoming Christian.

Perpetua, who was only 22, and the mother of an infant son, was probably arrested because her family was wealthy. However, her mother and brother – who were Christians – were spared. Her father was a pagan and begged her to deny Christianity, but she explained to him that she couldn't tell a lie and renounce her faith. Perpetua's name means "eternal."

Felicity, whose name means "happy," was the wife of a slave, and she may have been from Perpetua's household. She was pregnant at the time they were arrested, and she gave birth to her baby girl during their imprisonment.

Both women were treated cruelly in prison, but they showed so much courage and patience through their hardships that the jailer, Pudens, became Christian too. They were martyred for their faith in the year 203.

## ***Every Friday of Lent is a day of Abstinence.***

***Everyone over 14 years of age must abstain from eating meat  
Why not come to our Fish Fry and support your parish and save yourself the  
trouble of cooking? In the school building from 3PM until 7PM***