

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Pictures By Cheryl Thompson

OUR MINISTERS & MINISTRIES

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

Mind and Spirit Ministry

Mind and Spirit Ministry provides spiritual accompaniment to mental health challenges and those who care for them.

We meet in person each month in the Phil Matrale Hall for our non-therapeutic spiritual support groups, which focus on different aspects of mental health that are prevalent in our community.

Through prayer and scripture, we reflect honestly and vulnerably about the importance of faith to our mental well-being.

Mind and Spirit Ministry started in 2023. Our ministry's purpose is to overcome the barriers, stigma, and discrimination that people who live with a mental illness encounter in the church and in human society. It is to build a bridge between faith and mental health and to provide a focal point for understanding mental health in our church.

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CYO

Kids Night Fundraiser

Hello everyone! My name is Samantha Torres. I'm 17 years old and a senior at Union High School. I also serve as the Vice President of CYO and have been a member since my freshman year. On Saturday, March 15th from 6-9pm in the Phil Matrale Hall, we will once again be hosting our annual Kids Night Fundraiser. Kids Night is an opportunity for CYO teens to volunteer time to spend with the younger children of our parish and mentor them in our faith. Kids Night is one of my favorite events that CYO does all year and this will be my fourth year volunteering. To me, Kids Night is a special opportunity to connect with younger kids—just as we were once in their place. It's a chance to teach them more about God, just like I was taught when I was younger. Events like Kids Night allow older kids to share their faith in a fun, relatable way, making it an enjoyable and meaningful experience. There will also be music, crafts, games, bible stories, snacks and pizza! I believe every child should have the chance to be part of something like this at least once in their life. If you would like to sign your child up, please do so by March 7th. Flyers can be found in the vestibule of the church or you can email cyounionnj@gmail.com for more information. Hope to see you there!

By Samantha Torres

FAITH FORMATION

THE 1ST LUMINOUS MYSTERY

The Baptism of Jesus

Passages to reflect on: Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, and Luke 3:21-22

The passages that describe the Baptism of Jesus are special because they contain all 3 persons of the Trinity in one place: Jesus is present in physical form, God's voice comes down from the heavens, and the Holy Spirit descends as a dove.

"After Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water and behold, the heavens were opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'" (Mt 3:16-17 NAB).

When Jesus went to the River Jordan to be baptized by John the Baptist, John was confused why Jesus would want to be baptized by him since he was not "worthy to carry his sandals" (Mt 3:11). While we get baptized to cleanse us of sin, Jesus was sinless and did not need to be purified. He chose to be baptized to provide us with an example of how we should live. The Baptism of Jesus is a luminous mystery because Jesus is lighting a way for us and providing us with clarity so that we can follow in his footsteps.

Jesus, light my path and help me to live as You lived.

By Christina Dziedzic

LENTEN REFLECTION

Avoidance of the Spiritual River of No Return

On July 5, 2024, I watched a television series **Aerial America** on the National Geographic channel. This broadcast features the history and places of each state of the United States. I was especially interested in the Salmon River in Idaho, the River of No Return. Part of our Lenten journey should be about the avoidance of the spiritual river of no return; three areas we regret: anger, gossip, and unforgiveness.

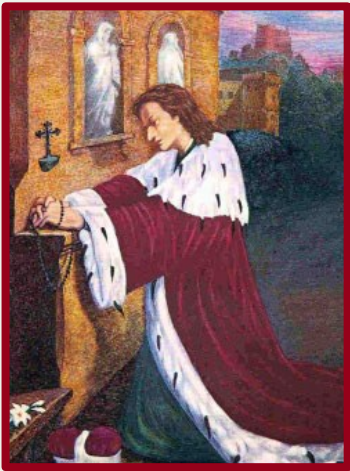
First, losing our temper can be forgiven, but not be undone, once we have lost control (See Ephesians 4:26). Second, gossip, speaking something about another person whether true or untrue that hurts them cannot be taken back (See Proverbs 18:21). Third, sometimes, unforgiveness (not choosing reconciliation) is a non-second-chance action if the person offended has either died or is unaccepting of it (See Matthew 6:15-16).

Lent is also about returning to our Lord Jesus. We can replace the 3 above-referenced sins with these 4 faith-filled actions: Attendance of Mass, going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, personal prayer to our Lord, and service to others. Our avoidance of sin and faithfulness to God will produce Christ's power, forgiveness, peace, and joy in our daily lives.

By Chuck Cababe

SAINTS & US TODAY

St. Casimír



Regardless of our social, political or professional standing in life, as disciples of Jesus Christ we are to strive to live our lives as Christ teaches

us in the Gospels. In this regards, we have a perfect example to follow and to look up to in St. Casimir.

St. Casimir, whose feast day we celebrate on March 4th, was born a prince in 15th century

Poland. Even though he lived in a royal household, Casimir refused to let luxuries obscure his loyalty to God. As a young child, he prayed often. He had a great devotion to Mary and gave away what he could to the poor.

I became interested in learning about St. Casimir when one of my students chose Casimir as his confirmation name. He explained to me that he chose Saint Casimir’s name because he greatly admired how even as a wealthy prince, what mattered most to Casimir was devoting his life to God and caring for the poor.

St. Casimir, patron Saint of Poland, as a young man, you devoted your life to God and to helping the poor - pray for us.

By Deacon Michael Alfano



Aided Persecuted Christians	Priest or Bishop
Basilica of Santa Maria	Relics
Beheaded	Roman Empire
Celebrated Eighth Century	Roman Martyrology
Church of Santa Prassede	Saint Valentine
February Fourteenth	Strong
Italy	Third Century
Jailed	Valens
Martyred	Via Flaminia
Pope Gelasius	Whitefriar St Dublin
Powerful	Worthy

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Y	I	R	T	A	I	T	S	E	P	K	U	R	P	T	D	A	N	G	L	F	U	B	E	N
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