

S.M.A.R.T. NEWS

Saint Mary's Active Religious Teens

Saint Mary's Parish Iowa City, Iowa March 2009

Web Site: <http://youth.icstmary.org>

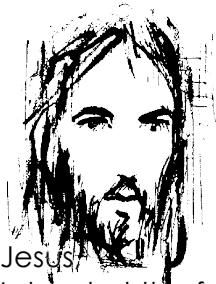
At the Foot of the Cross

Jesus,
I run away from your cross leaving you there hanging
between desolation and rejection. Draw me to you that
I may be one with you.

"Then all the disciples deserted him and fled."
Matthew 26: 54

Jesus,
I stand at a distance for fear of being
ridiculed because I believe in you. Give
me strength so that when I hear your
voice calling, I will recognize you and
answer.

"All his acquaintances stood at a
distance, including the women
who had followed him from
Galilee..." Luke 23:49



Jesus,
I stand at the foot of your cross like a parched land
waiting for the rain. Let me thirst for your love as
much as you thirst for mine.

"Near the cross of Jesus
stood his mother... with the
disciple whom he loved..."
John 19:25-26



"I am thirsty." John 19:28

*Jesus,
I hang on to the wood of my cross. Help me to let go
and reach out in love as you did.*

*"Now it is finished." Then he bowed his head
and delivered over his spirit.... John 19:30*



Let us pick up our backpacks full of burdens and follow Jesus this Lent. His "back-pack" can carry all our crosses...no matter how heavy they may be...

Source: Gillas Cote

Patti McTaggart

CALLING ALL CHEFS!!!!

DO YOU LIKE TO COOK? On the third Thursday of every month, join other youth from each high school and junior high as we collaborate together in St. Mary's parish hall and make four casseroles for the Free Lunch program. This month's "cooking class" will take place on Thursday, March 19th from 5:00-6:00PM. The casseroles created will be served the next day, Friday, March 20th, at the Free Lunch program. All youth are invited to participate!!

CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES AND THE CHRISM MASS:

On Monday, March 30th, 2009, the Chrism Mass will be celebrated at Sacred Heart Cathedral at 5:00PM. At this Mass, the sacred oil used for your Confirmation will be blessed by Bishop William Amos. Any interested Confirmation candidate who would like to attend this Mass should contact Patti at 337-4314 as soon as possible. Supper will be provided at one of Patti's favorite Quad City restaurants! ☺ We will arrive home at around 8:30PM.

P.S. It's a GREAT experience!

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Movie and Pizza Night!

Staying home during Spring Break? GREAT!

**On Monday, March 16, 2009 at 7:00PM, we will have a
"Make-Your-Own Pizza" and "Movie Night"
in St. Mary's parish hall. Patti will bring the pizza dough,
the sauce, the cheese, and the drink. Bring your own
topping to share with others. As we devour the
delicious pizzas, we'll watch a movie flick!
ALL YOUTH ARE WELCOME – COME JOIN IN THE FUN!**

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

by Madi Goodfellow - Sophomore, West High School

Sts. Perpetua and Felicity

FEAST DAY: March 7th

In the year 203, Perpetua made the decision to become a Christian, although she knew it could mean her death during Septimus' persecution. Her surviving brother (another brother had died when he was seven) followed her leadership and became a catechumen as well. Her father was frantic with worry and tried to talk her out of her decision. We can easily understand his concern. At 22 years old, this well-educated, high-spirited woman had every reason to want to live -- including a baby son who was still nursing. We know she was married, but since her husband is never mentioned, many historians assume she was a widow. Perpetua's answer to her father's concerns was simple and clear. Pointing to a water jug, she asked her father, "See that pot lying there? Can you call it by any other name than what it is?" Her father answered, "Of course not." Perpetua responded, "Neither can I call myself by any other name than what I am -- a Christian." This answer so upset her father that he attacked her. Perpetua reports that after that incident she was glad to be separated from him for a few days -- even though that separation was the result of her arrest and imprisonment. Perpetua was arrested with four other catechumens including two slaves Felicity and Revocatus, and Saturninus and Secundulus. Their catechist, Saturus, had already been imprisoned before them. She was baptized before taken to prison. Perpetua was known for her gift of "the Lord's speech" and receiving messages from God. She tells us that at the time of her baptism she was told to pray for nothing but endurance in the face of her trials. The prison was so crowded with people that the heat was suffocating. There was no light anywhere and Perpetua "had never known such darkness." The soldiers who arrested and guarded them pushed and shoved them without any concern. Perpetua had no trouble admitting she was very afraid, but in the midst of all this horror her most excruciating pain came from being separated from her baby. The young slave, Felicity was even worse off for Felicity suffered the stifling heat, overcrowding, and rough handling while being eight months pregnant. Two deacons who ministered to the prisoners paid the guards so that the martyrs would be put in a better part of the prison. There her mother and brother were able to visit Perpetua and bring her baby to her. When she received permission for her baby to stay with her "my prison suddenly became a palace for me." Once more her father came to her, begging her to give in, kissing her hands, and throwing himself at her feet. She told him, "We lie not in our own power but in the power of God." When she and the others were taken to be examined and sentenced, her father followed, pleading with her and the judge. The judge, out of pity, also tried to get Perpetua to change her mind, but when she stood fast, she was sentenced with the others to be thrown to the wild beasts in the arena. Her father was so furious that he refused to send her baby back to Perpetua. While praying in prison, she suddenly felt "gifted with the Lord's speech" and called out the name of her brother Dinocrates who had died at seven of gangrene of the face, a disease so disfiguring that those who should have comforted him left him alone. Now she saw a vision that he was even more alone, in a dark place, hot and thirsty -- not in the eternal joy she hoped for him. She began to pray for Dinocrates and though she was put in stocks every day, her thoughts were not on her own suffering but on her prayers to help her brother. Finally she had another vision in which she saw Dinocrates healed and clean, drinking from a golden bowl that never emptied. Meanwhile Felicity was also in torment. It was against the law for pregnant women to be executed. To kill a child in the womb was shedding innocent and sacred blood. Felicity was afraid that she would not give birth before the day set for their martyrdom and her companions would go on their journey without her. Her friends also didn't want to leave so "good a comrade" behind. Two days before the execution, Felicity went into a painful labor. The guards made fun of her, insulting her by saying, "If you think you suffer now, how will stand it when you face the wild beasts?" Felicity answered them calmly, "Now I'm the one who is suffering, but in the arena Another will be in me suffering for me because I will be suffering for him." She gave birth to a healthy girl who was adopted and raised by one of the Christian women of Carthage. The officers of the prison began to recognize the power of the Christians and the strength and leadership of Perpetua. In some cases this helped the Christians: the warden let them have visitors -- and later became a believer. But in other cases it caused superstitious terror, as when one officer refused to let them get cleaned up on the day they were going to die for fear they'd try some sort of spell. Perpetua immediately spoke up, "We're supposed to die in honor of Caesar's birthday. Wouldn't it look better for you if we looked better?" The officer blushed with shame at her reproach and started to treat them better. There was a feast the day before the games so that the crowd could see the martyrs and make fun of them. But the martyrs turned this all around by laughing at the crowd for not being Christians and exhorting them to follow their example. The four new Christians and their teacher went to the arena with joy and calm. Perpetua in usual high spirits met the eyes of everyone along the way. When those at the arena tried to force Perpetua and the rest to dress in robes dedicated to their gods, Perpetua challenged her executioners. "We came to die out of our own free will so we wouldn't lose our freedom to worship our God. We gave you our lives so that we wouldn't have to worship your gods." She and the others were allowed to keep their clothes. The men were attacked by bears, leopards, and wild boars. Perpetua and Felicity stood side by side as all five martyrs had their throats cut. Perpetua's last words were to her brother: "Stand fast in the faith and love one another."

Prayer: *Saints Perpetua and Felicity, watch over all mothers and children who are separated from each other because of war or persecution. Show a special care to mothers who are imprisoned and guide them to follow your example of faith and courage. Amen*

St. Joseph's Day - Thursday, March 19th

One of the special patron saints of religious and priestly vocations is St. Joseph, the faithful spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster father of Jesus. The reason for this is founded in his primary vocation in life, which was to watch over and to protect the Blessed Virgin Mary and, our Savior, Jesus. During this month of March, which is dedicated to St. Joseph, let us pray to him for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. God may be calling you! ☺

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CONNECTIONS YOUTH GROUP!!!

Connections will meet Sunday, March 1st from 6:30-8:00 pm @ St. Wenceslaus Church Lower Level.

This evening of Faith and Fun will be led by university students from the Newman Catholic Student Center! Featured presenter: Theresa Parsons on the topic of: "*Faith, Sexuality, Spirituality, Intimacy*"

Food and drinks will be provided! Come join other Catholic youth from Iowa City and around our deanery!

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DIOCESAN JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH RALLY!!!

WHEN: SUNDAY, MARCH 29th, 2009

WHERE: REGINA HIGH SCHOOL

TIME: 10AM-4PM

SEE FLYER FOR DETAILS!!!

MARCH

1 – CONNECTIONS YOUTH GROUP	6:30-8:00PM St. Wenc. Parish hall
1- Taize Prayer	5:00PM in the church
4 - Adult/Youth Choir	6:00-7:00PM in the church
5 – Holy Hour for Vocations	7:00PM in the church
6– Stations of the Cross and Benediction	6:00PM in the church
8 – Taize Prayer	5:00PM in the church
8 – CONFIRMATION CLASS	7:00-8:00PM parish hall
11- Adult/Youth Choir	6:00-7:00PM in the church
13 – Stations of the Cross and Benediction	6:00PM in the church
15 – Taize Prayer	5:00PM in the church
16- MOVIE AND PIZZA NIGHT	6:00PM in the parish hall
17 – St. Patrick’s Day!	
18 - Adult/Youth Choir	6:00-7:00PM in the church
19 – St. Joseph’s Day! Pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life!	
19- FREE LUNCH CASSEROLES	5-6PM parish hall
20 – Stations of the Cross	6:00PM in the church
22 – Taize Prayer	5:00PM in the church
25 – Adult/Youth Choir	6-7PM in the balcony
27 – Stations of the Cross	6:00PM in the church
29- DIOCESAN JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH RALLY	10:00AM – 4:00PM see flyer
30 -Chrism Mass in Davenport	Leave at 3:00PM - more in newsletter