

REFLECTION – CONNECTION – ACTION

Dear Friends,

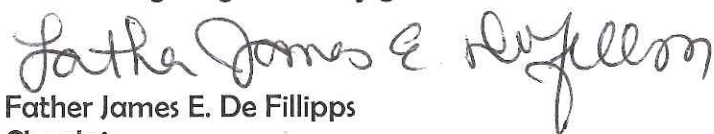
I have always enjoyed the season of Lent, even as a kid. Fittingly, Lent falls in the winter for us in New Jersey. A time where many enjoy the silence as the snow falls to the ground. A time where most of nature remains dormant anxiously awaiting the season of spring (Easter) to begin again. But for right now, the seasons of winter and now LENT, offers a time summoning us to pause, draw back from life's daily grind, and drink more deeply of Jesus' story of our salvation: his life, passion, and resurrection. Simply put, Lent is a time of retreat for the soul.

Lent is synonymous with "praying, fasting, and almsgiving," but let us take it a step further this year. The scriptural readings throughout Lent offer us the fuel for our reflection. Here, we open our hearts and minds to the mercy of God, manifested in Jesus' ministry: Jesus ushered into the desert by the Holy Spirit, the glory of man on Mount Hermon, the power of forgiveness at Samaria, the restoration of sight, and Jesus' power even over death. How do each of these "life-giving" events speak to you?

Reflection offers us a means to a deeper connection with Jesus Christ, the Church, and the community. Pope Benedict said, "The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness." In our world, and indeed, our very own Rutgers community, this "greatness" may be particularly hard to identify with because of the many "crosses" we bear, especially when trying to find a healthy balance between our spiritual, academic, and social lives. Our faith challenges us to connect Jesus' command to love God and serve our neighbor more profoundly. This is where we experience the "greatness" God made us for. How will you connect with God, the Church, and the community?

Reflection offers us a means to a deeper connection with Jesus Christ, the Church, and the community, the connection we form will lead to action. One cannot speak of action without speaking of grace. In doing so, I immediately turn to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, the *Cost of Discipleship*. Bonhoeffer makes a distinction between *cheap grace* and *costly grace*. He states, "cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting today for costly grace. Grace is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost!" When performing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy in His name, the blessings are in abundance. The call to action, which has no limits, is true discipleship. Discipleship found in reflecting, connecting, and taking action in the name of Jesus Christ and the Church for the betterment of the community. What actions will you take this Lent to serve God, Church, and community?

Continue fighting for "costly grace!"



Father James E. De Fillippis
Chaplain



THE CATHOLIC CENTER
AT RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
ST. PETER THE APOSTLE UNIVERSITY & COMMUNITY PARISH

Ash Wednesday Liturgy Services 14 February 2018

*"Above all, I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with **enthusiasm**, sustained by **almsgiving, fasting and prayer.**" – Pope Francis*

- † 7:30 a.m. Mass @ St. Peter's – Fr. Tom
- † 12:15 p.m. Mass @ St. Peter's – Fr. Tom
- † 12:15 p.m. Mass @ Busch Rm 122 ABC – Fr. James
- † 12:15 p.m. Mass @ Trayes Hall, Douglas – Fr. Jeff
- † 12:15 p.m. Mass @ Livi Rm. 202 ABC – Fr. Jay
- † 4:45 p.m. Liturgy of the Word w/ Ashes
@ St. Peter's – Fr. James
- † 6:00 p.m. Liturgy of the Word w/ Ashes @ Cook
Multipurpose Room B – Fr. Jeff
- † 6:00 p.m. Liturgy of the Word w/ Ashes @ Livi Rm. 202
ABC – Deacon Helmut
- † 7:30 p.m. Mass @ St. Peter's
– Fr. Peter
- † 8:00 p.m. Liturgy of the Word w/
Ashes @ Busch Center Hall
– Deacon Pat
- † 9:00 p.m. Liturgy of the Word w/
Ashes @ St. Peter's – Fr. Peter

