RE-IMAGINING

So, what’s happened over the past year?

What were we thinking? A year ago in this newsletter preceding Lent, there was an announcement of “a new process of study and imagining” initiated by the Pastoral Council regarding the renovation of our church’s interior.

It was announced that Fr. Frank Corradi, a senior priest of our diocese with extensive liturgical background, would guide the process, which would include studying the U.S. Bishops’ teaching document of church design and construction, Built of Living Stones, as well as visiting other churches that might offer insights as to how we could best proceed.

As indicated in that update, particular study and conversation would be directed toward a stronger connection between the baptismal font and the altar, as well as a desire for greater unity among worshipers within the body of the church.

That February 2019 update concluded by reporting that the newly established subcommittee intended to make a recommendation by April — of last year!

Indeed, what were we thinking? Or, what was I thinking? Our study committee has done its work well, and good things take as long as they take. The design firm enlisted by the parish in the fall...

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ENCONTROS

On the final three Sundays of Lent we hear wonderful stories of discovery, of awareness, of people coming to life again. All of this occurs when they encounter Jesus.

These stories of a woman at a well, a man born blind and a friend restored to life are the inspiration for a Lenten series based upon the wonder and potential of encounters.

On the Thursdays of Lent, beginning March 5, we’ll gather with our neighbors from St. Michael and Resurrection parishes to experience encounters with people from different backgrounds and experiences. One is from far away, the birthplace of Jesus, and another grew up at St. Anne but has gained a wonderful appreciation for that ancient city.

They all have followed curious and grace-filled paths. The complete schedule is on Page 3.

What our five prophets and preachers share is that they, like those figures in the Lenten gospels, have had encounters with Jesus. They may not have been as life-changing or life-giving, and yet in some way those sacred encounters continue to form and enliven their lives.

I hope you’ll be open to the possibilities of these weekly Lenten encounters, gathering on all of the Thursdays or just one or a few. We never know what might come from these meetings: these encounters with prophets and preachers, strangers and friends.

— Fr. Tom
There was a story one of my friends in parish ministry used to tell. On one of his classroom visits he asked the children what we practice during Lent. One little girl eagerly answered that we are supposed to give alms and pray fast (versus prayer, fasting and almsgiving.)

This story has stuck with me over the years because without knowing it that child had great insight. In our busy world it does feel like we “pray fast,” that all of our lives run at a rapid pace. As a parent of a teenager I see Lent as an opportunity to slow things down. Lent gives us permission to step outside of our normal routine and be more present to the people and experiences in our lives.

We tend to hear about “being mindful” in all that we do. Our Church has called us to this practice for years, and Lent offers a special opportunity. We can get so caught up in going from one thing to the next we don’t have the chance to enjoy the activity or be fully present to those involved. Even Jesus carved time out of his life to pray and slow down. Some of us might say that was easy for him because he did not have children in basketball, hockey, gymnastics, jazz band, etc. However, I do think that those desert experiences can speak to us as families. How can we apply that lesson to our lives?

We can begin in small ways. As parents it is our job to model for our children, younger and older. Teaching them how to slow down and truly be present is a life lesson. Possibilities including more intentional family meals, possibly with recipes suggested by Catholic Relief Services for Lenten meals; or possibly “giving up” something as a family, or doing something beneficial as a family.

There are lots of Lent ideas for families at stanneswausau.org.
DESSERTS FOR FISH FRY: As we prepare for the 67th year of the St. Anne Fish Fry, we ask parishioners to provide desserts, according to the schedule listed below.

WHAT'S NEEDED: fruit pies, cakes, bars, cupcakes and fruit cobblers. Please do not bring custard and meringue pies or frosting made with eggs. If you are not able to bring a dessert, please make a donation of $5-$10 on your scheduled week for the purchase of desserts.

WHERE AND WHEN: Bring desserts to the main Gathering Space of church between 8 a.m. and noon on the date indicated.

WHO: Please bring a dessert on the designated week, if your last name begins with:
- A-E: Feb. 28
- F-I: March 6
- J-M: March 13
- N-Q: March 20
- R-U: March 27
- V-Z: April 3

Thanks for helping to make the 2020 Fish Fries a success.
TASTE OF ST. ANNE

‘Could I get the recipe for this?’

A highlight of the recent Epiphany Open House at the parish rectory was Jan Gierl’s Reuben Dip. It was so popular that many people asked for the recipe. Maybe, if we’re lucky, she’ll make it again next year. The Epiphany Open House will be on Jan. 3.

REUBEN DIP

3/4 cup sour cream
- 8 oz. carton
Cream cheese - 8 oz. package
Corned beef - 6 oz. package - chopped
Drained sauerkraut - 3/4 cup
Swiss cheese - 1 cup - shredded
2-3 tsp. milk

Put all the ingredients in a crock pot set to Low.

Serve warm with garlic chips, pretzels or whatever you’d like.

ASH WEDNESDAY - Feb. 26

Worship to introduce the season of Lent: 7 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 5 p.m., 6:30 p.m. Ashes, Little Books, Rice Bowls & More.

LIVING SYMBOLS OF LENT

The girls pictured here are people we are going to come to know well during Lent as we anticipate the celebration of their Christian initiation at the Easter Vigil.

They were accepted as Catechumens — people seeking to come to know Jesus — on Feb. 16, and on the First Sunday of Lent, March 1, we’ll send them to the Cathedral in La Crosse to be elected for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

Violet Smith-Riggs, on top, is a second grader at Newman-St. Mark Elementary School, and Caroline Stabe is a second grader at Lincoln Elementary School.