

# St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church

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February 11, 2010 (*Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes*)

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*We adore You, O Christ, and we praise You, because by Your holy cross You have redeemed the world.*

The theme of this year's Lenten Papal Message is, "***The justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ***" (cf. Rm 3, 21-22). I encourage you to go to [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va) to read Pope Benedict's entire message.

I would like to briefly summarize the Holy Father's Lenten message "**on the great theme of justice**" and propose a way to put this into action in our lives during this Lenten season.

The Holy Father reminds us that "in common usage, **justice** implies 'to render to every man his due.' In reality, however, this classical definition does not specify what 'due' is to be rendered to each person."

"How can man free himself from selfish influence and open himself to love?" asked Benedict XVI. "We must give up self-sufficiency and accept our mission with humbleness. What man needs most cannot be guaranteed to him by law. In order to live life to the full, something more intimate is necessary that can be granted only as a gift: We could say that man lives by that love which only God can communicate since He created the human person in His image and likeness."

"So we understand how faith is altogether different from a natural, good feeling, obvious fact: Humility is required to accept that I need Another to free me from 'what is mine,' to give me gratuitously 'what is His.' This happens especially in the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Thanks to Christ's action, we may enter into the 'greatest' justice, which is that of love (cf. Rm 13: 8-10)."

When a Christian is strengthened by this experience, the Pope explained, then he is "moved to contribute to creating just societies, where all receive what is necessary to live according to the dignity proper to the human person and where justice is enlivened by love."

This Lent, I propose that we can best grow in our love for God and therefore best experience that "the Justice of God has been manifested through faith in Jesus Christ" **through prayer**.

**PRAYER** is "an intimate sharing between two friends" and no one can be contemplative without charity, detachment and humility as St. Teresa of Avila teaches us. Please consider the following as you practice prayer this Lent - Prayer is God's gift of grace for the souls He has created. To summarize St. Teresa's three points of prayer: **Charity** is the call for us to learn to relate with one another by being friends, by being open to others so our relationship with God keeps maturing. By **Detachment** from everything created we are called to break free from all that binds us and to overcome our possessive desires. Finally, **Humility**, teaches us to allow ourselves to be led by Him, (not seeking to impose on Him or even to counsel Him) about the way He should lead us.

Have you been away from the Church? This Lent renew your relationship with Jesus Christ. Please contact the parish office to be reconciled back to the Jesus Who loves you.

Wishing you every blessing from the hand of God this Lenten Season,



Fr. Ted Dudzinski