FAITH QUEST 2020

**FAITH QUEST** began in 2007 as part of the Archdiocese of Newark’s New Energies Initiative.  The four cluster parishes of West Essex -- St. Aloysius in Caldwell, Notre Dame in North Caldwell, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament in Roseland and St. Thomas More in Fairfield collaborated to develop an adult education and information program that is held during the Lenten season.

 **FAITH QUEST’s** mission is fourfold; to nurture our awareness, deepen our understanding, embrace and enjoy our journey of faith. The three major topics are Prayer & Spirituality, Understanding Sacred Scripture and Faith in Practice. The presenters have all been esteemed members of the Christian community and this year is no exception.

**FAITH QUEST 2020** will be held on the following Wednesdays in Lent: March 11th, 18th & 25th and April 1st from 7:30pm-9pm at St. Thomas More Church, 12 Hollywood Avenue in Fairfield New Jersey.

**Prayer & Spirituality**

March 11: ***An Approach to Lent through Ignatian Spirituality , . . .*** presented by ***Rev. Andrew Downing, S.J*.:** The Spiritual Excercises of St. Ignatius offer a path toward spiritual growth; Lent offers a time for us to focus on growth in our Christian lives. At this session, we will look at how the dynamic of the Spiritual Excercises might be used to guide our prayer in Lent, as we follow Jesus into the desert through the Passion to the Resurrection at Easter. Participants will learn some basics of Ignatian spirituality and be given scriptural meditations to use during Lent. **Rev. Downing is a Jesuit priest serving Saint Peter’s University teaching in the Theology Department and in Campus Ministry and on staff at St. Aedan’s Parish in Jersey City.**

March 18: ***Help Me Hear Your Path For Me Oh Lord, . . .*** presented by ***Ginger Grancagnolo, Ed.D., OPA:*** We have often heard the phrase, “the power is within . . .listen to the power from within.” But how can we be certain that we are sensing the TRUTH? How can we discern between our imagination and God’s wisdom? We will carefully explore the inner pathways to the heart of God’s love and truth that always awaits us deep within our hearts***.* Ginger Grancagnolo is alecturer, author and counselor. She holds a doctorate in Christian ministry and has a background in education, psychology and theology.**

March 25: ***Nunc Coepi (Now I Begin) Discovering again New Life in Christ After the Scandal, . .*** presented by ***Rev. Msgr. Joseph R. Reilly:*** A personal reflection on how we can find Jesus among the “rubble” in which we find ourselves at times. The presentation will focus on the foundation of passion, the staying power of perseverance and the living conviction of courage**. Msgr. Reilly, is the Rector of Immaculate Conception Seminary; dean of the School of Theology and member of the Board of Trustees for Seton Hall University.**

April 1***: Penance: The Scary Sacrament, . . .*** presented by ***Rev. Thomas A. Dente:*** Of all of the seven sacraments, the only one that seems to send a chill down people’s spine is Penance. Why? Where did this sacrament come from anyway? And what’s with the dark booth? Explore the history, theology and pastoral dimensions of the Sacrament of Penance – you may discover it’s not so scary after all . . **. Rev. Dente is the Pastor of Notre Dame Church, North Caldwell and Director of Worship Office for the Archdiocese of Newark.**

**Understanding Sacred Scripture**

March 11: ***“The Beatitudes: What Do They Really Mean?” . . .*** presented by ***Ginger Grancagnolo, Ed.D., OPA:*** *Such a truly beautiful Gospel message, but are we really supposed to “be” all those virtues? Don’t they seem unrealistic and even impossible due to the turbulent and unsettling world we live in? These ideas and more will be discussed**so we can finally understand what is the real Christian mission these days.* **Ginger Grancagnolo is alecturer, author and counselor. She holds a doctorate in Christian ministry and has a background in education, psychology and theology.**

March 18: ***Parables of the Kingdom, . . .*** presented by ***Rev. Christopher Ciccarino***: Few aspects of Jesus’ teaching are better known than his parables, those brief, vivid, dramatic accounts which He used to teach and challenge His hearers. We will examine briefly three of these accounts, to understand and grapple with how Jesus wanted to redefine the Kingdom of God for His original hearers and for us. **Rev. Ciccarino is the Associate Dean for the Seminary and Academic Studies at Immaculate Conception Seminary.**

March 25: ***What You Never Learned About the Ten Commandments, . . .*** presented by ***Rev. James Manos:***  Because they may seem so harsh to our ear, we fail to realize that they are our key to freedom. They are an entire plan of life that draws us closer to God, which will bring us enduring peace with others and with ourselves. **Rev. Manos is the Pastor of St. Luke’s, Ho-Ho-Kus and former pastor of St. Thomas More, Fairfield.  Ordained in 1996, he has served as parochial vicar in Newark, Union and Ramsey and as Dean of the West Essex Deanery.**

April 1: ***St. Paul and His Missionary Journeys, . . .*** presented by ***Rev. John Gabriel.:*** From Damascus to Rome, from the Acts of the Apostles to the Epistles: The Life of St. Paul in Sacred Scripture.**Rev. Gabriel is the Pastor of St. Paul’s, Ramsey and prior pastor of St. Thomas More, Fairfield.**

**Faith in Practice**

March 11: ***Building a Monastery of the Heart . . .*** presented by ***Judith Valente:*** How can we experience in our daily lives the peace and prayerfulness that exists in monasteries? A growing number of people are rediscovering a 6th century text known as *The Rule of St. Benedict.*  With its emphasis on listening, community-and-consensus-building, hospitality, humility, simplicity, prayer, and praise, the monastic Rule offers timeless wisdom and many simple practices for living a more balanced life in our 24/7 world. Using video, music, photography, writing and discussion, we will explore how each of us can become an “everyday contemplative.”  **Judith Valente is the author of four spirituality books and two poetry collections. She is a graduate of Saint Peter’s University and a former staff writer for *The Wall Street Journal*and *The Washington Post*; former contributing correspondent to PBS-TV and Chicago Public Radio and senior correspondent at WGLT Radio. One of her most recent books is *How To Live: What The Rule of St. Benedict Teaches Us About Happiness, Meaning and Community.***

 March 18: ***Women of all ages striving for the perfect work/life balance . . .*** presented by ***Christine Boyle:*** As women, we hear we can have it all by perfectly striking work/life balance. If something is out of sync, then it is the fault of the individual for improperly “weighing” priorities. The content and discussion of this engagement will focus on debunking the myth of work/life balance, deconstructing the self-blame, and shifting away from the hurriedness of life to enjoy the solitude of each moment. Using the Lenten theme of renunciation and the gospel examples of Mary and Martha this discussion will help women in each stage to reframe their daily approaches to experience self-success in their lives, relationships and communities.  **Christine Boyle is the Director of Campus Ministry at Saint Peter’s University where her work centers on student spiritual development using Ignatian spirituality. She is an alumna of University of Scranton (BA History) and the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara University** **(M.Div.)**

March 25: ***“The Wilderness Will Lead You” . . .*** presented by ***Kathy Detlet. D.Min.***: What “wilderness” gets in the way of deepening one’s relationship with God? In this presentation, we will identify what our wilderness might be and hear suggestions for how to continue growing into our authentic selves, our journey with God and our relationships with others. “The Wilderness will lead you to your heart where I will speak . . . “ Kathy **Detlet is Co-Director of the Caldwell Dominican sponsored Lumen Center at the Motherhouse in Caldwell. Kathy provides parishes and pastoral staffs support through facilitating workshops and days of reflections. She is also a certified spiritual director.**

April 1: ***Catholic Social Teachings: The Word & Worship Connections , . .*** presented by ***Anita Foley:***  The seven Catholic Social Teachings will be presented within the framework of discipleship, word and worship. These guiding principles which are rooted in scripture and liturgy will be discussed within a prayerful reflection. **Anita Foley is the Pastoral Associate, Notre Dame Church, North Caldwell and adjunct professor in the Religious Studies Department at Seton Hall University.**

Attendance at prior sessions is not required to benefit from participation at later sessions.

Taking part in **FAITH QUEST 2020** is an excellent way to celebrate Lent. To defray expenses, an offering of $5 a session or $15 for the four week series is requested. Pre-registration is also requested to help with logistical planning. For brochure and registration form, go to the St. Thomas More website at [www.stmchurch.net](http://www.stmchurch.net) or contact St. Thomas More Church at 973-227-0055 or any of the other sponsoring parishes after February 8th.