

# Spirit & Life

*"Do This in Memory of Me"*

*March/April 2012*

## Congratulations to Our Pastor!

The Department of Elementary Schools of the National Catholic Educational Association is proud to announce that Rev. Joseph C. Gatto has been selected to receive the 2012 Distinguished Pastor's Award at their annual Convention. The award was established to honor pastors who have given outstanding support to Catholic elementary education. The department acknowledges that in honoring these pastors, it also honors the many pastors who give their support to Catholic elementary schools throughout the United States.

According to Brother Robert Bimonte, FSC, Executive Director of the NCEA Department of Elementary Schools, "The awardees have demonstrated outstanding support of Catholic education. Their commitment to providing spiritual guidance, involvement with their governing boards, and support of the school administration, as well as their active involvement to assure the future of Catholic education are the reasons they were chosen."

Fr. Joe will be honored at special ceremonies and a banquet on the opening evening of the annual Convention of the National Catholic Educational Association on April 11 in Boston, Massachusetts.

NCEA is the largest, private, professional educational association in the world. Founded in 1904, the association's membership represents more than 200,000 educators serving 7.6 million students in Catholic education at all levels.

We look forward to sharing this honor with Fr. Joe here at St. Gregory's at 9:30 am Mass on Sunday, April 15 with a reception to follow in the Gathering Rooms. Please see page two for some of the supporting comments from parents, students, and faculty that were behind Fr. Joe receiving this prestigious honor!





## Father Joe is Recognized for Outstanding Work

*(continued from page 1)*

Here is some of the praise for Fr. Gatto's service to Jesus and our parish through the ministry of our school, and also for his ability to bring out the "excellence" in everyone, from faculty to kindergartner:

*"Fr. Gatto firmly believes in the education of the whole child – spiritually, morally and academically. He has committed his life not just to the priesthood but also to the education and faith development of Catholic youth."*

- School Principal Patricia Freund



*"How many faculty can say that their pastor visits their classroom on a daily basis, wishing the faculty and staff a blessed day? Fr. Joe fits that bill with love and gratitude for his staff every day."*

- Reading specialist Michele Femia

*"Our Father Gatto looks at the school with love and a vision for future. We, the parishioners, parents and children, are filled with gratitude, love and thankful hearts for a man whose love for God and his own faith have helped put the 'Great' in St. Gregory the Great School."*

- Kristin Bauer, school board chairwoman

*"Through (Fr. Joe's) teachings, the children of St. Gregory's learn that no matter how far they travel, or how long they are gone, no matter how old they become, there is no safer place on Earth than the sanctuary of God's loving arms."*

- Kathleen and Michael Lillis, parents of St. Gregory students

*"Fr. Joe has inspired me and so many other students to pursue Catholic education and to be an active member in our parish. He forms meaningful relationships with students at St. Greg's School and remains a positive influence in their lives."*

-Dan Courtney, St. Gregory's School graduate

Whether through the sacraments, the school, ministry, parish life or all of the above, each of us is greatly blessed by Fr. Joe's priestly vocation. Thank you, Fr. Joe, and congratulations on this well-deserved honor.

### THE U.S. BISHOPS DEFEND OUR RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES WE, THE FAITHFUL, ARE CALLED TO PRAY AND FAST FOR OUR COUNTRY

Last fall, Cardinal-designate Timothy Dolan, current president of the USCCB, and his fellow bishops formed an important committee to defend the American right to live according to conscience. In recent years there has been a steady increase in the number of attacks on our ability to follow Church teaching, and our bishops believe it is time to act. Dolan wrote that this Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty will address an "Urgent need to safeguard religious liberty inherent in the dignity of the human person. We recognized our need to protect this foundational

principle of our country...that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."

In response, the committee, chaired by Bishop William Lori, "will work closely with national organizations, charities, ecumenical and interreligious partners and scholars to form a united and forceful front in defense of religious freedom in our nation."

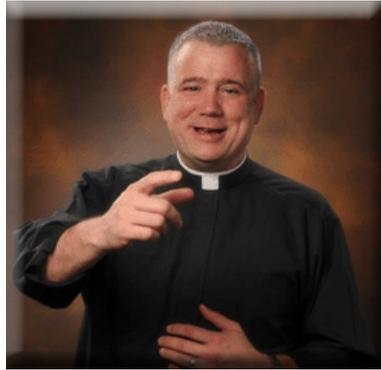
*(continued on page 7)*



# Come to Our Lenten Mission Retreat

Fr. Larry Richards, a popular conference speaker and pastor from Erie, Pa., will conduct a four-day mission retreat at St. Gregory the Great from Monday, March 12 to Thursday, March 15. The retreat will be held in the church, beginning at 7:00 pm each evening. Fr. Larry is a dynamic speaker and is also very engaging with young people. Families are encouraged to attend together, and young people are also most welcome.

A priest since 1989, Fr. Larry has conducted hundreds of parish missions and retreats. He is known to make the love of God real in his presentations. He is the founder of “The Reason for Our Hope Foundation” and has many media presentations, which have been distributed worldwide. He was a featured speaker at the 2011 Men’s Conference in Buffalo. At his mis-



sions, Fr. Larry promises that; 1) You will not be bored, and 2) Your life will be changed forever. Each night will focus on a particular theme:

- Monday – knowing God’s love, and practical information on how to pray.
- Tuesday – focus on the gift of the Mass, and the importance of family.
- Wednesday – the passion of Jesus Christ, and how it frees us from, and provides forgiveness of, our sins.
- Thursday – a healing service and a new life of discipleship.

Please mark the dates and plan to be a part of this inspiring and spiritually rewarding experience.

## EASTER TRIDUUM SCHEDULE

### HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 5

**9:00 am – Morning Prayer**

**5:45 pm – Parish Shared Supper**

**7:30 pm – Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper  
Adoration until 11:00 pm in the Gathering  
Rooms**

### HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 7

**9:00 a.m. – Morning Prayer**

**12:00 noon – Blessing of Easter Baskets**

**8:00 pm – Easter Vigil Mass**

### GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 6

**9:00 am – Morning Prayer**

**12:00 noon – Seven Last Words of Christ**

**1:00 pm – Stations of the Cross**

**2:00 pm – Celebration of the Lord’s Passion**

**7:00 pm – Stations of the Cross**

### EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 8

**Regular Mass Schedule: 8:00 am, 9:30 am,  
11:00 am, 12:30 pm, 4:30 pm**

## ALL ARE WELCOME - FISH FRY FRIDAYS!

Everyone (and we mean everyone – parishioners, extended family, neighbors!) is invited to join us for St. Gregory’s Fish Fry Fridays during Lent. Dine-in, take-out or drive-up to the School Gym from 4:00 to 7:00 pm on February 24, March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30. Fish or breaded shrimp dinners are \$8.00 each (pre-sale) and include French fries, cole slaw, roll and butter, drink and homemade dessert. Pizza will be available for children for \$1 a slice. Tickets at the door are \$9.00 each.

If you have not been involved in parish life, or if you have and want to continue, our Fish Fry Fridays are a wonderful opportunity to socialize with others in our church community. Be sure to get your tickets in the Parish, Family Faith Formation, School or Youth Offices today!



**St. Gregory the Great Faith Community**

**Journey with us...  
...as we deepen our Faith this Lent**

**Begin your day with Morning Prayer every Wednesday in Lent**

Fr. Joe will lead prayer/reflection from 6:30 – 6:45 am in Gathering Room 2

**Fish Fry Fridays – Join us for Food & Fellowship**

Every Friday night, February 24 – March 30: 4:00 - 7:00 pm in the School Cafeteria

**Come and Pray the Stations of the Cross**

Every Friday at 7:00 pm in the Church

Also March 2, 16, 23 and 30 with the schoolchildren: 1:20 pm in the Church

Special Youth Stations Sunday, March 4: 6:50 pm in the Church

**Join us for Liturgy of the Hours**

Morning Prayer (Lauds) Every Saturday Morning, February 25 – March 31: 7:30 am in the Church

Evening Prayer (Vespers) Every Tuesday Evening, February 28 – April 3: 6:30 pm in the Church

**The Sacredness of Death & Burial: Understanding Catholic Funerals**

Presented by Fr. David Richards – Tuesday, February 28, 7:00 pm in the Church

**An Invitation to Holiness through the Spirituality of the Gospels**

Series of Presentations by Fr. Joseph C. Gatto

Thursdays, March 1, 8, 22 and 29: 7:00 pm in the Church

**Exploring our Faith with Fr. Francis**

Brown Bag lunch series: Fridays in March, 12:30 – 1:30 pm in Gathering Room 1

**Deepen your Faith at our Parish Lenten Retreat**

Retreat Director: Fr. Larry Richards

March 12, 13, 14, and 15: 7:00 pm in the Church

**St. Joseph's Table**

Monday, March 19: 5:30 pm in the Ministry Center Gym

**Courageous Movie Night for Families**

Friday, March 30: 7:00 pm in the Gathering Rooms

**Family Faith Formation Children's Lenten Pageant**

Saturday, March 31: 9:15 am in the Church

**Vicariate Lenten Lecture Series on the Corporal Works of Mercy**

Monday nights, 7:30 pm at various church locations



## Beautiful Changes: A Parish in Motion

In his recent State of the Parish presentation, Fr. Joe inspired parishioners with the plans he hopes to bring to fruition for St. Gregory's.

These plans fall into three categories: works currently funded and in progress, planned works in need of funding, and "sketched out" ideas in need of funding and prayer. If any of the projects listed below piques your interest or moves your heart, please contact us for memorial opportunities.

On page five of this issue you can read about the Catholic store and café in the old rectory, which were nearing completion at the time of printing. The café, which is downstairs and separate from the store, will have internet accessibility and a big-screen TV.

Other projects include:

- \* Removing the wall behind the altar, moving the Blessed Sacrament Altar and relocating the Tabernacle to the center of the sanctuary.
- \* Adding a stained-glass window above the Blessed Virgin. The window will depict her Coronation and is being created by a Rochester artist.
- \* Renovating the ushers' space.
- \* Reusing the stained-glass panels formerly behind the choir to enhance worship space.
- \* Renovating the rear restrooms to make them handicapped accessible and add changing tables.

- \* Installing a new baptistery to replace the old one, which was removed because of leaks and mold issues.

- \* Painting the sanctuary walls and front canopy.
- \* Replacing the sanctuary lighting. Renting a hydraulic lift is required each time the current fixtures are cleaned.
- \* Stripping and waxing the sanctuary floors.
- \* Resealing the parking lot in conjunction with the Kaleida parking contract and redoing the parking lot island, flagpoles and landscaping.
- \* Structural repairs to the Grotto and possible inclusion of Stations of the Cross and candles.
- \* Expanding or remodeling the Adoration Chapel.
- \* Constructing a day chapel for small weddings, funerals and similar rites.
- \* Repairing leaks in the roof of the middle school.
- \* Restructuring the music office and storage areas.

Some of these projects are simply required maintenance. Others involve a bold vision for the future of the parish. Past memorials for such items as the baptistery will be included in future dedications.

We stand on the shoulders of giants at St. Gregory's and hope to continue to build on the legacy of our parish's founders well into the future. All for the Greater Glory of God!

## St. Gregory Paying a Personal Visit to His Parish!

In our faith, the veneration of relics (a part of the body or a belonging of a canonized saint) is a time honored extension of our understanding of the human body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. Relics are considered sacramentals and as such, are efficacious in bringing God's graces and blessings to us.

Fr. Michael Burzynski, pastor at St. John Gualbert Parish, has a personal collection of over 1,000 relics. On April 18, at 7:00 pm in our Church, he will come and discuss them. Fr. Burzynski, who has been collecting relics for over 25 years, is bringing several relics for our veneration and blessing, including one from St. Gregory the Great. Please join us for this special Easter Season Celebration of the Communion of the Saints!

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

**Great Dinner Auction: October 20, 2012**

**Chairwomen**

**Antonietta Landi, Kristin Vaccarro, Lori Leone and Ellen Gruttadauria**



## St. Gregory's Catholic Store Becoming a Reality

Ever since he arrived at St. Gregory the Great, Fr. Joseph Gatto has envisioned a Catholic store on our campus. This year, his vision is becoming a reality in a renovated section of the old rectory.

Kathy Delaney, who will serve as manager of the store, feels privileged to be part of a project that is close to her heart. Kathy and her husband, Tom, have been St. Gregory's parishioners since 1982 and have been active in ministries for more than 25 years. Their children, Tim, Katie and Lizzy, all graduated from St. Gregory the Great School.

It will not just be a "store," Kathy explained, but a true ministry to parishioners and the community. In addition to Bibles, the store will carry patron saint cards, Catholic prayer cards, crucifixes, rosaries and Catholic books. Many of these items are not available in a typical non-Catholic Christian store; they will provide excellent gifts for religious occasions.

Near the store, and included in the old rectory renovations, will be a café for meetings, speakers and other functions. The store and the café are expected to draw others in the community to visit our parish.

Kathy stressed that the store is truly a ministry. It will be a place where people can feel comfortable browsing, talking and finding resources for their families' faith journeys. Fr. Francis plans to be available regularly to bless items that have been purchased. A prayer intention book will be available.

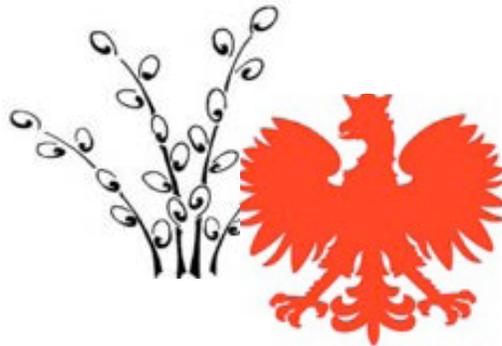
"We plan to staff the store with volunteers from the parish," Kathy said. "I have a great committee working with me to get this project going, and we are very excited about this new ministry."

For more information or to volunteer at the Catholic Store, please contact Kathy Delaney at 688-5678, ext. 320, or email [kathydelaney@stgregs.org](mailto:kathydelaney@stgregs.org).

## Post Dyngus Day Dinner Dance

Saturday, April 14

St. Gregory the Great Ministry Center



\$25 Per Person Includes:

Family Style Catering from salad to dessert by Nowak's, Beer and Wine

Doors open at 5:00 pm with cocktails; Dinner will be served at 6:15 pm

Performance by **Polish Heritage Dancers**  
and

Featuring Live Music by **The Buffalo Touch**

**Tickets must be purchased by April 1 from St. Gregory's Parish Office.**

**No tickets will be sold at the door.**

**For more information, contact Ed Rajewski at 633-4594.**



# Fashion is Back - St. Gregory the Great Fashion Show

The St. Gregory the Great Fashion Show is back! Fittingly, (no pun intended) the theme is “Fashion is Back.” The evening promises to be fun-filled, with local fashions from *TYORI*, *JB Tennis*, *Ann Taylor*, *Leelee* and *Park Country Club Pro Shop*. It will be held on Thursday, March 15, at Park Country Club (Sheridan Drive).

The evening begins at 6:00 pm with cocktails, a basket raffle and an auction of amazing items, including handbags, sunglasses and other popular fashion accessories. A sit-down dinner will be followed by the spectacular Fashion Show! Tickets are \$45, or \$60 for a patron-sponsor



ticket. They can be purchased by contacting Jennifer O’Donnell at [jennifer.odonnell@wellsfargoadvisors.com](mailto:jennifer.odonnell@wellsfargoadvisors.com). For information about sponsorship or program ads, contact Co-Chairwomen Alexandra Wehr ([Alexandra\\_Wehr@KeyBank.com](mailto:Alexandra_Wehr@KeyBank.com)) or Amy Starck ([amy\\_starck@yahoo.com](mailto:amy_starck@yahoo.com), 946-8300).

This “Girls’ Night Out” will not only be extremely enjoyable but will raise funds for an excellent cause. Seating is limited, so get your tickets soon! The Fashion Show is sponsored by the Home School Association and benefits St. Gregory the Great School.

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## THE U.S. BISHOPS DEFEND OUR RELIGIOUS LIBERTIES WE, THE FAITHFUL, ARE CALLED TO PRAY AND FAST FOR OUR COUNTRY *(continued from page 2)*

Locally, on January 27, our bishop, Edward Kmiec, wrote an open letter to all Catholics in the Diocese. In it he decried “an alarming and serious matter that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith. The federal government, which claims to be ‘of, by, and for the people,’ has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people – the Catholic population – and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic faithful... We cannot – we will not – comply with this unjust law. People of faith cannot be made second-class citizens.”

Our bishops are responding to many issues, but most glaringly to President Obama’s January 20 communiqué to Dolan, informing him that he intends to enforce the HHS mandate that requires all health insurance plans to offer contraception/sterilization with no co-pay to church-affiliated employees. This includes religious organizations. The administration made a great show of emphasizing that the mandate does include a, “conscience protection clause,” but it is so narrowly defined that most Catholic hospitals, colleges and social service agencies would not qualify. As Sr. Carol Keehan, DC, president of The Catholic Health Association, says, the clause would “only cover the parish housekeeper.”

In his letter, Bishop Kmiec asked us to perform two

concrete sets of actions: First, as a community of faith we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail, and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing; with God, nothing is impossible. Second, please visit [www.usccb.org/conscience](http://www.usccb.org/conscience) to learn more about this severe assault on religious liberty, and how to contact Congress in support of legislation that would reverse the administration’s decision.

We need to be informed. Philadelphia’s Archbishop Charles Chaput has written a very readable work on these subjects, *Render Unto Caesar: Serving Our Nation by Living Our Catholic Beliefs in Political Life*. It is a brilliant explanation of why we not only have the right but the obligation, to speak up for our faith and for true freedom in our country and it is available at the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library.

We need to pray. All of our bishops are urging us to prayer and action. Our bishops, and our country, need us more than ever before. It does not matter if the tide seems to be turned against us. It does not matter if our opponents are well-connected and well-financed. It matters only that we continue to pray and be willing to be God’s instruments for the good of our beloved nation. Many souls are at stake. Please pray!

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*Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church*

## What's Inside This Issue?

- Deepen Your Faith this Lent - Schedule of Opportunities Inside!
- Parish Lenten Retreat with Fr. Larry Richards!
- Fr. Joseph C. Gatto wins National Award
- Catholic Store Coming Soon!
- Defending our Religious Liberties

## Mark Your Calendar For These Upcoming Events:

### *March*

1, 8, 22, 29 - *Catholic Spirituality Series*  
2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - *Fish Fry Fridays, Stations of the Cross and Prayer Hour for Vocations*  
3 - *Nickel City Opera Performance*  
6, 20, 27 - *Marriage Preparation Sessions*  
11 - *100th Anniversary of Girl Scouting Mass*  
12-15 - *Parish Lenten Retreat with Fr. Larry Richards*

19 - *St. Joseph's Table*  
31 - *FFF Lenten Pageant*

### *April*

5 - *Parish Shared Supper*  
8 - *Easter Sunday*  
14 - *Dyngus Day Dinner Dance*  
15 - *Divine Mercy Celebration*  
21 - *Italian Feast*

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