

## Praying, Fasting, and Giving for Justice during Lent

*Is this not, rather, the fast that I choose:*

*releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke;*

*Setting free the oppressed, breaking off every yoke?*

*Is it not sharing your bread with the hungry, bringing the afflicted and the homeless into your house;*

*Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own flesh?*

*Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed;*

*Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.*

*Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer, you shall cry for help, and He will say: "Here I am!"*

*Isaiah 58:6-9*

### **PRAY for Congressional Representatives to Support Immigration Reform**

For many years, the Catholic Church in the U.S. has advocated for comprehensive immigration reform, to ensure dignity and justice for undocumented immigrants. Although the Senate passed legislation last year, the House of Representatives still hasn't addressed this issue. Our U.S. Bishops' "Justice for Immigrants" campaign is asking us to pray for Catholic members of the House during Lent. We pray that they would support immigration reform that includes a **pathway to citizenship** for undocumented immigrants and that promotes **family unification** by shortening the wait times for immigrants to bring their relatives into the U.S. You can find more information and a calendar to use to pray for a different Congress member each day at this web site:

<http://www.networklobby.org/lent>

Or you can concentrate daily prayers on the Catholic Congress members representing parts of our diocese who have not yet signed on to the House version of the immigration reform bill. After you pray for them, call them up and let them know what you are asking them to do.

Rep. Tom Reed (202) 225-3161

Rep. Richard Hanna (202)-225-3665

Rep. Chris Collins (202)-225-5265

### **FAST for the Lives of the Babies Threatened by Abortion Expansion**

Consider fasting from TV, Facebook or some other recreational pursuit and then dedicating that time to opposing abortion expansion in New York State. Current proposals would allow abortion through all nine months of pregnancy, open the door for non-doctors to perform abortions, and potentially require Catholic hospitals to permit abortions and Catholic human service agencies to counsel and refer for abortion.

These proposals are part of the *Women's Equality Act*, a bill which includes many good and important measures to protect victims of domestic violence and human trafficking along with these disastrous and unacceptable abortion provisions.

In order to stop those provisions from becoming law, make your voice heard! You can **write a letter to the editor** and **contact your state legislators**. In particular we need to ensure that our State Senators do not allow this bill to pass with abortion expansion included. This will take a concerted effort so please **take action!**

To find your state senator go to:

<http://www.nysenate.gov/>

To learn more on this issue, go to:

<http://www.nys4life.com/>

### **GIVE to the CRS Rice Bowl**

It's not too late to participate in Catholic Relief Service's Rice Bowl this Lent. Donating the money you save by giving up snacks, restaurant meals, coffee or dessert is just one way to direct Lenten sacrifices to supporting hungry people. Rice Bowl donations support CRS' work in poor countries around the globe and also support local hunger relief efforts. Pick up a Rice Bowl at your parish or contact our diocesan CRS liaison Kathy Dubel at [KDubel@dor.org](mailto:KDubel@dor.org) or 607-734-9784.



## The Power of the Pen and the Clipboard...

### Speaking Up To Strengthen Families



During Public Policy Weekends in parishes around the diocese, people spoke up for young, low income, and vulnerable parents and their children by signing the Diocesan Public Policy Committee's petition. This year's petition called on Governor Cuomo and the state legislature to increase funding for **Healthy Families** and the **Maternity and Early Childhood Foundation**, so that these entities could expand their work providing pre-natal health information, guidance, mentoring and emotional support to parents in need. The grand total of the petition signatures was an impressive **9,679** !

Some of the biggest numbers of signatures came from parishes that have discovered the power of the clipboard. Instead of tabling in the back of church after Mass, they stocked the pews with pens and petitions on clipboards, and provided a few minutes after Communion for parishioners to sign while still seated. This made it easy and convenient for many more people to sign their names and express their support for these programs. The origin of the word "liturgy" is "public working". How fitting that during our Sunday liturgy, which is the work of the *public*, of the *People of God*, we take seriously the call to put love into action and to work together for the Common Good.

**SAVE THE DATE— Saturday May 10, 2014**

(More information to follow)

**Diocesan Social Ministry Conference**

**Our Lady of Peace Parish Hall , Geneva NY**

Please plan to join other parish staff and social ministry committee volunteers to hear and share new ideas for engaging your parish in social concern ministry. Participants will have the opportunity to talk and learn about the topics that interest and move them the most. Bishop Salvatore Matano will open the conference with morning Mass. Lunch will be provided. There's no registration fee, but free will offerings will be welcomed. RSVP with the Justice & Peace staffer from your county. (You'll find their contact info below).

#### **Justice & Peace Ministry Staff of Catholic Charities**

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