



INSTITUTE FOR  
DIACONAL STUDIES

# AD LUCEM!

MARCH 2016

TO: INSTITUTE FOR DIACONAL STUDIES COMMUNITY

FROM: DEACON BOB PUHALA, DIRECTOR



## A Joyful Journey to Easter

Lent, we know, is the liturgical season especially focused on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time of spiritual discipline and preparation which allows for new growth, new habits, and bears much good fruit. But, it may also dredge up feelings of contrition, sadness, privation, or somberness as we examine our hearts and meditate on the cross. So it is important to remember that our Catholic tradition points us to unabashed expressions of joy in the knowledge of the resurrection.

In his meditations on Easter, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI points to laughter as an essential expression of joy, even in the context of the liturgy:

In the Baroque period the liturgy used to include the *risus paschalis*, the Easter laughter. The Easter homily had to contain a story that made people laugh, so that the church resounded with a joyful laughter. That may be a somewhat superficial form of Christian joy. But is there not something very beautiful and appropriate about laughter becoming a liturgical symbol? And is it not a tonic when we still hear, in the play of cherub and ornament in baroque churches, that laughter which testified to the freedom of the redeemed?

And is it not a sign of an Easter faith when Haydn remarked, concerning his church compositions, that he felt a particular joy when thinking of God: "As I came to utter the words of supplication, I could not suppress my joy but loosed the reins of my elated spirits and wrote 'allegro' over the Miserere, and so on"?

The Book of Revelation's vision of heaven expresses what we see by faith at Easter: the Lamb who was slain lives. Since he lives, our weeping comes to an end and is transformed into laughter (cf. Rev 5:4f). When we look at the Lamb, we see heaven opened. (*Images of Hope*, Joseph Ratzinger, 50-51).

Fr. Joe Sica of the Diocese of Scranton wrote a helpful daily meditation precisely on this point in his booklet, *Saying Yes to Soul Time*. He writes about "The LOL Remedy":

Ahh, laughter. A good belly laugh stirs the blood, expands the chest, and clears the cobwebs from the brain. William Frey of Stanford University found that a hundred belly laughs is the aerobic equivalent of ten minutes on a StairMaster. That's why laughing is my favorite exercise, right after breathing and eating.

Go ahead and give it a try. Turn the corners of your mouth up and smile. Now laugh. No matter when or where, laughter is always good for you. Not only is it the best stress reliever to naturally boost your mood, but it's free as well.

Lent is the perfect time to get humorically fit. Make a "Doses of Laughter" kit. Decorate a shoebox with smiley faces and bright colors. Fill it up with amusing stories, the merriest jokes, quips, cartoons, comedy movies, and anything else that you know will make you laugh.

When the clouds roll in or you hit a pothole on life's journey that knocks the joy out of you, reach for your Doses of Laughter kit to add smileage to your life. Laughter just might be the best remedy for energizing your joy as it shines a fun light into your life again, helping you feel better and revamping that spring in your step.

Heart words: *Jesus, I believe laughter makes life the merriest of go-rounds. Amen.*

## **Around IDS**

### *Courses*

Spring Semester courses continue:

- Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (Aspirancy)
- New Testament (Year 1)
- Ecclesiology & Mariology (Years 1 & 2)
- Homiletics III (Year 2)
- Moral Theology (Years 2 & 3)
- Presiding at the Rites II (Year 3)

### Special Notices

- *CANCELLED*: Mar. 5 - Collaboration Day with Lay Ecclesial Ministry Candidates and Candidates for Ordination (Year 3)
- *BREAK*: There is a break from all classes during Holy Week, March 21-27, 2016.
- *CANCELLED*: Mar. 28 - All classes cancelled due to USML holiday.
- Classes resume on Wednesday, March 30.

- Apr. 2 – Wives’ Day of Recollection (Candidate Path, Years 1, 2, 3)

### **Exploring the Diaconate**

IDS offers four *Exploring* sessions in March and one in early April:

- Thursday, March 3, University of Saint Mary of the Lake, Mundelein (Prist Center, Bldg. 201P), 7:30–8:30pm
- Sunday, March 6, St. Philip the Apostle, Northfield – Please join us at the 11:45am liturgy followed by the *Exploring* session, 1-2pm
- Wednesday, March 16, St. Linus (Vicariate V), 7–8:30pm
- Thursday, March 31, University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein (Prist Center, Bldg. 201P), 7:30–8:30pm
- Thursday, April 7, St. Aloysius, Chicago (Vic. III), Parish Center Gonzaga Room, 7-8pm

These sessions are intended to raise vocation awareness of potential applicants who would begin formation in August 2016. All are invited to attend. No preregistration is required. For more information, contact Deacon Bob Puhala, [bpuhala@usml.edu](mailto:bpuhala@usml.edu), 847.837.4564.

### **IDS March Birthdays**

Prayers for a special blessing on these folks who celebrate birthdays this month:

3/3 – Paul Onischuk; 3/6 – Pam Carlson; 3/7 – JoAnn Schutzius; 3/16 – Jenn Holevoet; 3/20 – Jola Oliver; 3/25 – Robert Powers; 3/29 – Tom Biegel

### **Let Us Remember in Prayer Those Entrusted to Our Care**

*Pray for our beloved who have passed from this life to the next:* Johnny Miller, Bridget Lenihan, Ann Chester, Elizabeth Ruth Lynch, Dr. Gerry Girdaukas, Maria Carmen Woodard, Kathy O’Brien, Robert Kunkel, Rev. Richard Mueller, Rev. Luc Tran, Tom Tricarico, Anna Georgen

*Pray in a particular way for all of our sick:* Stanislaw Ciomek, Marites Negrón, Catherine O’Hearn, Rita Farina, Justin Souta, Tom Seehausen, Yuki Birck, Lorraine Olley, Barbara Kupsak, Rev. George Koeune, Brett Swearingen, Gloria Enriquez, Joan Madej