

March 24, 2019



From Fr. Jim . . .

One of our responsibilities on the Lenten journey is to walk with the catechumens and candidates in this time of preparation in order to receive the Easter Sacraments. We have one adult who has been baptized Christian (candidate) in another faith and who will be received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil this year and we have one adult (catechumen) who will be fully initiated into the Catholic faith with Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

We want to show our prayer support for them and for all the catechumens and candidates in our partner parishes who will be baptized or received into full communion with the church at the Easter Vigil this year. Their names are already included in our prayer wall and in our book of intentions. We have also sent them each a personal letter offering them our continued prayers and support and encouragement in this time of purification and enlightenment.

On the Third Sunday of Lent, the catechumens or the Elect, as they are now called, celebrate the First Scrutiny. Whenever the Rite of Scrutiny is celebrated, the Cycle A readings can be used. We are currently in Cycle C. The Cycle A reading for the First Scrutiny is the Woman at the Well. The Elect examine their lives under the lamp of this Gospel for a deeper purification of their call and a deeper awareness and enlightenment of the Faith they are receiving. The woman at the well invites them to conversion and to accept the Lord, Jesus Christ as living water for their lives. It also provides understanding for the Sacrament of Baptism that they want to receive and the life they are being called to live. We pray for them so that they can know the Lord as well as the Samaritan Woman and that they will allow the Lord to know them as fully and deeply as possible. We are not celebrating the Rite of Scrutiny with our catechumen here at St. Leo but as we prepare to renew our baptismal promises at Easter and to support and walk with those who are celebrating The Rite of Scrutiny, we examine our lives with the Cycle C Readings.

In the Cycle C Readings, in the gospel, Jesus tells the story about the fig tree that produced no fruit and the gardener was told to cut it down, but the gardener asked to give the tree one more year to produce fruit. During that year the gardener would cultivate the ground and fertilize the tree and then if the tree didn't produce, it could be cut down. As we prepare to renew our baptismal promises at Easter, we examine our lives in light of this Gospel. Are prayer, fasting and almsgiving like fertilizer that cultivates your faith and helps you to produce fruit for the Lord? If so, what fruit is being produced with the Lenten disciplines you have chosen? Do you need a second chance at something? Do you know of anyone who does?

Parishioners Preparing for the Sacraments: In addition to our catechumen and candidate, we have over forty adults and children who have already been baptized Catholic and are preparing to receive Confirmation on May 5 at the cathedral with the Bishop and with members from other parishes in our Deanery. Please keep them in prayer. We pray for any of our parishioner children who are in Catholic schools, preparing for first Eucharist or Confirmation this year, also.