



From Your Chaplain, Fr. Dan Brandt...

I recently had the unfortunate honor of ministering to a police family following the death of their little daughter. It was an awful incident that no parent should ever endure—though many folks reading this article have sadly been there.

Our department has experienced untimely deaths several times this past month. Such sad occasions create scars that never heal. If you have been so affected—no matter how much time has passed—please do not hesitate to call on the other chaplains or me. Contact information is listed on our website.

One positive thing I took from these experiences was the brother/sisterhood exhibited by the Chicago Police Family. In all cases, I was amazed at the incredible outpouring of support from coworkers and bosses alike. Thank you for reminding me what a caring family to which I proudly belong.

Talking with some friends while making the rounds last month on Ash Wednesday, the question came up: “So, what are you ‘giving up’ for Lent?” One of the guys in our circle answered, “Chocolate.” Another, “Beer.”

So why do we “give up” something during this season? In a sentence: sacrificing allows us to better relate to those who are less fortunate. Our 40-day journey mirrors that of Christ himself. That in mind, I re-aligned my Lenten priorities some years ago and decided: RATHER THAN “GIVING SOMETHING UP,” ... WHY NOT **DO** SOMETHING SPECIAL? After all, the Lenten discipline is three-fold: it involves not only sacrifice (FASTING), but also ALMSGIVING and INCREASED PRAYER.

So... my challenge to you, Judeo-Christian or not: if you haven’t yet made (or if you haven’t been able to KEEP) a Lenten discipline, why not try this—as we are now more than half-way through Lent...

- 1: Give to a charity that you find worthy of your generosity. Of course, Police Chaplains Ministry is a happy beneficiary of your goodness: visit www.ChicagoPCM.org to donate. You also know of plenty of *other* worthy causes—and I hope you’ll take this opportunity to support them.
- 2: Exercise extra discipline when it comes to your behavior and attitude at home or on the street. Go out of your way to treat your loved ones and those you encounter at work, at the store, or elsewhere, as if they are Christ Himself.
- 3: Get to church/synagogue/mosque/*whatever*, especially if that’s *not* part of your regular routine. Know that you are always welcome there. While communal prayer is fruitful, pray also at home (with your family—at meals and bed time), or before lunch with your partner, or on your way to/from work, or ANYWHERE. (There’s NO wrong place or way to pray!)

To that end, here’s a reminder: the police Mass on Palm Sunday (24 MAR) is at 11:00 a.m. But the following Sunday, Easter (31 MAR), we’ll move it up an hour to 10:00 a.m. so folks can get home and prepare their Easter meals. Mass is over in under 30 minutes for the sake of attendees who are working. The location remains the same: Mercy Home for Boys and Girls – 1140 W. Jackson Blvd. While this is a Catholic Mass, ALL are welcome!

God bless you in your most noble work,

Fr. Dan Brandt, CPD Chaplain

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