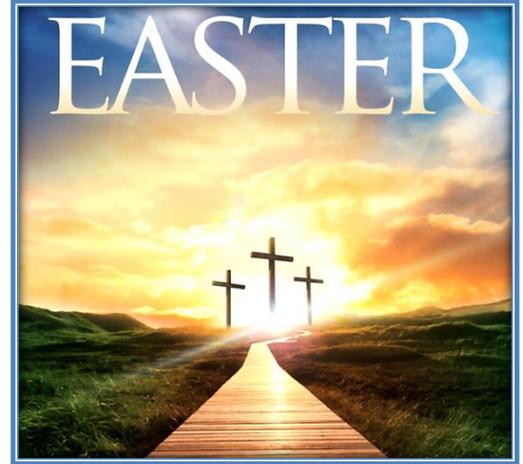




THE PATH TO EASTER

(ONE SMALL STEP AT A TIME FOR A PARISHIONER)

In his Message for Lent 2019, Pope Francis speaks about “the path to Easter”. “The path to Easter” he writes, “demands that we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness, so as to live fully the abundant grace of the Paschal Mystery (the Passion, Crucifixion, Death, Burial, Descent into Hell, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus).”



Every year, whether it is *Year I* or *Year II* and whether it's *Cycle A*, *B*, or *C* of the Liturgical Calendar (learn more about the Liturgical Calendar by logging in at www.formed.org), members of the Church step on the path to Easter not only with the use of Blessed ashes (learn more by logging in at www.formed.org) and the words: “Remember thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return” or “Repent and believe in the Gospel”, but also with Jesus’s Gospel-instruction regarding *prayer, fasting, and almsgiving* (cf. Saint Matthew VI:1-6, 16-18). With an increase in that *Lenten-trinity*, travelers on the path to Easter can experience the renewal of the Resurrection even before we celebrate it on Easter!

At Our Holy Redeemer in Freeport, the Lenten-trinity is providing parishioners with an opportunity to increase *one small step for a parishioner* that will lead to a longer *one giant leap for a Parish!*

Parishioners this Lent are being asked to take one small step in **almsgiving** by making (or renewing) a commitment to increase their weekly offering to our Parish, by going outside of our Parish and answering the *Catholic Ministries Appeal (CMA)* which helps our Bishop take care of needs that might otherwise go unsatisfied, and by even going outside the borders of our state and nation to Ghana, Africa where Our Holy Redeemer’s good friend Father Jerome is faced with the daunting task of providing a safe environment that is conducive to learning the teachings of Christ and His Church.



Parishioners this Lent are encouraged to take one small step by **fasting**; not to simply “get in shape” or to “lose weight”, but to feed (yes when we fast in the flesh we feed in) the spirit; to strengthen the spirit so that we can (like and with Christ) carry the cross of suffering (ours and others) along the path to Easter.

Parishioners this Lent are being asked to not simply say more prayers, but to **pray** more fervently, so that when we say, “I confess to Almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters” we will say those words with deep sorrow (contrition) for worshipping false gods, missing Holy Mass on Sunday, taking the Lord’s Name in vain, dishonouring father and mother, intentionally killing innocent human life (born and unborn), stealing, lying, coveting people and things, and committing adultery.

“Dear brothers and sisters” writes the Holy Father, “Let us not allow this season of grace to pass in vain! Let us ask God to help us set out on a path of true conversion. Let us leave behind our selfishness and self-absorption, and turn to Jesus’ Pasch. Let us stand beside our brothers and sisters in need, sharing our spiritual and material goods with them. In this way, by concretely welcoming Christ’s victory over sin and death into our lives, we will also radiate its transforming power to all of creation.” And here in Freeport parishioners will do it: **one step a time!**