



**Saint Agnes Parish Religious Education Program**  
**215-257-1811**      **www.stagnesprep.com**

## February, 2012 PREP NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents/Guardians and Children,

We continue spending time with our children talking about the wonders of God, the everlasting joy of his love, and how we can praise him in our everyday lives.

God has blessed us with beautiful January weather. Winter lurks somewhere in February and March. We'll be watching. Please remember to check our website and listen to the message on our PREP office phone for information regarding cancelled classes due to inclement weather.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Group

We are pleased to have a small but active 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth group. They held a collection of items to send to our troops to show support for who they are and what they do to defend us. Thanks to all who contributed items to this collection. It was successful and our 8<sup>th</sup> graders are grateful. The group plans to make dinners for families in need in our area; assist at Penridge F.I.S.H.; help at Manna on Main St. and more. If your 8<sup>th</sup> grader would like to participate in these activities and those to come, please email Mrs. Lisa Rodgers at [rodgersclan@comcast.net](mailto:rodgersclan@comcast.net) for information on meeting dates and times.

### First Penance Preparation

Children in our third level classes are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in part, by reading *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*...at the request of Msgr. John. They will discuss the book, the characters and the underlying themes of this book written by C. S. Lewis. They have enjoyed reading this book as they learn of God's forgiveness and unending love. Please keep these children in your prayers.

### Confirmation Preparation

All candidates are continuing preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation by completing their search for a confirmation name and a saint who shares this name; learning to serve others and witness their faith as part of their baptismal call; and writing a letter to Msgr. John expressing their desire to be confirmed and how this will impact them as they grow in faith and age. Please keep them in your prayers as they continue on their journey in faith.

### Season of Lent – Begins Wednesday February 22 – Ash Wednesday

"You should put away the old self of your former way of life...and put on the new self, created in God's way of righteousness and holiness of truth."

St. Paul to the Ephesians

This Season of Lent offers us the opportunity to look more closely at ourselves. God offers us this time to see in ourselves what needs improvement in our relationship with him and with others. What can I DO, and not always what can I give up, may be a good approach to our Lenten offerings to God.



May your Lent bring you peace with yourself, God and others as you prepare for the great feast of Easter.

### Some Symbols of Lent

Children can often understand a symbol rather than big words that are hard for them to comprehend. Sacrifice, suffering, purification are examples of Lenten words that may be difficult for children. But the following Lenten “symbols” may be easier to explain and understand.

**Ashes:** Ashes, a token of penance and sorrow since the early days of the Old Testament, are used on Ash Wednesday to show the beginning of our journey toward Holy Week, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. Ashes are made by burning the palm from the previous Palm Sunday which are collected in our churches. These burnt palm ashes are blessed and placed on our foreheads to remind us to “turn away from sin and remain faithful to the Gospel.”



**Fish:** The Church asks us to refrain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lenten. This is the rule of *abstinence*. Fish has become an important meal for Catholics during Lent. Also, during the early days of Christians, following the death of Jesus, a simple drawing of a fish was used to show Christians where it was safe for them to meet and pray. When Jesus called his apostles he told them they would be “fishers of men.” We are the *fish*.

**Purple:** The color purple that we see starting on Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent serves both a sad and a happy purpose. Purple represents the pain and suffering of Jesus during his last days and his walk to Calvary. It also reminds us of his royalty as “king.” Purple has long been associated as the regal color of kings and royalty. Jesus is KING of all people.

### Protecting God’s Children Lesson

St. Agnes Parish Religious Education Program will present the Safe Environment/Protecting God’s Children lessons on March 5<sup>th</sup> and March 7<sup>th</sup> to all children in all grades. You can find information regarding these lessons at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) or [www.archphila.org](http://www.archphila.org). You are also welcome to preview the lesson in the PREP office. Please call ahead so that we can plan for your visit. 215-257-1811

### Important Date Reminders:

Feb. 16 – Confirmation Parent Meeting – 6:30-7:40 PM in Parish Social Hall – parents only

Feb. 20 – NO CLASS – Presidents’ Day

Feb. 22 – NO CLASS – Ash Wednesday - First day of Lent– begins Fast and Abstinence

Feb. 28 – Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation – **First Penance**

Mar. 3 – Confirmation Retreat for **ALL** Candidates – 8:45 to noon

Mar. 5 & 7 – Presentation of Protecting God’s Children Lesson in all classes

Mar. 13 – First Communion Parent Meeting – 6:30-7:40 PM in Parish social hall – parents only

Mar. 28 – Stations of the Cross during class time (Wed)

Apr. 2 – Living Stations of the Cross presented by SASH 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class during class time

Parents are encouraged to stay and witness this presentation in church. Children will meet in class at regular time (6:30), walk to church and sit with their classes for the presentation of the Stations of the Cross. Following the Stations, the children will return to class and parents who are present in church are welcome to come directly to school and pick up their children. This is beautifully done by SASH 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and is certainly worth your presence.

Please remember to check the home page for the link to “**Partners in Faith**”; “**Do This in Memory of Me**” and “**The Lenten Calendar**” for insight and family activities related to the various aspects of what we do in our PREP classes.

God Bless,  
*Mrs. Anne Hayes*