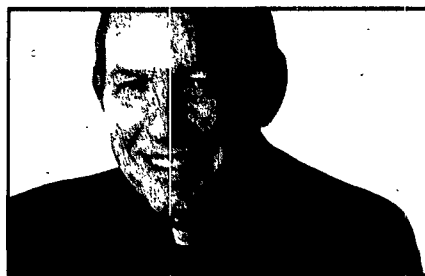


Pray for catechumens, candidates

The season of Lent, which begins next Wednesday, calls us to ongoing conversion and renewal. Last week I offered some reflections and raised a few questions inviting you to think about your relationships with God and with neighbor and to consider your stewardship of the material goods at your disposal. I hoped that they might be helpful to you as you prepare for this holy season.

This week I invite you to renew your awareness of and prayer for women and men, girls and boys from all parts of our diocese who are preparing to be baptized or to become full members of our faith community at the Easter Vigil.

You may or may not know these individuals personally, but I am sure you are aware that for several months they have been thinking, praying and learning about this deeply significant step they are about to take in their journeys of faith. In most cases, this process began long before they made their first



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

formal inquiry about joining our church.

Now, as we approach Lent, these catechumens and candidates join with us in a personal and communal preparation for the Easter feast while we, who are already fully initiated, prepare to renew our baptismal vows on the Easter feast. They prepare to enter the waters of baptism so that they might emerge sharing with us the life of the Risen

Christ.

One of the moving moments for our catechumens and candidates in this Lenten process is the Rite of Election. At this rite, the bishop or his delegate formally and publicly accepts them as candidates for the Easter sacraments. He also commends their continuing preparation to the affectionate prayer of the whole diocesan church.

Rites of Election always renew the spirit. The catechumens and candidates are excited and enthusiastic. The ceremony is a moment that brings together much that is important to them — awareness of the unfolding of their journey of faith over the years; a memory of those persons, events and circumstances that have helped shape their story; the presence of sisters and brothers from many other communities; and of the bishops who make them aware of the communion of life in which they will participate.

We'll have the usual five Rites of

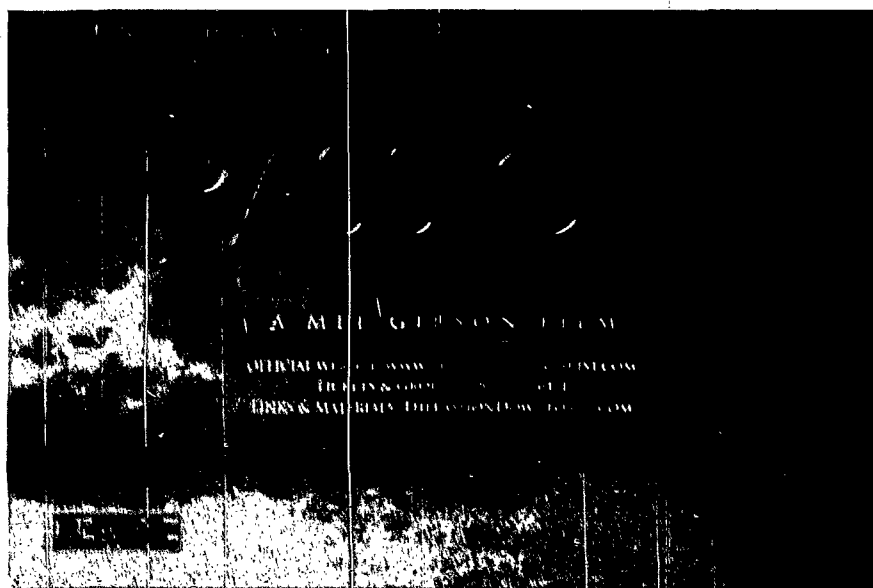
Election this year. The three we normally have at Sacred Heart Cathedral will instead take place at Corpus Christi, Rochester; Our Mother of Sorrows, Greece; and Christ the King, Irondequoit. St. Mary in Canandaigua will host parishes in the Finger Lakes region, and our final celebration will be at St. Mary, Bath, for our Southern Tier parishes.

Over the years I have tried to be faithful to prayer for these dear sisters and brothers, especially during this privileged time of Easter preparation. Lent is meant to be for all of us. Such prayer has been a grace for me. Prayer for others is a wonderful antidote to tendencies of selfishness and egotism that can be strong in me. And, secondly, such prayer usually freshens my awareness of all to whom I owe thanks for their understanding and support in my own journey of faith.

I wish you a blessed Lenten season.

Peace to all.

Can a film fairly depict the death of Christ without invoking anti-Semitism?



Join us for a stimulating, in-depth look at this film, and the implications it may have for Jewish-Christian relations. Discuss the theology and spirituality of the Passion and Death of Jesus. Identify and discuss any anti-Judaic elements that might be in the film. Raise consciousness of how art can perpetuate stereotypes and falsehoods.

Sponsored by St. Bernard's, Temple B'rith Kodesh and the Catholic Courier

Part 1: What to look for

Thursday, February 26, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

St. Bernard's School of Theology & Ministry,
120 French Road, Rochester, NY 14618

Should the Passion accounts in the Gospels be taken literally?

Father Sebastian Falcone, Professor of Biblical Studies, St. Bernard's

Jewish concerns about anti-Semitic images that might be in the film.

Rabbi Laurence A. Kotok, Senior Rabbi, Temple B'rith Kodesh

A checklist of critical motifs in the film

Rabbi Alison B. Kobey, Associate Rabbi and Director of Life Long Jewish Learning, Temple B'rith Kodesh

Developing a health spirituality of Jesus' death

Damian Zynda, Professor of Christian Spirituality, St. Bernard's

Part 2: What we have seen

Thursday, March 11, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

St. Bernard's School of Theology & Ministry,
120 French Road, Rochester, NY 14618

Pre-registration helps us plan. To pre-register: tdriscoll@stbernards.edu or 585.271.3657 ext. 292 (24-hour voice mail). Of course, walk-ins are welcome! Suggested donation: \$5.00 at the door. Donations will be used to support Jewish-Christian lifelong learning through the Rochester Kollel and St. Bernard's