



ST. MONICA

CATHOLIC CHURCH

9933 Midway Road, Dallas, Texas 75220

214-358-1453 • Fax: 214-351-1887

www.stmonicachurch.org



Search for "St. Monica Church Dallas" in the app store.

WELCOME TO ST. MONICA CHURCH!

We are pleased to have visitors join us in worship and we invite you to become active registered parishioners. Registration forms can be found in the vestibule, at the Parish Office, and online.

Mass Times

Saturday: 5:00 pm
Sunday: 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am
12:30 pm, 2:00 pm (español), 5:00 pm

Weekday Mass Times

6:45 am, 8:00 am, 5:30 pm (Lent) M-F
8:00 am Saturdays
First Fridays 5:30 pm
Primer viernes del mes 7:00 pm

Childcare for 11:00 am Mass

Ages: 12-months to 4-years
No Cost • Room 114 Family Center
Celina Abeyta-Barry, Leader

Reconciliation • Reconciliación

Saturday/Sábado
3:30-4:30 pm • 6:30-7:00 pm
Tuesdays/Martes (during Lent)
12:00-12:30 pm • 5:00-5:30 pm

Baptism • Bautismo

Third Saturday of each month at 10:00 am
Parents and godparents are required to attend a preparation class offered on the first Saturday of each month at 10:00 am. Call the Faith Formation Office to register.

Tercer sábado de cada mes 3:00 pm

Padres y Padrinos deben de asistir a una clase de preparación que se otorgan los primeros sábados de cada mes a la 1:00 pm. Llame a la oficina de Ministerio Hispano.

Marriage • Matrimonio

Contact a priest or deacon at least six months before the planned marriage date.
Por favor de contactar a un Sacerdote o Diacono por lo menos seis meses antes de la fecha de la boda.

Helplines • Línea de Ayuda

St. Vincent de Paul serves the poor or distressed on an emergency basis.
972-994-1121 (confidential) Volunteers contact: info@stmonicasvdp.org

Stephen Ministry helps those experiencing grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or another life crisis. 214-290-0803 (confidential)

Bulletin Deadline

Monday at 12:00 noon • Submit notices in writing to ecooper@stmonicachurch.org.

March 22, 2015

Parish Staff

Fr. Stephen W. Bierschenk
Pastor - x 7107

Fr. Marco Rangel
Parochial Vicar - x 7112

Fr. Edwin Leonard
Vocation Director (in residence)

Monsignor John F. Meyers
Pastor Emeritus

Deacons

Abel Cortes Bob Marrinan
Larry Lucido Brian Mitchell

St. Monica Church Office

Main: (214) 358-1453 • Fax: (214) 351-1887
Hours: M-F 9:00-5:00 • Sunday 10:00-2:00

Parish Secretary x 7453
Faby Gomez

Business Manager x 7176
Debbie Diaz

Database Manager x 7111
Melissa Franks

Volunteer Coordinator x 7173
Maria E. Juarez-Plank

Safe Environment Director x 7144
Marilyn Hicks

Bookkeeper x 7102
Jared Wirths

Director Youth Ministry x 7103
Emmanuel Espiritu

Director of Communications x 7142
Erin Cooper

Music Ministry

Director of Music x 7101
Jeremy Wirths

Director Youth Music x 7103
Emmanuel Espiritu

Organist (9:30 & 11:00 Mass)
Guillermo "Will" Martinez

Faith Formation

Main: (214) 357-8549 • Fax: (214) 351-1887
Director of Faith Formation x 7132

Mariangela Byrne

Administrative Assistant x 7549
Eldie Diaz

Ministerio Hispano

Main: (214) 357-8549 • Fax: (214) 351-1887
Director of Hispanic Ministry x 7131

Maria M. Gonzalez-Rocha

St. Monica School

Main: (214) 351-5688 • Fax: (214) 352-2608
Phil Riley, Principal
www.stmonicaschool.org

From the Pastor

In Jules Verne's novel *The Mysterious Island*, he tells of five men who escape a Civil War prison camp by hijacking a hot-air balloon. As they rise into the air, they realize the wind is carrying them over the ocean. Watching their homeland disappear on the horizon, they wonder how much longer the balloon can stay aloft.

As the hours pass and the surface of the ocean draws closer, the men decide they must cast overboard some of the weight, for they had no way to heat the air in the balloon. Shoes, overcoats, and weapons are reluctantly jettisoned, and the uncomfortable aviators feel their balloon rise. But just temporarily. Soon they find themselves dangerously close to the waves again so they toss their food. Better to be high and hungry than drown on a full belly.

Unfortunately, this too, is only a temporary solution and the craft again threatens to lower the men into the sea. One man has an idea: they can tie the ropes that hold the passenger car and sit on those ropes. Then they can cut away the basket beneath them. As they sever the very thing they had been standing on, it drops into the ocean and the balloon rises.

Not a minute too soon, they spot land. Eager to stand on terra firma again, the five jump into the water and swim to the island. They live, spared because they were able to discern the difference between what really was needed and what was not. The "necessities" they once thought they couldn't live without were the very weights that almost cost them their lives.

Jesus uses a beautiful image in today's gospel, "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but, if it dies, it produces much fruit."

As he spoke those words, he knew well what was about to occur in the coming week. As he accepted the

Cross and gave himself away so that we could be forgiven, he proved that God's love for sinners was unlimited.

Doing nothing or being satisfied with things as they are is not the way to success for a follower of Christ. During these times of Lent we have given more attention to making time to pray, to embracing the Cross through our penances, and to being more generous with those who, in their need, call for our help.

We often measure out what we are going to give away. We plan to set aside twenty minutes for prayer every day – yet we could have a richer relationship with God by making the effort to have a conversation with the Lord all through the day. We are saying "No" to our self as we give up a favorite food or activity because it is Lent. But, we plant seeds of God's love as we say "Yes" to an opportunity to help someone in need or practice patience as we let someone else be in control of a situation. There are so many ways to share our riches with others, because these gifts given by the Lord carry a great responsibility. But good intentions are not the same as actually making the donation.

We will soon complete the season of Lent. But during this fifth week, our call is to accept the challenge of today's gospel. There are many people and things in our life that distract us from what is important. It is possible we need to pitch some overboard, cut the strings that hold us to things that are not worthy of a child of God. It can be a difficult and frightening exercise. But, we have the example of Jesus. His love was so powerful he gave away everything for our sake. And his gift opened the door to eternal life. "Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat . . ." Jesus invites us to follow him.

—Fr. Stephen W Bierschenk

News & Events

The **St. Monica Women's Organization** is hosting its **Annual Easter Egg Hunt** on Sunday, March 29 following the 11 am Mass on Coach Gross Football Field (or the gym if raining). All ages are welcome. Be sure to bring your own basket!

There will be a second collection for the **North Dallas Shared Ministries** next Sunday, March 29th (Palm Sunday) to purchase food for their clients.

St. Monica Church needs volunteers for the **cleaning of the palms** on Thursday, March 26 from 9 am to 3 pm in Room 212 of the Family Center. To volunteer, please call the parish office at 214-358-1453.

This Holy Thursday, St. Monica will be following the ancient Roman tradition of visitation to 7 churches after the Lord's Supper. The event will involve going to pray before the altar of repose at seven different Catholic churches in North Dallas. The pilgrimage will start after praying at St. Monica's altar of repose following Holy Thursday Mass. At 9 pm, the group will meet in Angel Hall and caravan to the other churches, which are San Juan Diego, Mary Immaculate, St. Andrew Kim, St. Rita, All Saints, and Christ the King. Fifteen minutes will be spent at each altar and the event will end around midnight. For more information, please contact Mariangela Byrne at 214-357-8549.

During the month of April, the **Baptism class** will be held on April 11th, the second Saturday of the month instead of April 4th.

Is God a priority in your life? Is Jesus the center of your life? Do you think that there are some things in your life that you should change in order to grow closer to Him? If the answer is yes then consider joining **St. Monica Youth Ministry** Sunday after the 5 pm Mass for a night of food, fellowship, and a discussion on making Christ the center of our lives. This is a great opportunity to hang out with other teens who are striving for Heaven! We hope you will join us and bring a friend! Meet in the Youth Room upstairs in the Family Center! For more information contact Emmanuel Espiritu at eespiritu@stmonicachurch.org. Follow us on Twitter @StMonicaYouth and Instagram @StMonicaYouthDallas.

Registration now open!

Vacation Bible School, presented by The St. Monica Women's Ministry, will be held June 8-12th from 9 am to 12 pm. The program is open to children 4 years-old (by 6/9/15) through 5th grade. Volunteers (cleared through Safe Environment) are also needed. To register or volunteer, please visit stmonicachurch.org/vbs.

The newly formed **Multicultural Group** at St. Monica Church is planning a Multicultural Celebration Day on May 24. As we plan for this event, we need to gauge the level of interest and participation. We invite parishioners to participate by sharing unique foods, customs and costumes with our parishioners. If you would like to volunteer to share your cultural heritage at this event or would like more information, please contact Juliette Akagu at julieakagu@yahoo.com or 214-791-4358.

Contemplative Outreach will present a one-day workshop, Aging and Forgiveness, featuring Fr. Bill Sheehan, OMI, on Saturday, March 28 from 9:30 am to 3 pm at St. Monica. Registration is \$35 and can be completed online at www.CellofPeace.com/workshops.htm. For more information, contact Sandy at 972-722-6029 or CPDallas@CellofPeace.com.

Stewardship

03-15-2015

Regular - \$39,091

CRS - \$4,774

Total Mass Attendance

03-15-2015

3,324

Mass Intentions

Sunday, March 22

8:00 am..... Priest's Intention
 9:30 am..... Priest's Intention
 11:00 am..... For the People of the Parish
 12:30 pm Priest's Intention
 2:00 pm..... Leticia Villagran
 5:00 pm..... Priest's Intention

Monday, March 23

6:45 am..... Madden & Canary Families
 8:00 am..... Genaro Zuniga † by Carolyn Zuniga

Tuesday, March 24

6:45 am..... Josephine Risinger † by Jeff & Joanne Jackson
 8:00 am..... Jerry Houpy, Jr. † by Milton Vrla & Family

Wednesday, March 25

6:45 am..... Steven Chambers † by Barbara Chambers
 8:00 am..... Doris Walker † by Court of St. Faustina #2478

Thursday, March 26

6:45 am..... Maria Doskey by Becky Ryan
 8:00 am..... Nha Van Dao † by Randy Wooley Family

Friday, March 27

6:45 am..... Gus Doskey † by Madden Family
 8:00 am..... Mac Hall † by Geisler Family

Saturday, March 28

8:00 am..... Ellenore Anne Flynn † Walter & Joan Minigutti
 5:00 pm..... Marge Hennessy † by Lindsay Brennan

Sanctuary Light

This week the Sanctuary Light is burning for Leticia Villagran.

For Our Sick

To request a name to appear, please contact the parish office or complete a green prayer request card (found on tables at the back of church) and place the card in an offering basket.

Leticia Villagran³

Names will appear for 3 weeks. The numbers after the names begin at 3 and count down and are intended to help those who make requests.

For Our Departed

Bill Martin
 Frances Malone
 Rita Skalak
 Lucille Guy

Parish Calendar

DAILY - Monday to Friday

6:20 am..... Rosary | Church
 6:20 am..... Morning Prayer | Chapel
 7:30 am..... Rosary | Church (Tues&Fri - Chapel)
 9:00 am..... Eucharistic Adoration | Chapel

Sunday, March 22

9:30 am..... Adult Education | 217
 10:30 am..... Little Rock Script | FC Various
 2:00 pm..... K-5 CCD | Cafe
 4:00 pm..... Handbell Rehearsal | 217
 4:00 pm..... GCA Rehearsal | 129
 4:00 pm..... Youth Night | FC Various
 6:30 pm..... Finding Christ in the World Retreat | 214

Monday, March 23

8:30 am..... Legion of Mary | JCLC Conf.
 1:00 pm..... Monday Bible Study | 129
 3:45 pm..... SMS Living Stations Rehearsal | Church
 6:00 pm..... Centering Prayer Group | Bride Room
 6:00 pm..... St. Vincent de Paul | 129
 7:00 pm..... RCIA | 109
 7:00 pm..... RCIA Church Tour | Church

Tuesday, March 24

5:00 am..... Men's Lenten Study | 109
 10:30 am..... Finding Christ in the World Retreat | 129
 1:30 pm..... Tuesday Scripture Study | JCLC Board
 6:30 pm..... First Reconciliation | Church
 6:30 pm..... Symbolon II Class | 109
 7:00 pm..... KoC Officer's Meeting | 217

Wednesday, March 25

6:30 pm..... Choir Rehearsal | Church
 6:30 pm..... 6-12 CCD | Cafe
 7:00 pm..... Fr. Cromly Series | 201
 7:00 pm..... Finding Christ in the World Retreat | 214
 7:00 pm..... Light is on Confessions | Church

Thursday, March 26

9:00 am..... Sisters of Notre Dame Luncheon | 201
 9:00 am..... Cleaning of the Palms | 109
 1:30 pm..... Finding Christ in the World Retreat | 214
 2:20 pm..... SMS Living Stations Practice | Church
 6:30 pm..... St. Andrew Dinner | 109
 6:30 pm..... ACTS Core Meeting | JCLC

Friday, March 27

2:00 pm..... SMS Stations of the Cross | Church
 6:30 pm..... Stations of the Cross | Church

Saturday, March 28

9:00 am..... Stephen Ministry Leaders | 129
 8:00 am..... Centering Prayer | 201
 10:00 am..... Baptisms



News & Events

Please return Baby Banks

The St. Monica Pro-Life Ministry wanted to remind you to bring your full Baby Banks back and give them to our Priests, Deacons or Ushers before or after Mass. You may also drop them off at the Church's office during business hours. Thank you again for your life-giving gift.

Coordinator needed for Senior Outreach Program

St. Monica is looking for a coordinator for the Senior Outreach program. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve God and the elderly of our parish. If you are interested, please contact Sharon Wetzel at 214-908-2344.

Youth Retreats

If you are a middle school or high school student wanting to grow closer to God in a fun and exciting way, please consider joining us for one of our retreats this spring! Our middle school retreat, Into the Mystery, will be held April 17-19th at Sky Ranch. Our high school retreat, Full-Filled, will be held April 24-26th also at Sky Ranch. There will be great talks, adoration, reconciliation, and time for sports, activities, and fellowship! Registration forms are available in the youth room and online at www.stmonicachurch.org/youth. Fee is \$150 per student.

Catholic Charities of Dallas is a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program site!

This free tax help is for qualifying tax payers, who made less than \$53,000 in 2014. You do not have to be a U.S. citizen to receive this assistance. VITA is open Monday through Friday from 3 pm to 8 pm and Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm at 9461 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75243 in Conference Room B. For more information on VITA sites, visit www.DallasTaxCenters.org or call 214-978-0081.

Volunteer to spend an hour a week with Jesus

Please contact Marge Giangliulio at 214-769-4407 or email adore10397@sbcglobal.net to sign up. Adoration coverage needed for 11 pm-Midnight on Tuesday; 1-2 pm on Wednesday. 9-10 am, 4-5 pm & 5-6 pm on Thursday.

The **North Dallas Shared Ministries** weekly Friday Foodbasket supplemental food assistance program, which assists low-income seniors 60 and older and select disabled persons on SSI or SSDI, needs volunteers to organize, bag and distribute food in the pantry warehouse. The times needing to be filled are: Wednesday afternoons from 3-4:30 pm; Thursday from 7-8:30 am; and Fridays from 8 am-1 pm. Individuals or groups may choose to volunteer on a week, biweekly or monthly basis. For more information, contact Sherrie Boyd at 214-358-8767.

Is your group doing something exciting or special at St. Monica? Place an announcement in the bulletin. Send information to ecooper@stmonicachurch.org.

Family Vocation Chalice

To participate call (214) 368-3640

March 28 at 5:00 pm
Gloria Cantu

March 29 at 11:00 am
Darren & Sally Smith

March 29 at 8:00 am
Joseph & Consuelo Zacarias

March 29 at 12:30 pm
Issy & Anne Perez

March 29 at 9:30 am
Matthew & Lynette Schnitzius

March 29 at 5:00 pm
Jeff & Christy Libby

Noticias y Eventos

Divina Misericordia

El ministerio de la Divina Misericordia les invita a ser parte de este cenáculo. Nuestras reuniones son todos los martes a las 7pm. en el edificio McManus. Estudiamos la Sagrada Escritura, el Catecismo de la Iglesia, el Diario de Santa Faustina y meditamos la Coronilla. Si quiere llevar la imagen por una semana a su hogar o algún enfermo por favor llame a Baltazar Villanueva al 214-584-7789. Déjese abrazar por la Misericordia de Dios.

Apoyo Familiar

Crece en Santidad junto a tu familia aprendiendo a ser mejor padre, madre, hijo, hermano. Cualquier estado de vida que tengas, estas llamando a buscar la Santidad, que se logra a través de tus obras y relación con Dios. Te esperamos, los segundos y cuartos viernes de cada mes en el Centro Familiar salón 201. Cada reunión está preparada especialmente para ti y tu familia para que a través de las enseñanzas, aprendas a vivir una vida recta y que el amor, paz, lealtad y felicidad abunden en tu vida y familia. Las reuniones inician a las 7pm. Para más información comunícate con Dolores y Noe Vielma 469-759-0767.

Tiempo de Cuaresma

Ya estamos próximos a terminar la Cuaresma pero aun debemos mantenernos firmes en la Oración, Ayuno, Abstinencia y Sacrificio.

Misa entre Semana durante la Cuaresma - Lunes a Viernes 6:45 & 8 am; 5:30 pm; sábados 8am (misas son en Ingles)

Confesiones durante la Cuaresma - Sábados 3:30-4:30 pm. 6:30-7pm.; Martes 12- 12:30 pm. & 5- 5:30 pm.; Marzo 25, 7-9 pm. & Abril 1, 7-9 pm.

Vía Crucis - Todos los viernes a las 7pm. en la Iglesia

Momentos de Reflexión - Sábado, 28 de Marzo retiro Espiritual 9- 3pm.; Concierto/Oración 7pm. con la Hermana Glenda.

Misión de Semana Santa

¡Lleva el Mensaje de Cristo! Ven a la Misión de Semana Santa del 30 de Marzo al 5 de Abril. Cada noche tendremos una reflexión especial para profundizar el acto de amor de Jesús por la humanidad (Lunes a Miércoles, 7pm. - 8:30pm.) Jueves Santo: Santa Misa, lavatorio de pies a las 7pm. Seguido por las visitas a las 7 Iglesias. Viernes Santo: Vía Crucis viviente a las 5 pm. en la Cafetería, seguido por Celebración de la Palabra y Adoración de la Santa Cruz. Sábado de Gloria: Vigilia Pascual a las 7pm. Domingo de Resurrección: Santa Misa a las 2pm.

Domingo de Ramos

Año tras año, hacemos la procesión de Palmas antes de la Misa de Español. La procesión de las palmas se hace con el fin de conmemorar la entrada triunfante de Cristo a Jerusalén y simbólicamente, dejarlo entrar a nuestra vida. El próximo domingo les pedimos permanecer afuera del Templo, tomar una palma y entrar en procesión con todos.

Cáliz Vocacional Familiar

Para llevarse el Cáliz llame al (214) 358-1453

29 de Marzo - Familia Diaz

5 de Abril - Cayetana Serna

12 de Abril - Liandra Garcia

19 de Abril - Adriana Rodriguez

26 de Abril - Estela Gutierrez

Calendario Comunitario

Domingo, 22 de marzo

11:30 am..... RICA | 201

12:00 pm..... Jóvenes Adultos | 211

12:00 pm..... Coro de Adultos | JCLC Board

12:00 pm..... Preparación Matrimonial | 214

Lunes, 23 de marzo

7:00 pm..... Practica de Via Crucis | Cafe

Martes, 24 de marzo

7:00 pm..... Rosario | Capilla

7:00 pm..... Divina Misericordia | LIB

7:00 pm..... MEC | 211

7:00 pm..... Practica de Via Crucis | Cafe

8:00 pm..... Hora Santa | Capilla

Miércoles, 25 de marzo

6:30 pm..... Legión de María | 129

6:30 pm..... Taller Oración y Vida | 217

7:00 pm..... Estudios de la Biblia - UD | 109

7:00 pm..... Coro de Adultos | JCLC Board

7:00 pm..... Jóvenes Adultos | 211

Jueves, 26 de marzo

7:00 pm..... Niños Proclamadores | 129

7:00 pm..... Pastoral Familiar | Upper Lounge

7:00 pm..... Coro de Adultos | JCLC Board

Viernes, 27 de marzo

6:00 pm..... Apoyo Familiar | Upper FC

7:00 pm..... Estaciones de la Cruz | Iglesia

Sábado, 28 de marzo

8:30 am..... Formación Guadalupana | LIB

3:00 pm..... Bautismos | Iglesia

5:00 pm..... Ballet Folklorico | Cafe

Sobre las tinieblas del corazón, brilla su luz...
Retiro y Concierto - Oración

Hermana Glenda
A través de sus predicas y música
nos ayudará a prepararnos espiritualmente
para vivir junto a Jesús esta Semana Santa.

28 de Marzo del 2015
Retiro 9:00 am a 3:00 pm
Concierto 7:00 pm

Los eventos serán en el
gimnasio de la Parroquia Católica
Santa Mónica
(9933 Midway Rd. Dallas, Tx. 75220)

DONACIÓN PARA EL RETIRO :
\$25.00 preventa y \$30.00 en la puerta.
DONACIÓN PARA EL CONCIERTO - ORACIÓN:
\$15.00 preventa y \$20.00 en la puerta.
(Con la compra de un boleto para el retiro,
la entrada para el concierto será a \$10.00)

Los eventos son solo para personas
mayores de 12 años.
No habrá cuidado de niños.

ST. MONICA CATHOLIC CHURCH
INFORMACIÓN Y COMPRA DE BOLETOS
WWW.STMONICACHURCH.ORG
214-357-8549

Legión de María

El ministerio de la Legión de María de Santa Mónica les invita aprender y compartir la importancia de seguir el ejemplo de nuestra madre santísima a través de sus enseñanzas de la fe, esperanza y caridad. Algunas de las actividades que hacemos es rezar el rosario en comunidad, estudiar el manual de la Legión de María, orar por la salvación del mundo y servir con humildad en cualquier necesidad. Venga a compartir esta oportunidad de conocer nuestro ministerio!! Nuestra Madre Santa María nos a llamado a servir de una forma ejemplar. Los esperamos todos los miércoles de 6:30 pm a 8:30 pm. en el salón 129 del Centro Familiar. Que Dios y la Virgen los Bendiga. Para más información comuníquese con Zoila Guevara al 214-566-5677.

Visita a las 7 Iglesias....

Este Jueves Santo despues de la Santa Misa de 7pm. continuaremos con la tradición Romana de visitar 7 Iglesias para acompañar a Jesus en el Sagrario. Es una peregrinación y sacrificio, en recuerdo de cuando Jesús fue llevado de un lado a otro, en el momento de ser enjuiciado, desde el Huerto de Getsemani, huerto de la casa de Anás, casa de Caifás, pretorio de Pilato, casa del Rey Herodes, nuevamente con Pilato y su camino al Calvario. Nos reuniremos a las 9pm. en la Iglesia de Santa Mónica y nos iremos en caravana a las otras seis Parroquias. Venga solo o con su familia para acrecentar su fe y mostrar amor a Jesus. Para más información llame al 214-357-8549.



De El Pastor

En la novella de Jule Verne, La Isla Misteriosa cuenta de cinco hombres que escaparon del campamento de la prisión de la Guerra Civil robando un globo de aire. Al elevarse, se dieron cuenta que el viento los llevaba sobre el océano y mirando desde el horizonte desaparecer su tierra. Pensaron que tanto se mantendría el globo en el aire.

Al pasar las horas y al acercarse a la superficie del océano, los hombres decidieron echar afuera algo de peso, porque no había manera de mantener el calor en el globo. Sin querer tiraron zapatos, chaquetas y armamento y la incomodidad de los aviadores sintieron que el globo subió. Pero solo fue temporal, pronto se encontraron cerca de las olas entonces decidieron tirar su comida. Mejor estar en lo alto y con hambre que ahogarse con un estómago lleno.

Desafortunadamente, esto también solo fue una solución temporal, nuevamente fueron amenazados y se bajaron cerca del mar. Un hombre tuvo una idea: Unieron los lazos que mantienen a la caja de los pasajeros y se sentaron en los lazos. Ahora podrían cortar la canasta que estaba debajo de ellos. Al despojarse de la única cosa que les sostenía, cayó al océano y el globo subió.

No tan tarde, divisaron tierra. Deseosos de estar en tierra firme, los cinco brincaron al agua y nadaron hacia la isla. Sobrevivieron, porque pudieron discernir la diferencia entre lo que realmente era necesario y lo que no. Las "necesidades" que alguna vez creyeron que no podrían vivir sin ellas, eran el peso que casi les costaba la vida.

En el Evangelio de hoy Jesús usa una bella imagen, "Si el grano de trigo sembrado en la tierra, no muere, queda infecundo; pero si muere, produciría mucho fruto." Al decir estas palabras sabía claramente lo que sucedería en las próximas semanas. Al aceptar la Cruz y darse así mismo para

perdonarnos, comprueba que el amor de Dios por los pecadores es ilimitado.

El hacer nada o estar satisfecho de cómo son las cosas no es la manera de triunfar para seguir a Cristo. Durante estos tiempos de Cuaresma hemos prestado más atención en hacer tiempo para orar, para abrazar la Cruz a través de nuestras penitencias, y de ser más generosos con los que, en su necesidad piden nuestra ayuda.

A menudo medimos lo que vamos a regalar. Planeamos destinar veinte minutos para la oración de todos los días – pero podríamos tener una relación más rica con Dios haciendo el esfuerzo de tener una conversación con el Señor durante todo el día. Estamos diciendo "No" a nosotros mismos cuando renunciamos a un alimento o actividad favorita porque es Cuaresma. Pero, Plantamos las semillas del amor de Dios al decir "sí" a una oportunidad de ayudar a alguien en necesidad o practicando la paciencia y permitiendo que otra persona este en control de la situación. Hay tantas maneras de compartir nuestras riquezas con los demás, porque estos dones dados por el Señor cargan una gran responsabilidad. Pero las buenas intenciones no son las mismas que en realidad haciendo la donación.

Pronto concluiremos con el tiempo de Cuaresma. Sin embargo, durante esta quinta semana, nuestro llamado es aceptar el reto del Evangelio de hoy. Hay muchas personas y cosas en nuestra vida que nos distraen de lo que es importante. Es posible que necesitamos lanzarlas al agua, cortar las cadenas que nos sujetan alas cosas que no son dignas de un hijo de Dios. Puede ser un ejercicio difícil y aterrador. Pero tenemos el ejemplo de Jesús. Su amor era tan poderoso que dio todo por nuestro bien. Y su regalo abrió la puerta a la vida eterna. "A menos que el grano de trigo caiga al suelo y muera, sigue siendo solo un grano de trigo...." Jesús nos invita a seguirle.

—Fr. Stephen W Bierschenk