

February 2018
From the Offices of Mission Effectiveness and Campus Ministry
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Let your first recourse be to gather at the feet of Jesus Christ...
St. Angela Merici

The month of February is filled with preparations for important upcoming events. We are preparing for the Season of Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14. We will focus on the theme, "Return to me with your whole heart." These are the first words of scripture for Ash Wednesday Mass and are the first words the Church offers us this Lent. As such, they are the foundation for the message God wishes to communicate to us this season. During a 2014 Ash Wednesday Mass, Pope Francis reflected on these very same words, noting that during Lent, "We are invited to embark upon a journey on which, by defying routine, we strive to open our eyes and ears, ***but especially to open our hearts***, in order to go beyond our own 'backyard.'" ([Homily, March 5 at the Basilica of St. Sabina](#)).

In his reflection, Pope Francis asks us to do four things. First, we must form new routines. Next, he invites us to make this journey to conversion through three timeless practices of penance- *prayer, fasting and almsgiving*. Put more plainly by Pope Francis, we might say we are called to "open our eyes and ears" through prayer, "open our hearts" through fasting, and we must "go beyond our backyard" through almsgiving. This season is a time to fix our eyes on the cross and look up and out to the world to find ways we can give our whole heart to others. If we allow prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to form a new routine in our lives we can truly experience the grace of the season.

In our morning prayer we will reflect on this theme with applicable scripture and written reflections using the book, *Living Lent with Love* by Pope Francis. The afternoon prayer will consist of two minutes of silent prayer. You are welcome to join us for our **Ash Wednesday Mass on February 14 at 1:40 p.m.** in the auditorium. Students and parents are also encouraged to attend our Lenten

liturgies which are scheduled **every Tuesday during activity period at 9:40 a.m. in the chapel.** Students will have the opportunity to participate in **reconciliation services on March 8th at 1:40 p.m.** We also encourage students to spend time in their parish taking advantage of faith formation opportunities.

“Even now, says the LORD, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning; Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God.” (Joel 2: 12-13).

Upcoming Mission and Ministry News

We are preparing for our Chicago service trip that leaves February 15 and returns on February 18. Sr. Mary Ann Dooling, Mrs. Caton and Mrs. Springer are taking nine students on this trip and they are staying at the Brother David Darst Center. This service trip is designed as an urban immersion experience in the downtown Chicago area. Among other things, the students are very excited about our junior service trip scheduled over spring break. Twenty-eight juniors are volunteering with St. Bernard Project in New Orleans. Mr. and Mrs. Thomasson, Mrs. Ramsey, Sr. Peggy Moore, Sr. Mary Ann Dooling and Mrs. Weston will accompany the students on this trip. Student formation is taking place throughout February and March. We are also taking eleven students to New York over spring break to participate in the 62nd Commission on the Status of Women, held at the United Nations. Our students will join students from several other Ursuline schools around the country. Mrs. Springer and Mrs. Hilmes are accompanying the students attending this trip. Please keep these students and co-workers in your prayers.

Freshman Service Trip to Whole Kids Outreach in Ellington, MO

Applications for the freshmen service trip to Whole Kids Outreach will be sent out February 8 via student email. This trip takes place the week of June 18-22 and we are able to take ten students with two co-workers. Students will be working within the Whole Kids Outreach day camp. Camp activities include swimming, crafts, horseback riding, camp games and various service projects on site and in the community. Cost is approximately \$300 for the week.

Sophomore Service Trip to Hand in Hand Ministries in Auxier, KY

Applications for the sophomore service trip to Auxier, Kentucky will be sent out on February 8 via student email. This trip takes place June 10-13 and we can take up to 15 students with three co-workers. We are volunteering through an organization called Hand in Hand Ministries. Their mission is “We build strong communities and transform lives through cultural immersion, education, housing, and healthcare.” Students will complete home building projects in the economically depressed Appalachian mountain region. Cost is approximately \$400 for the week.