

March 10, 2024

They were first struck on the mouth with stones, and at nightfall conducted, in the middle of winter, to a frozen lake. They were condemned to sit there, naked, until death should put an end to their sufferings. There was also a hot bath in readiness, at a neighboring house, for those who should chance to go over to the service of the idols.

As soon as the Christian soldiers reached the lake, they took off their clothes and went out on the ice. Here they continued their praises of God, earnestly asking for the Divine assistance. "We are forty going on the ice," said they, "grant, O merciful Lord, that forty also may be crowned, and that none lose his crown. It is a favored number, which Thou hast ennobled by Thy holy fast. Elias sought and found God by a fast of forty, days." Near the martyrs were stationed the guards to watch that no one should escape. Some hours had already passed; the heroes still persevered in glorifying God by their chants, and continued to offer supplications to the throne of the Most High: the guards, however, had fallen asleep: the prison-keeper alone was watching. He suddenly beheld the martyrs environed by a shining light, and angels descending from heaven with magnificent crowns in their hands, which they placed on the heads of the soldiers. He remarked, however, that only thirty-nine were crowned. He said to himself: "There are forty Christians on the lake; where is the crown of the other one?" The mystery was soon solved. One of the number, unable to endure the cold any longer, had crawled to the bath, and by this act, denied his faith. But God did not suffer this inconstancy to go unpunished, for the wretch died soon after entering the bath, losing his life and precipitating himself into the flames of hell; thus, by seeking to escape short sufferings, he also forfeited the heavenly reward due to perseverance. The thirty-nine were much grieved at this desertion, but they were gladdened by seeing the prison-keeper himself filling up their number again. For, reflecting on what he had just witnessed, he concluded that the faith of the Christians must be the only true one. Awaking the guards, he related to them his vision, and cried out, in a loud voice: "I also am a Christian, and will live and die with the Christians." He stripped off his garments, and, joining the martyrs on the lake, begged them to petition the Lord to bestow a similar crown on him. Their prayer was heard, for an angel came down from heaven with the crown.

At the break of day, everything that had occurred in the night was reported to the Governor. He immediately ordered the forty martyrs to be drawn out of the lake, their limbs to be broken with clubs, and the bodies to be thrown into the fire. The icy water had deprived all of life, with the exception of one, who, being younger, was possessed of greater power of endurance. The name of this one was Melitho. His mother, seeing him still alive, said to him: "Persevere only a little longer, my child; Jesus is standing at the gate of heaven, hastening to your assistance." In the mean while, the bodies of the other confessors had been thrown into a cart and were carried to the burning pile. The mother, perceiving that her son was left behind, in the hope of bringing him over to the worship of the idols, took him on her shoulders, in order to place him on the cart or on the pile. Whilst carrying him, she encouraged and exhorted him to persevere by considerations on the shortness of life and the eternity of the reward. The courageous youth, whilst listening to the words of his mother, gave up the ghost. The pious mother, however, completed her task, and laid the corpse with those of the other martyrs, that he might be united, even in death, with his companions. St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and many other holy fathers, delivered sermons, full of instruction and unction, on these holy martyrs.



*Saint Joseph's
Traditional Roman Catholic Chapel
Traditional Latin Mass*

*29968 County 22
Harmony, Minnesota 55939*

Sunday, March 10 **4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday)**
Confessions 12:30 pm
Holy Mass 1:00 pm
(Forty Holy Martyrs)

Friday, March 15 **Lenten Feria**
Confessions 5:30 pm
Holy Communion 6:00 pm
Stations
(St. Clement Mary Hofbauer, C)

Sunday March 17 **Passion Sunday**
Confessions 12:30 pm
Holy Mass 1:00 pm
(St. Patrick)

Tuesday, March 19 **St. Joseph, CspBVM**
Confessions 8:30 am
Holy Mass 9:00 am

**** UPCOMING HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE ****

Sunday March 24 **Palm Sunday**
Confessions 12:30 pm
Palm Procession / Holy Mass 1:00 pm
(St. Gabriel the Archangel)

Thursday, March 28 **Holy Thursday**
Confessions 5:30 pm
Holy Mass 6:00 pm
Mass of the Last Supper
****All Night Adoration** - Sign up Sheet will be available in the vestibule**

Friday, March 29 **Good Friday**
Good Friday ceremonies begin at 12:00 pm

Saturday March 30 **Holy Saturday**
Easter Vigil 10:30 pm

Sunday March 31 **Easter Sunday**
Holy Mass 12:00 am

CONTACTS:

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MASS INTENTIONS may be submitted to Father for a stipend of \$25.00. If you wish a specific date, please submit well in advance. Mass Intention envelopes are available in the vestibule.

MEAL VOLUNTEERS: There is a sign up sheet in the vestibule for the month of March to help provide Father with a meal-to-go after Mass. *Thank You* to all those who have been assisting with this Corporal Work of Mercy to feed the hungry; and supporting your parish priest.

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND *postponed until OCTOBER* is being coordinated by Fr. Benedict Hughes. Please see flyer in the vestibule and contact Fr. Benedict if interested.

MONTH OF ST. JOSEPH – The Litany of St. Joseph will be prayed after the recitation of the Holy Rosary during the month of March.

Tuesday, March 19th – We will be having a Solemn High Mass on the feast of St. Joseph at 9:00 am. followed by a Potluck.

St. Joseph's Church Financial Statement

Average Weekly Operating Costs: \$590

Average 2024 Weekly Collection (year-to-date): \$620

Last Four Collections: 2/11 \$709 2/18 \$410 2/25 \$561 3/3 \$838

Forty Holy Martyrs

(March 10th)

In the time of Constantine the Great, the city of Sebaste was witness of a magnificent spectacle of Christian heroism, in the forty soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the Faith of Christ. Licinius, to whom Constantine had entrusted the government of a portion of the empire, was at first very friendly to the Christians, but afterwards played the part of a cruel tyrant towards them. He issued an edict to all the prefects to force the Christians to adore the pagan gods, and, in case of their refusal, to condemn them to death. Agricola, Governor of Armenia, published the imperial mandate and summoned the Christians before, him. The first to answer this summons were forty brave soldiers of the garrison of Sebaste. They openly proclaimed themselves followers of Christ and ready to suffer tortures, and even death, rather than deny their faith. Lysias, their general, endeavored by praising their former bravery, by promising them imperial favors and rewards, and finally by threatening them with an ignominious death, to turn them from their holy purpose of remaining disciples of the Crucified. The Christian heroes, however, fearlessly declared, that in a case where the honor of the King of kings and their own eternal welfare were at stake, they disregarded promises and threats, and scorned the favor or displeasure of the Emperor.

The Governor, provoked to anger, ordered the holy confessors to be bound with chains and cast into dungeons. He called them again and again before his tribunal, but, finding them always firm in their faith, inflicted cruel tortures on them and sent them back, to prison. During their confinement, they exhorted each other to perseverance with these words: "We have borne so many hardships, so often exposed our lives in the service of an earthly sovereign, and in defence of our country: shall we do less for the King of Heaven and in behalf of our own souls?" In this manner they encouraged each other, and begged of the Lord that He would strengthen them in their impending martyrdom. They employed a portion of their time in singing the Divine praises. Our Saviour did not fail to assist and console His servants. In a vision, He addressed them in these terms: "The beginning is good, but he only who perseveres to the end will be saved." Shortly after this, sentence was pronounced on the forty martyrs, and immediately carried out.