

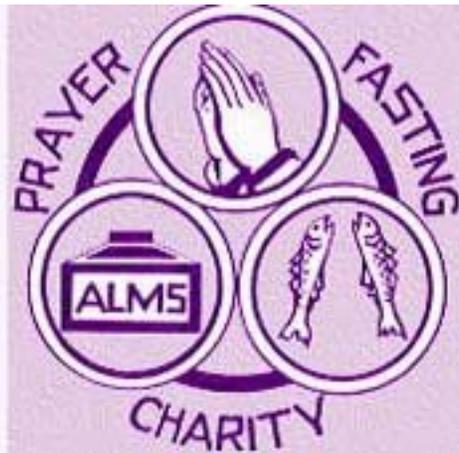
LENTEN ALMSGIVING

It seems like Christmas was just yesterday and already it is almost Lent! Ash Wednesday is February 14. Once again, the parish community will acknowledge this Lenten season by combining two elements of our rich Catholic Lenten tradition – almsgiving and mite boxes. Many of you may remember with fondness the mite box traditions from your youth. To encourage almsgiving as a parish community, our Committee for the Common Good will once again be handing out mite boxes after all weekend masses next weekend.

How you use your mite box is up to you! Two commonly used ways to contribute are to put the money saved from treats given up during Lent or the change in your pocket emptied daily into the box.

Most of the alms money donated will go directly to our Social Services Ministry which benefits the community food pantry, the coat closet and other services that help our neighbors in need. For the past few years, the children in Religious Formation have voted to send a small amount to the

Catholic Near East Welfare Association to help the victims of violence in the Middle East, many suffering as a direct result of their faith. We hope this helps remind us all that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, both near and far, we do unto Jesus.



We want to encourage parents to take the lead in making this a family endeavor. Tell the children what a difference their contributions can make from the money saved from those small things they choose to give up. Explain to them that our Lord is as interested in the

positive things we can do in this world as with the things we give up in His name.

We hope this Lenten season is a time when all in our community can grow in their love for the Lord and their neighbor, for it is in prayer, fasting and giving that we receive the blessings of a grateful heart.

The mite boxes will be collected at all Palm Sunday Masses, March 24 and 25.