

A Peek Into The Atrium

As we enter Lent we come into a time of ritual, reflection and change. Our work in the atrium echoes this experience.

Lenten Procession We gather to discuss the time of Lent, as we remove the items from our prayer table and decide what will be in our space during lent. Each child is invited to carry an item in our procession and to join in song as we leave the season of Ordinary Time and commit ourselves to a new time of preparation for the great feast of Easter.

Bury the Alleluia *Alleluia* comes from the Hebrew *Hal-e-lu-Yah*, “praise Yah(weh)”, or “praise God.” It is a word long loved in the Judeo-Christian tradition, filled with the promise and hope of heaven. In a symbolic gesture, the wonderful, joyful word is given up, put away for a while, to dramatize our need for God while we are still on our earthly journey. And hopefully, by the end of Lent, through our Lenten practices (prayer, fasting, almsgiving) we are a bit closer to our heavenly home as we “unbury” the Alleluia at Easter.

Symbols of Lent The tradition of “sign and symbol” is a strong one in our Catholic faith. The seasons of Lent and Easter develop this language of signs in particular ways. This language is reinforced in the atrium over and over. Specifically in lent we lift up the image of the cross in many of our works. At Easter we see the sign of the flame (Holy Spirit), and the image of water (new life, baptism) highlighted through the atrium materials. This is a language to which the 3-6 year old child is especially attuned, to a finer degree than our adult eyes and ears. We gain insight from the child in this way!