

# Parish News

Here is your weekly update. There are also attachments for this week.

Class begins this Sunday.



Ash Wednesday -March 5<sup>th</sup>  
Masses @12:15 & 6pm

Note Fridays are days of abstinence from meat for all who are 14years of age or older  
Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are also days of fast, 1 full meal two regular meals  
which does not equal 1 and nothing in-between meals unless there is a medical reason

Bishop Lucia has announced that Rev. John Mikalajuels -Pastor of Holy Trinity has  
retired on February 15. Our Pastor Fr. Mark will now be the Pastor of both Parishes.  
Congratulations Fr.. Mark on your new assignment.

## **Conversation Series**

We are happy to announce a brand-new Conversation Series. We will meet once a  
month on the first Monday of the month in the Cow Palace

March 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 6pm

Hope you can join us for this new and exciting spiritual, education opportunity open  
to all

## Parish Giving-

The Parish is pleased to introduce “Enhancing Stewardship through Electronic Funds Transfer. It is convenient no more searching for a checkbook or Sunday morning stops at the ATM. To excess simply Log on the parish website [www.sacredheart-saintmary.org](http://www.sacredheart-saintmary.org) and click on the Parish Giving Log and follow the easy registration instructions. It is Secure.

## Stewardship-

Operating expenses for the Parish on a weekly basis are \$6,900.00 Collection.

**Stewardship for Feb 16, 2025**

**Ordinary \$3111.00**

**Online Giving for January \$2322.37**

## ITS PIEROGI TIME FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

They will be on sale starting after Mass on Saturday March 1<sup>st</sup> and after all Masses until gone



## Hope Appeal 2025

The Assessment for the Parish is \$32,143.00

Currently received as of 2/19/25 we have collected \$28,840.02

**NOTRE DAME SCHOOLS**

**14<sup>TH</sup> Annual Raffle \$100,000.00**

Additional cash prizes and more-Tickets are \$100

On sale at Notre Dame Jr/Sr. High School and Chanatry's Market in Utica

[www.NorteDameUtica.org](http://www.NorteDameUtica.org) 315 724-5118 ext 26

Drawing Sunday May 4, 2025 @ 12PM



As always, I like to share the deep traditions and meaning of our Church. What a great way to learn as a family and learn more about this great Faith of ours.

This Wednesday is Ash Wednesday which is the beginning of Lent. What do we as Catholics believe As Wednesday.

*Among the beautiful, meaningful and solemn ceremonies of the Catholic Church is the gathering of the faithful on Ash Wednesday.*

This special day begins our Lenten journey. It is the start of 40 days of prayer, penance and almsgiving as we prepare ourselves to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. But why does Lent begin on a Wednesday, and what is the significance of ashes?

Ash Wednesday was added to the liturgical calendar well after the 40-day penitential season of Lent became the norm throughout the Latin Church. Lent, in turn, was universally established only after the early Church sorted out the date of Easter. The issue was clarified at the famous Council of Nicaea in 325 where “all the Churches agreed that Easter, the Christian Passover, should be celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon (14 Nisan) after the vernal equinox” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1170). The vernal (spring) equinox generally falls on March 21, thus the date of Easter in the Western Church can occur anytime between March 22 and April 25.

### **Lent in the Early Church**

The word Lent is from an Old English term meaning springtime, and by the second century the term was being used to describe the period of individual fasting,

almsgiving and prayer in preparation for Easter. Among the Christians of the first three centuries, only those aspiring for baptism — the catechumens — observed a defined period of preparation, and that time lasted only two or three days. The idea of Lent being 40 days in length evolved over the next few centuries, and it is difficult to establish the precise time as to when it began. Among the canons issued by the Council of Nicaea, the Church leaders, in Canon Five, made reference to Lent: “and let these synods be held, the one before Lent that the pure gift may be offered to God after all bitterness has been put away, and let the second be held about autumn.” The language of this canon seems to validate that Lent, in some fashion, had by the fourth century been established and accepted by the Church. While the exact timing and extent of Lent both before and after the Nicaea council is unclear, what is clear from historical documents is that Christians did celebrate a season of Lent to prepare themselves for Resurrection Sunday and used a variety of ways to do so.

That Lent evolved into a period of 40 days in length is not surprising as there are numerous biblical events that also involved 40 days. Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving instructions from God for that number of days (see Ex 24:18); Noah and his entourage were on the Ark waiting for the rains to end for 40 days and 40 nights (Gn 7:4); and Elijah “walked forty days and forty nights to the mountain of God, Horeb” (1 Kgs 19:8). Mostly, though, the 40 days of Lent identifies with the time our Lord Jesus spent in the desert fasting, praying and being tempted by the devil (Mt 4:1-11). “By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert” (Catechism, No. 540).

There is, therefore, evidence that by the end of the fourth century Christians were participating in a 40-day Lent before Easter. The dilemma now became how to count the 40 days. In the Latin Church, six weeks were used to identify the Lenten period, but you didn’t fast on Sundays, so six Sundays were subtracted and there remained only 36 fasting days. In the early seventh century, St. Pope Gregory I the Great (r. 590-604) resolved this situation by adding as fast days the Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday before the first Sunday of Lent. Thus the Lenten 40-day fast, or the Great Fast as it was known, would begin on a Wednesday.

Initially, people fasted all 40 days of Lent. They ate one meal a day and only an amount of food that would sustain survival. But the Church taught, and people believed (then as now), that fasting is not about what we eat, it is about changing hearts, interior conversion, reconciliation with God and others. It’s about living in an austere way, giving from our abundance to the poor. St. John Chrysostom (347-409)

explained it this way: “Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works!... If you see a poor man, take pity on him! If you see an enemy, be reconciled to him! If you see a friend gaining honour, envy him not! If you see a handsome woman, pass her by!”  
(Homily on the Statutes, III.11).

### Ashes

The Church has long used ashes as an outward sign of grief, a mark of humility, mourning, penance and morality. The Old Testament is filled with stories describing the use of ashes in such a manner. In the Book of Job, Job repented before God: “Therefore, I disown what I have said, and repent in dust and ashes” (42:6). Daniel “turned to the Lord God, to seek help, in prayer and petition, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes” (Dn 9:3). Jonah preached conversion and repentance to the people of Nineveh: “When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in the ashes” (Jon 3:6). And the Maccabees army prepared for battle: “That day they fasted and wore sackcloth; they sprinkled ashes on their heads and tore their garments” (1 Mc 3:47).



Ashes were imposed on the early catechumens when they began their preparation time for baptism. Confessed sinners of that era were also marked with ashes as part of the public penitential process. Other baptized Christians began asking to receive ashes in a manner similar to catechumens and penitents. Christian men had ashes sprinkled on their heads while ashes were used to trace the cross on the forehead of women. Thus the use of ashes as the sign of penance, in readiness for Easter, was becoming a Churchwide practice. During the papacy of St. Gregory, the Great, the practice was further expanded and is mentioned in the sixth-century Gregorian

Sacramentary. Around the year 1000, Abbot Aelfric of the monastery of Eynsham, England, wrote: “We read in the books both in the Old Law and in the new that men who repented of their sins bestowed on themselves with ashes and clothed their bodies with sackcloth. Now let us do this little at the beginning of our Lent, that we strew ashes upon our heads, to signify that we ought to repent of our sins during the Lenten feast” (“Aelfric’s Lives of Saints,” 1881, p. 263). This same rite of distributing ashes on the Wednesday that begins Lent was recommended for universal use by Pope Urban II at the Synod of Benevento in 1091.

So when we go to that early Mass on Ash Wednesday morning and receive the blessed ashes on our forehead, we are repeating a somber, pious act that Catholics have been undergoing for over 1,500 years. As “The Liturgical Year, Septuagesima,” by Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B., written in the middle decades of the 1800s, puts it: “We are entering, today, upon a long campaign of the warfare spoke of by the apostles: forty days of battle, forty days of penance.

We shall not turn cowards, if our souls can but be impressed with the conviction that the battle and the penance must be gone through. Let us listen to the eloquence of the solemn rite which opens our Lent. Let us go whether our mother leads us, that is, to the scene of the fall.”

Like all those before us, we unhesitatingly embrace this invitation to sanctity, this time to turn away from sin. We are part of that great cloud of witnesses who through all the ages have donned the ashes, publicly acknowledging that we are Christians, Christians who have sinned and seek to repent. We acknowledge that “we are dust and to dust we shall return.”

### **Events at other Parishes in our area**

#### **I have attached fliers for the events in Our Parishes**

Please remember we are all a Catholic Community and need to support each other.

***The Lights Are On for Your  
Confession will be offered  
April 14, 2025***

*4-7pm in Parishes*

Diocesan Lenten Mission  
Join us for a Diocesan Lenten Mission



A powerful 3-night journey of faith, prayer and renewal as we prepare our hearts for Easter and celebrate the Jubilee Year

March 31 @ 6:30-8:30pm  
**Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish**  
Tuesday April 1<sup>st</sup>  
**Holy Cross-Dewitt**  
April 2<sup>nd</sup>  
**St. Thomas Aquinas Binghamton**

Each evening will feature an inspiring talk from a Keynote speaker, John Bealeu  
With Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with Bishop Lucia

**Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish**

***The Annual Lenten Parish Mission***

Tues March 11 from 6:30-8pm @ the Lourdes Campus  
Evening of inspiring talks beautiful music and time for prayer  
Jeremy Bobak will be worship leader  
Mark and Nina Ranieri will be the keynote speakers



## ***A Lenten Retreat for Catholic Women***

Saturday March 8 @ Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish

7:30am to 12:15pm

Breakfast, Mass, Speaker Reflections, Confession, Adoration and Rosary  
Divine Mercy Chaplet and Brown Scapular Enrollment

### **St Paul's Whitesboro**

Healing Mass –

March 2 @ 3pm

Anointing of the sick and laying of the hands

### **Youth Ministry Event**

Mary, Mother of our Savior Parish invites all teens in the Greater Utica Area to join  
us for

Who: Teens in grades 7 thru 12 from the Greater Utica Area

Where: Mary Mother Of Our Savior Parish, Seton Center, 2 Barton Ave, Utica (look  
for the welcome flag)

When: Monday evenings 6:30PM-8:00PM-

(following the school calendar)-

[www.motherofoursavior.org](http://www.motherofoursavior.org)

*For information please reach out to Brittany Wilcox: [bwilcox@syrdio.org](mailto:bwilcox@syrdio.org)*

### **Utica Newman Catholic**

Christian Fellowship

For registered College Students/Utica Area

For questions Contact Campus Minister, Pat Gillick @

[Uticanewmandoutreach@syrdio.org](mailto:Uticanewmandoutreach@syrdio.org)

Free Pizza and Wing Dinner after every 4pm Sunday Evening Mass

Our Lady of the Rosary Campus

Catholic Young Professionals

The Cyrenian Way

First Thursdays @ 6:30 pm Monthly

Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish

Seton Center  
Food Fellowship, Prayer and Discussion

**Totus Tuus /Diocese of Syracuse**

Mary, Mother of our Savior

July 20-25, 2025

This is a summer Catholic youth program. It is dedicated to share the Gospel and promote the Catholic faith through evangelization, discipleship, Christian witness and Eucharistic worship

Teen Program -7<sup>th</sup> -12 grade Evenings Sunday July 20-Thru July 24 7pm-9pm \$25  
per youth

Children Program Day Program 1<sup>st</sup> grade-6<sup>th</sup> grade Monday July 21- July 25<sup>th</sup>  
9am-3pm \$55 per child maximum of \$110 per family

Questions?

[Bwilcox@syrdio.org](mailto:Bwilcox@syrdio.org) or [mmoosfaithformation@syrdio.org](mailto:mmoosfaithformation@syrdio.org)

**St Anthony/St Agnes -Utica**

Every Friday March 7<sup>th</sup> -April 18, 2025

Eat In or take out

Fried or baked Haddock \$17

12 Piece Fried Shrimp \$18

St Anthony Combo \$21

(baked or fried Haddock plus 7 shrimp)

All meals include choice of baked potato or French fries Coleslaw, dinner roll, coffee & dessert)

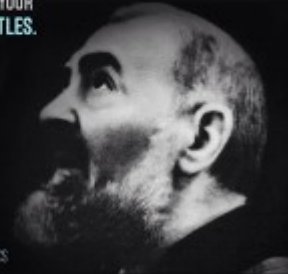
Food for thought

# JESUS IS WITH YOU

EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL HIS PRESENCE.

HE IS NEVER SO CLOSE TO YOU  
AS HE IS DURING YOUR  
SPIRITUAL BATTLES.

SAINT  
PADRE  
PIO



FROM/ROAMINGCATHOLICS



**The children making First Reconciliation will meet in the Church on March 2 and 9<sup>th</sup>. Please bring the children to the Church and they will be brought back to the school for dismissal.**

Students making First Communion-it will be on May 4<sup>th</sup> @ the 11am Mass

First Reconciliation will be on a Sunday during class time-March 16th

The Blessing Cup meal has been scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup> in the school cafeteria from 12-3pm

#### Lenten PCA Event



Please join u for our annual Family PCA event with our Parishes in the PCA  
(Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish, St Paul's, Holy Trinity and Sacred Heart/St Mary's  
Open to all families with children Preschool to Grade 6<sup>th</sup>

March 30th @ Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish

2 to 4pm

Fun Lenten Projects

Pizza and drinks will be served



Sacrament of Reconciliation: Saturday 3:15PM prior to Mass

Weekdays 12:15 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Friday.  
There will be no Mass on Thursday

Let's remember that as Catholics, the importance of attending Sunday Mass. At Mass we stand at mystically at the foot of the cross and witness for ourselves the same self-sacrifice of Jesus, in an unbloody manner. Mass is a celebration of this sacrifice. It is the active participation of all that come together in the place of worship

Eight Sunday of Ordinary time

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Sirach 27:4-7

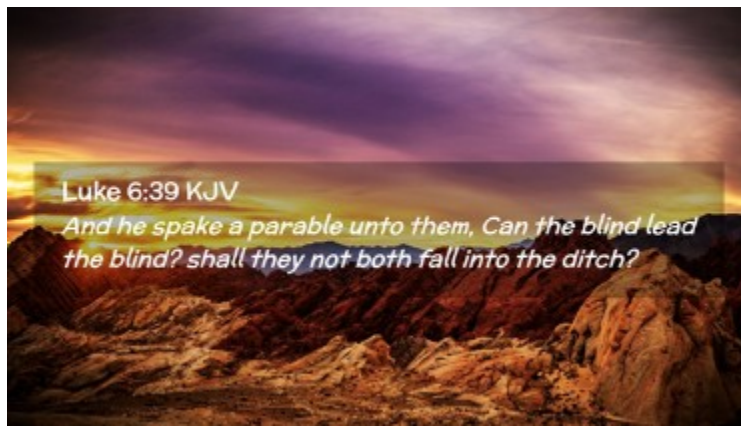
Responsorial Psalms: 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:54-58

Gospel: Luke 6:39-45

While these are wonderful reflections, please remember that they are not to be a substitute for the wonderful sermons of Father or Deacon Kirk at Mass.

As always, I try to find wonderful reflections for this week's Gospel reading. I let the Holy Spirit guide me.



**3/2/2025 (Sunday) Today's Gospel reading: Luke 6:39-45**

- 39 Jesus told his disciples a parable, “Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?
- 40 No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher.
- 41 Why do you notice the splinter in your brother’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own?
- 42 How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me remove that splinter in your eye,’ when you do not even notice the wooden beam in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter in your brother’s eye.
- 43 “A good tree does not bear rotten fruit, nor does a rotten tree bear good fruit.
- 44 For every tree is known by its own fruit. For people do not pick figs from thornbushes, nor do they gather grapes from brambles.
- 45 A good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good, but an evil person out of a store of evil produces evil; for from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks.”

**3/2/2025 (Sunday) Today's Gospel reflection / homily / sermon: Luke 6:39-45**

Jesus teaches about spiritual blindness, personal accountability, and the power of the heart's overflow. He reminds us that we cannot lead others if we ourselves are lost, and we cannot correct others unless we first examine our own hearts. These verses challenge us to reflect on our inner lives and the fruit we bear through our words and actions.

Jesus begins with a simple yet profound question: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?” (Luke 6:39). This metaphor reminds us that we must first seek spiritual clarity before guiding others. Too often, we rush to advise or correct people while ignoring our own faults. True leadership and discipleship require humility and self-examination. If we desire to be lights in the world, we must first allow Christ’s light to shine in us.

Jesus then speaks about hypocrisy, using the famous illustration of the speck and the plank: “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” (Luke 6:41). This is not just about being judgmental. It’s about being blind to our own need for transformation. When we focus on others’ shortcomings without addressing our own, we deceive ourselves. Spiritual maturity begins when we let God cleanse our hearts before trying to correct others.

He then shifts to the image of a tree and its fruit: “No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.” (Luke 6:43). Just as trees produce fruit according to their nature, our lives reflect what is truly inside us. If our hearts are filled with love, kindness, and truth, our words and actions will reflect those qualities. But if we allow bitterness, pride, or selfishness to take root, our lives will bear the consequences.

Jesus concludes with a powerful truth: “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:45). Our words are not just random expressions but they reveal the state of our hearts. If we constantly speak words of criticism, anger, or negativity, it is a sign that our hearts need renewal. But when we speak with grace, encouragement, and wisdom, we show that God’s love is working within us.

This Gospel passage calls us to deep self-reflection. Instead of being quick to judge others, we must ask: Am I spiritually blind in any area of my life? Am I bearing good fruit? Do my words reflect a heart filled with God’s love?

The good news is that Christ can transform our hearts. As we draw near to Him, He renews our minds, purifies our thoughts, and fills us with His love. When we allow Him to change us from the inside out, our lives will naturally bear good fruit, and our words will bring life to those around us.

Let us seek God daily, asking Him to give us clear vision, pure hearts, and words that  
bless others. May our lives be a reflection of His love, overflowing with goodness, truth,  
and grace





Here is this week's Gospel for children who are unable to attend our program. What a great way to share this Gospel with them.

A bad fruit tree can't produce good fruit.  
Several kinds of fruit such as apples, oranges, grapes, bananas, etc.

"A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. A tree is identified by its fruit." Luke 6:43-44 (NLT)

Do you like fruit? I have a basket filled with several different kinds of fruit with me today.

Here's an apple. How many of you like apples? Apples not only taste good, but they are good for you. Surely you have heard the saying, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away."

How about bananas? There are lots of ways to eat bananas. They are great on cereal at breakfast, aren't they? How about banana pudding? Is there anyone who doesn't like banana pudding? Have you ever eaten banana bread? Yum, yum! One of my favorite snacks is a banana smoothie. Oh, did I mention that bananas have lots of vitamins?

### **A Tree and Its Fruit**

What is one of the best ways to get a lot of vitamin C? The orange, of course! Where do we get all of these delicious fruits? They come from fruit trees, don't they? Apples come from an apple tree. Oranges come from an orange tree. Bananas come from a banana tree.

Jesus had a lot to say about fruit. He told his followers that they were to bear fruit. Now I don't think he was talking about apples, oranges, and bananas. What do you think Jesus meant when he told his followers to bear fruit for him? [Give the children time to

answer]. When Jesus says that good people produce good fruit, he doesn't mean the kind of fruit that we eat. He means that if we are following him, we will want to do the things that make God happy. We will do good things, we will help people, we will share what we have with others, and we will treat other people with respect.

Jesus said, "A tree is identified by its fruit. A good person produces good things from a good heart, but an evil person will produce bad things from an evil heart. What kind of fruit tree do you want to be? A good tree producing good fruit, or an evil tree producing evil fruit?

Father, we want to be identified as a good tree, producing good fruit. Help us to do the things we know will be pleasing to you. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

## Weekly Prayer

Prayer is a large part of our Faith. As we given the season of Lent, each will be a prayer to help us prayer during this season



Lynn M. Springer  
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Sacred Heart/St Mary's  
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