

Ash Wednesday is February 14th.

Masses @ 12:15 & 6pm

If you have blessed ashes, they can be brought to the Parish Office for burning prior to that date.

Fridays @ 6pm-Station of the Cross

Friday March 15th @ 6:30pm
Living Stations of the Cross performed by the Norte Dame Students

Stewardship-December 24, 2023

Operating expenses for the Parish on a weekly basis are \$6,200.00 Collection January 28 \$5720.00

Hope Appeal

2nd Collection at weekend Masses is for the Hope Appeal and will continue in order for the Parish to reach the 2024 Goal

Goal \$38,468.00 Received to date \$17,528.02

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.og and click on the Parish Giving Log and follow the easy registration instructions. It is Secure.

Events at other Parishes in our area

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

Family Lenten Faith Event

Let us prepare ourselves for the Season of Lent and the Joyful coming of Easter

Sunday March 3rd

2:00pm to 4:00pm

Our Lady of the Rosary Campus Burrstone Rd

Preschool to Grade 6

Fun Activities for your Lenten Journey

Prayer and Adoration

Cookies and Drinks

A collaboration of the Churches of our Pastoral Care Area

Holy Trinity, Mary Mother of Our Savior, Sacred Heart/St. Mary's and St Paul's

A Lenten Retreat for Women

The Syracuse Catholic Women's Conference is sponsoring a Lenten Retreat for Catholic Women for the Greater Utica Area. All are welcome.

This retreat will be hosted by

Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish @ the Lourdes Campus

February 17th

Visit WWW.syracusecatholicwomen.org for information about the schedule and speakers.

IGNITE 24

Catholic Mens Conference
Saturday March 21, 2004
This year's theme is "Lord Guard Us"
To be held @ Bishop Ludden High School in Syracuse
Contact: Ed Kri @ 315 560 9170 or lekirk3@gmail.com

Mary Mother of Our Savior Parish in Utica

Lenten Mission ~ "A Voice in the Desert!" - Mary, Mother of Our Savior Parish will be hosting a Lenten Mission on Thursday, February 22nd at 7pm on the Lourdes campus. All parishes from the Greater Utica Area are more than welcome to participate in this special Lenten offering. Mr. Christopher Spilka, lay evangelist and college campus minister,

will be the keynote speaker. Mr. Jeremy Bobak will be the worship leader. This evening will include inspiring talks, beautiful music, and time for prayer and reflection. This parish mission will be a perfect way to kick start your Lenten journey. This event is free and open to the public. www.motherofoursavior.org

LENTEN FISH FRY

St. Anthony/St. Agnes Church
1500 Bleecker St

Every Friday/February 16-March 29th
Fried or Baked Haddock \$16 (10-12 oz fillet)
12 piece Fried Shrimp \$18
St Anthony Combo \$20 (baked or fried haddock plus 7 fried shrimp)
All meals include a choice of baked potato or French fries, cole slaw, dinner roll coffee & dessert. Extra sides \$1
Call 315 418 5219 after 3pm

Youth Ministry Nights

February 12, 2024
The Senton Center/Mary Mother Savior Parish
6:30pm-8:00pm
This weeks meal Lasagna



As always, I like to share the deep traditions and meaning of our Church. As we begin the season of Lenten. What does it mean for us as Catholics and what are we to follow?

Are your families preparing for Lenten?

Lent is the main penitential season on the liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church. Here we will talk about what lent is, it's history, regulations and more. Despite being a season of penance and fasting it is quite popular even among non-Catholics

What is Lent?

The season of Lent is a Catholic liturgical season consisting of forty days of fasting, prayer, and penitence beginning at Ash Wednesday and concluding at sundown on Holy Thursday.

The official liturgical color for the season of Lent is violet.

The History of Lent

The observance of Lent is related to the celebration of Easter. In the first three centuries of the Christian era, most Christians prepared for Easter by fasting and praying for three days. In some places this was extended to the entire week before Easter (now known as Holy Weeks "). There is evidence that in Rome, the length of preparation was three weeks.

The Meaning of the Word Lent

The word *Lent* derives from the Middle English word *lenten*, meaning springtime – the time of lengthening days. There is biblical support for doing penance, in both the Old and New Testaments. The season of Lent builds on this biblical support, but like all Catholic liturgical seasons, it developed over time. In its early three-week form, Lent was the period of intense spiritual and liturgical preparation for catechumens before they were baptized at Easter. Many members of the community imitated this time of preparation with the catechumens.

Why is Lent 40 Days?

By the fourth century (when Christianity was legalized in the Roman Empire) Lent had developed into its current length of forty days. Forty days is significant for Christians because it is the length of the fast and temptation of Jesus in the desert (cf. Luke 4:1-13). Recently, research has suggested that the development of Lent was also influenced by the forty-day span of fasting practiced by many in the early Church (especially monks). This fast, beginning right after Epiphany (January 6th) stressed prayer and penance.

Fasting and Repentance During Lent

Once Christianity became widespread and most people were baptized as infants, Lent lost the connection to the preparation of catechumens. Instead, the themes of repentance and fasting became dominant. Vatican II restored the order of catechumens. Since then, most adult converts to Catholicism are baptized at the Easter Vigil, which takes place after sundown on Holy Saturday. As a result, the ancient baptismal meaning of Lent is once again becoming important.

When does Lent begin?

Traditionally, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at sundown on Holy Thursday. Since this is more than forty days, some contend that Sundays are not counted in Lent . Instead, they argue, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday are counted instead. Others say that Lent begins on the first Sunday after Ash Wednesday. No one is exactly sure how Ash Wednesday became the first day of Lent.

Ash Wedneday

Ash Wednesday dates from at least the fourth century, although it is not possible to give an exact date. During that century, penitents looking for forgiveness and re-entry into the community would dress in sackcloth and sprinkle ashes to show their repentance. This custom certainly predates Christianity as can be seen by references in the Hebrew Scriptures (cf. Esther 4:2-3; Danie 19:3; Jonah 3:6).

There is no doubt that the custom of distributing ashes to everyone on Ash Wednesday came from imitation of the practice of wearing ashes by public penitents. Public penitents were those doing penance for sins such as murder, apostasy, and adultery. When they completed their public penance, they were able to be readmitted to communion with the Church. As Lent increasingly focused on the themes of repentance and renewal, Christians sensed their own need for repentance. The practice of distribution of ashes to all members of the community is mentioned in official documents of 1091 (Cf. Synod of Benventum, 1091 Manse, XX, 739) although nearly a hundred years earlier it is already assumed in a homily of the period.

Lenten Regulations

The Catholic Church, in an attempt to help Catholics do at least a minimum during Lent, asks all Catholics to fast and abstain from meat on certain days. Fasting means to limit food to one full meal a day with the possibility of two smaller meals (not adding up to a full meal) as needed. Abstinence means not eating meat, although fish is allowed. Catholics are required to observe all days of fasting and abstinence which is one of the precepts of the Church

Fasting and Abstinence during Lent

Those 14 years of age or older are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent. Catholics between the ages of 16 and 59 are also to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. They may eat one full meal on these days, and two small meals to maintain strength. The two small meals together must not equal the size of one full meal. If one's work or health make it inadvisable to fast or abstain from meat, they are not obligated to do so. This includes mental health: Fasting may be harmful for someone who struggles with an eating disorder. Such a person might do an alternate penance on the days of fasting. Pregnant and nursing women are exempt from the fast.

At one time, people gave up all animal products and during the whole Lenten season. The Eastern Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches still follow this rule. Since chickens continue to produce eggs and cows milk, the custom developed to make the milk into cheese and color the eggs so that when Easter arrived, no food would be wasted.

Giving Up Something for Lent

Many Catholics were taught as children to "give up something" for Lent. The sacrifices in Lent are really penance, in the same spirit as the Ninehvites that repented at the preaching of Jonah. Throughout our history, Christians have found prayer, fasting, and almsgiving to be an important part of repentance and renewal. Many Catholics now add something during Lent rather than giving up something, either to address personal habits that need work or to add some outreach to others in need.

The Church does not specifically require that we do something beyond the requirements of fasting and abstinence. To do nothing, however, would certainly not be in keeping with the spirit of Lent. Furthermore, the sacrifices and extra things we do for Lent help us grow closer to Christ. We are missing out on so many graces if we do not participate fully in Lent. It is not necessary to be perfect, but we should put forth a good effort.

A good practice is to do something extra in prayer, something involving fasting (whether limiting our intake of food or giving up something non food-related), and something involving almsgiving (giving money or goods to the needy or doing extra acts of charity).

Other Definitions Concerning Lent

Carnival Originally a celebration just before Lent. Carnival is Latin for "farewell to meat."

Laetare Sunday The fourth Sunday of Lent, which marks the halfway point, celebrated with rose vestments instead of the usual violet. Laetare means "to rejoice" in Latin, and the lighter vestments signify a brief celebration in expectation of Easter, even in the midst of Lent.

Maundy Thursday An ancient English name for Holy Thursday. It comes from the Latin, *Mandatum novum da nobis* ("I give you a new commandment," John 13:34) that began the ancient foot-washing ceremony.

<u>Palm Sunday</u> The celebration of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem before he was arrested. In Scripture, people placed palm branches on the road as Jesus road on a donkey into Jerusalem. Catholics usually have a blessing of palms and then hold the palms as the priest enters the church.

Passion Sunday Passion Sunday is another name for Palm Sunday. This name is appropriate because at the Mass for this Sunday, the passion of the Lord (the story of Jesus' arrest and death) is traditionally read.

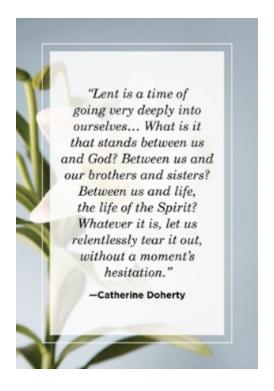
Spy Wednesday A name for the Wednesday of Holy Week that alludes to Judas agreeing with the Sanhedrin to betray Jesus.

Triduum The "Great Three Days" -the three-part celebration beginning with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, continuing with The Celebration of the Lord's Passion on Good Friday, and concluding with the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.

Prayer Time During Lent

Lent, traditionally marked by prayer and introspection, can be challenging for those unable to attend local parish activities and retreats. In light of this, we strongly recommend exploring the Pray More Lenten Retreat—an exclusively online Catholic Lenten retreat designed to accommodate individuals with busy schedules. Offering the flexibility to engage from any location at any time, this virtual retreat provides a meaningful and accessible way to embark on a spiritual journey during the Lenten season.

Catholic Food for thought





As we start the cold and flu season, please remember that if your child (ren) not feeling well, please keep them home.

The Faith Formation Program has a number of reflection books available for both Parents and the Children. They may be picked up this Sunday before and after class.

What a great way to start the Lenten Season with daily Prayer.

Any child who will be making First Holy Communion or Confirmation a copy of the Baptismal Certificate is required.

Important Dates for children making Sacraments.

First Reconciliation/First Communion

First Reconciliation will be on March 3rd after the 9am Mass.

Blessing Cup on April 13th from 12pm-2pm

First Communion May 5th @ 11am Mass

Confirmation Students

March 9th @ 10:30 am -Confirmation Retreat @ St. Paul's Whitesboro

March $3^{\rm rd}$ -Sponsor information and Confirmation Name due

In lieu of the last formation class Confirmation students will have lunch with Fr. Mark after the 11am Mass

The Faith Formation Program has obtained the program **AWAKEN** for Pflaum Publishing -a weekly publication. This will be available in the weekly newsletter as well as a paper copy for those who wish to have one.

Awaken and become disciples of the Word.

Church Masses



Sacrament of Reconciliation: Will be offered the first Wednesday of every month after the 12:15 Mass

Saturday 4pm
Sunday's
7:30am 9AM and 11AM
Weekdays 12:15 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Friday.

There will 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.

5th Sunday of Ordinary Time 1st Reading: LV 13:1-2, 44-46 Psalm: 32: 1-2, 5, 11

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 10:31-11:1 Gospel MK 1:40-45

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.



This week's reflection comes from Fr. Richard Ounsoworht O.P.

The Word of God

A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, 'If you choose, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I do choose. Be made clean!' Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, saying to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.' But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

Mark 1:40-45

A leper approached Jesus. "If you wish", he said, "you can make me clean". This is not a request, but a statement. It's an act of faith, yes, but also a challenge: daring; we could even say cheeky.

This man, who according to St. Mark virtually hurls himself at Jesus, is not only suffering from a particularly horrible and infectious disease. According to the law of Moses, he is ritually unclean. So he symbolically represents in himself the consequences of sin. He must then by God's law be separated from the people, for they are consecrated to God, and he is unfit to join them in worship.

"If you wish". St. Mark goes on to tell us the regrettable consequences for Jesus of this miracle. After it he could no longer go openly into any town. So Jesus had very good reasons for not wanting to do as he was asked here; for not trusting this man to be obedient. But alone among the evangelists, Mark tells us why he acted as he did.

Jesus, he says, was moved by compassion.

And out of that compassion came this most wonderful gesture: utterly astonishing in the circumstances; for us, an endlessly consoling source of meditation. Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. We can imagine the stunned silence, or the sudden intake of breath, of the onlookers. Jesus had just done what you mustn't do. He has deliberately touched a leper.

"It is my will", he said. "Be clean". And immediately the leprosy left him and he was clean. Once again, Jesus had confirmed that he could heal at a word, at a touch. He'd also accepted the deeper challenge offered him by the leper. Almost against his will, he'd allowed himself to be seen as the one who bears within himself the holiness of God. Unlike any other man there had ever been, Jesus was not himself made unclean by this touch. Instead, by it he conferred cleanness, that is, holiness, rightness with God.

I confess I always wince when I hear our Jerusalem Bible translation of Jesus' words. The 1960's committee of translators make him say. "Of course I want to!" The effect of that, it seems to me, is to trivialise, or sentimentalise this whole episode. It also falsifies a great part of its significance.

For there is no "of course" about it. Jesus did not come into the world in order to rid it of leprosy. There are still lepers today, no less than in Jesus' own time, and there are still people who suffer from countless other diseases and afflictions of every sort. St. Mark also strongly insists that Jesus did not want the reputation of a wonder worker, who would fix everyone's problems and solve their difficulties. His mission was much bigger than that. The blessings he came to give were much greater; of infinitely wider scope.

So with the leper of today's Gospel, we rightly approach Jesus in faith and hope, asking for his help, in big things and small, knowing he has the power to help us. But always with the leper we add: if it is your will. And we accept that sometimes, or quite often, it is not his will that we gain what we ask for.

So what is God's will for us? Our faith tells us that the single motive force behind God's will is his love: infinite, divine love: for God is love. *Thy will be done*, we pray; and if God's will is done in us, then indeed that can only be for our good. God's ultimate will for us is that we be found in Christ Jesus our Lord; that we share his divine Sonship; that we inherit God's own eternal, Trinitarian life. And the route to that blessing is our share in Christ's death and resurrection.

Sometimes then, it's God's will that in order to gain that blessing, for now we experience some share in Christ's suffering. And common experience suggests that normally we don't encounter God's love in its fullness unless we first have the experience of being desperately needy, helpless, wounded. And so there is a real sense in which it is sometimes good for us not to be healed.

"Moved with compassion, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him." The compassion of God for wounded, diseased, fallen, sinful humanity is expressed in the incarnation, and in the miracles, passion and death of Jesus. Through the humanity of Jesus, God has reached out his hand and touched us; all of us, in principle. Through

the human heart of Jesus especially, that heart which was pierced by a lance, we have immediate access to God's infinite and eternal love.

The outstretched hand of Jesus continues to touch us in our daily lives. Above all, and most directly, we meet that touch in the sacraments of the Church: in sacramental absolution, and in holy communion. But we meet it in other ways too: in our prayer; in our holy reading; in the Saints; in other people. Sometimes we find ourselves being used as instruments of that divine touch for others.

167 years ago the touch of God was expressed by an apparition of his holy Mother. On 11 February 1858 the 14-year-old Bernadette first saw our Lady in the grotto at Lourdes. On that occasion the Lady, or as Bernadette spoke of her, the girl, said nothing at all. What was utterly unforgettable about her was that she was so beautiful. She smiled at Bernadette, and invited her by gesture to pray. Only in the sixteenth apparition did the young lady respond to Bernadette's repeated request for her name: I am the Immaculate Conception.

And from that day to this the crowds flocked to Lourdes. Many healings of the sick, unexplained by medical science, have taken place there. But also: many sick people go to Lourdes who are not cured. Still they go, because Lourdes is a holy place. People are converted there; they find prayer flows easily; they experience the blessing of God and of Mary there somehow more directly. Lourdes points people firmly in the direction of heaven, and they come away consoled and refreshed.

"If you will, said the leper, you can make me clean". God does will. Touch and cleanse my heart, then, Lord, and make it like your heart. Touch and cleanse my mind, that it may be conformed to your mind. Touch and cleanse my whole life: that I may be ever more open to receive your love, and to give it back, now and forever. Amen



Each week I include this week's Scripture to be shared for children who may be too young to attend the program.

Theme

When you have nowhere to turn, turn to Jesus.

Object

A bottle of calamine lotion

Scripture

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man.

"I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured. Mark

1:40-42

Do you know what this is? It is a bottle of medicine called calamine lotion. Calamine is a medicine that is sometimes used to help stop itching. Have you have ever had the chicken pox? When you have chicken pox, it starts out like a cold -- you feel lousy, have a runny nose, and run a fever. Then, all of a sudden, itchy red bumps start to break out all over your body. The itching drives you crazy, but you can't scratch, because that just makes it worse. It is a very uncomfortable feeling, but it isn't hopeless. Rubbing on some calamine lotion may help to ease the itching. In a few days, the sores go away, the itching stops, and life is back

to normal again.

During the time when Jesus lived upon the earth, leprosy was very wide-spread and was a dreaded disease. When someone had leprosy, they were covered with sores all over their bodies. Unlike chicken pox, these sores didn't just go away. When someone had leprosy, it was hopeless, because there was no cure. To make matters worse, other people considered them to be unclean and were not allowed to touch them. Many people believed that people who had leprosy got the disease because of some terrible sin they had committed.

One day a man with leprosy came to Jesus. The man knelt down before Jesus and said, "If you will, you can make me clean." Jesus looked at the man and he felt love and compassion for him. He reached out his hand and touched the man and said, "I am willing, be clean."

Immediately, the leprosy left the man, and he was cured.

Sometimes, we may find ourselves in a situation where we are uncomfortable, like when we had chicken pox. But there may come a time in our lives when we find ourselves in a situation that is truly hopeless. When that happens, where can we turn? How do we find hope in a hopeless situation? We can turn to Jesus. When the situation is hopeless, Jesus is our only hope.

Dear Father, you sent your Son to bring hope to the hopeless. When we find ourselves in a hopeless situation, we will put our hope and trust in him. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Weekly Prayers

As we begin the season of Lent, let one open the hearts to the Lord and prepare ourselves for his sacrifice for us.





Diocese of Syracuse

From Danielle Cummings, Chancellor

As the holy season of Lent quickly approaches, We have received calls inquiring if there would be a dispensation for Ash Wednesday as it also falls on Valentine's Day. Bishop Lucia addressed this in his last column stating the following:

There will not be a dispensation for Ash Wednesday which is the beginning of the Lenten season - one of the holiest seasons in the Catholic tradition.

He writes: We need to be cognizant of the Lenten fast and abstinence because this year Ash Wednesday falls on February 14th - Valentine's Day - a day sometimes given over to elaborate meals and indulgence in desserts, chocolates and candy, but not this year! If a Catholic wants to observe this occasion, it is most appropriate the day before on Tuesday, February 13th - Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) as the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us: "The seasons and days of penance in the course of the liturgical year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church's penitential practice." (#1438)

From Notre Dame Schools:

Notre Dame Schools 12th Annual Raffle is underway. This year's Grand Prize is \$100,000. With a Second Prize of \$10,000, Third Prize of \$10,000, and an additional \$10,000 in smaller prizes! Tickets cost \$100 each and include admission for 2 adults to the Drawing Party on April 23, 2023, featuring free food, door prizes, and 50/50 raffles. Doors open at 12 Noon and the main drawing will be at 3pm. Call 315-724-5118 to purchase your tickets today!

I have noted above events that are happening here in the Greater Utica Areal

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