

Saint Justin the Martyr Roman Catholic Church, Toms River, NJ

Lent/Easter Triduum 2024

“Ash Wednesday is on Saint Valentine’s Day ... again?”

Have we said, “I am so sorry!” to God?

After Ryan O’Neal died in 2023, his most famous line, from the 1970’s flick *Love Story*, was often replayed: “*Love means never having to say you’re sorry.*” However, theologically and psychologically, this is so untrue! Even when we love unconditionally, broken or wounded relationships cannot totally heal until the offender apologizes and the victim grants pardon and absolution. And since every sin ultimately offends **God**, we must, as we hear in *Ash Wednesday’s* Second Reading, “*be reconciled to God.*” [2 Corinthians 5:20] The great season of **Lent** offers us ample opportunities to admit our sinfulness to **God**, to receive the **Lord’s** forgiveness, to strengthen our ability to avoid sin, and to be more forgiving of others’ faults and failings.

Nothing beats a good **Confession** to tell **God** we are truly sorry for all our sins; how and when to celebrate the **Sacrament of Penance** is found in this insert. As is our **Lenten** custom, the **5 Sundays of Lent** and many **daily Masses** begin with the venerable **Confiteor**: “*I confess...*”. The daily reception of **Eucharist** can fortify us against temptation. **Eucharistic Adoration** or simply ‘**making a visit**’ are like ‘booster shots’ for the soul. **Stations of the Cross** deepen our awareness of - and appreciation for - all **Christ** did to atone for and redeem us from sin. **Almsgiving**, through our regular collections, the **Catholic Annual Appeal**, **CRS Rice Bowl** [mite boxes are available in the narthex], our **Food Pantry bin**, a poor box - or any loving deed - restores our relationship with **God** and others, “*because love covers a multitude of sins.*” [1 Peter 4:8]

THE HOLY MASS. The best way to **receive God’s** love - and **express our** love for **God** - is through **Word** and **Sacrament**, especially **Eucharist**. During the **National Eucharistic Revival**, we are encouraged to make [or remake] **holy Mass** the ‘source and summit’ of our spiritual life. If you cannot attend every weekday **Mass** here or elsewhere, at least watch a virtual **Mass**. Note: **OBLIGATION Masses** [i.e., Sundays] are **NOT** fulfilled, without a **valid** reason, by **virtual Masses**!

LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH. No relationship grows without conversation; in fact, being on ‘self-pilot’ or taking others for granted can destroy a friendship. We **MUST** nurture our relationship with the **Lord** and His **Church**; no one - not even I - can learn enough about our **Catholic Faith**. Join **Faith Formation** sessions; use the free ‘**FORMED**’ online resource, explained on page 6, to be catechized in the comfort of your own home. Check out all that is offered on the **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops** website: www.usccb.org/bible/reflections/index.cfm.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT. We are fortified by practicing the three venerable **Lenten disciplines**: **Prayer**, **Fasting** and **Almsgiving**. While we can pray anywhere, making a visit to the **Blessed Sacrament**, walking the **Stations of the Cross**, lighting a candle, or inscribing your intentions in the **Parish Prayer Book**, are all grace-filled events. Check each week’s bulletin, also online, to see when our church is open, and commit to coming to your spiritual home to pray.

PUT YOUR LOVE INTO ACTION. In addition to **prayer** as explained above, **fast** from food, optional activities or secular routines to make more room for prayer and good works. Offer all you save by **fasting** from food or any activities to help those who have no choice but to **fast** from these things because of their economic situation. Show that you are truly sorry for not being the best **Catholic Christian** by showing your love in action in every way you can! Make one **Lenten** goal bringing someone new to **holy Mass** - or someone who stopped practicing the **Faith** back home. For “*if anyone among you should stray from the truth and someone bring him back, he should know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.*” [James 5:19-20] May **God** bless us with a grace-filled **Lent**, a joyous **Easter** ... and very little snow!

Rev. Mark A. Kreder, Pastor

+ St Joseph Celebrate St Patrick +

Join in The St. Joseph Celebration/ St Patrick Day Party, Sunday March 3, 2024 from 2 pm -6pm. Enjoy great company, delicious food and brilliant Irish music featuring the Willie Lynch Band. This event is for the entire family. Tickets are \$30.00 for adults and \$15.00 for children 13-17. Children 12 and under are free. This is a great opportunity to gather with friends and enjoy music, dancing, good food and fellowship. These are two great saints that we celebrate in the month of March -St. Patrick on the 17th and St. Joseph on the 19th. Tickets are sold after Sunday Masses or in the parish office.



**Ash Wednesday
February 14**

Blessed ashes mark the start of our Lenten journey of self-denial, penance and prayer. Ashes are a sign of repentance and mortality, so those of any age may receive ashes. Heed the words used to impose ashes: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel." or "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Ashes are distributed during Mass at:
8:00 am – 12 noon - 7:00 pm
and at a Liturgy of the Word
[no Holy Communion]
at 4:30 pm.

Easter Precept or Easter Duty

All Catholics are obligated to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the 1st Sunday of Lent, February 18, and The Most Holy Trinity Sunday, May 26. Those conscious of serious, grave or mortal sin must celebrate the Sacrament of Penance [go to Confession] before receiving Holy Communion.

Fast & Abstinence Guidelines

Those 14 and older are to **ABSTAIN** from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Lenten Fridays. Those between 18 and 59 should **FAST** by eating only one main meal and

two smaller ones on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Those unable to abstain or fast for a valid reason [i.e., St. Patrick's Day party or wedding] may abstain on another day or perform a different penance; Canon law only permits **PASTORS** to dispense from fasting or abstaining. Ignoring penitential days, without good cause, is a serious sin of omission. Our **Bishops** ask us to abstain from meat on Fridays all year long for **Pro-Life causes** and **world peace**.

Sunday 'Obligation' Masses:

Saturday at 5:00 pm

Sunday at 8:00 - 9:30 - 11:30 am

Daily Mass during Lent

Monday: 7:00 pm (2/19 to 3/11)

Monday through Thursday: 8:00 am

The Sunday obligation is mandatory, but also try to attend a weekday Mass, if possible, to receive Holy Communion.

Food Collection - CRS Rice Bowl

To help feed the hungry locally and abroad, donate to Catholic Relief Services' Rice Bowl' [CRSRB], collections on Ash Wednesday and the 5th Sunday of Lent or donate money and/or nonperishable food to our St. Vincent de Paul cart to the right of the main doors. Return CRSRB mite boxes, found in the narthex, by Holy Thursday, to the CRSRB in the narthex.

Lenten Reflection

Spend some time reflecting on your life. Is there anything that you have lost interest in? What has gone to ashes? Prayer? Discipleship? Enthusiasm? Joy? Hope? Trust? Perhaps we need to fast from noise and busyness in order to hear God speaking in the silence. Perhaps we need to fast from television and entertainment in order to hear God in the cries of the poor and the stranger. The Lord says, "Return to me with all your heart!" God pleads for our return. "Now is the acceptable time!" says St. Paul. Don't wait. The gospel gives us the spiritual tools of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting for bringing cold embers back to life.

Stations of the Cross: Wednesday Evenings

Many parishes pray the Stations of the Cross on the Fridays of Lent. We made the decision to pray them on Wednesday evenings to accommodate those who cannot come on Friday evenings. This will give people more opportunities to experience this rich tradition of the Church. If someone is not able to come on a Wednesday evening they can go to a local parish on a Friday evening. Likewise, people in other parishes can come to our parish on a Wednesday night if they are unable to go on a Friday evening. Many people in our parish like to go to the Knights of Columbus on Friday evenings for the Lenten suppers. This will allow them to do so.

There are many formats for the *Stations of the Cross*. All of them are beautiful. This year Stations will be prayed at 7:00 pm and will be led by:

February 21: Holy Innocents Society

February 28: Religious Education Students

March 6: Altar Servers

March 13: Altar Rosary Society

March 20: Men's Faith Group/Deacons

Good Friday—March 29: Living Stations by our Youth Group

On Wednesday of Holy Week, we will not have Stations of the Cross. This year, we will have a Family Supper on Wednesday, March 13th at 5:30 PM before starting the Stations of the Cross. This will consist of soup and salad. Registration is required so we can ensure we have enough soup and salad for those who attend. We are also looking for volunteers to set up on Tuesday, March 12 and on March 13 itself. Registration forms are available in the narthex, in the parish hall, and our website and must be returned by March 6th. Call the parish office if you can volunteer.

The Sacrament of Penance [Reconciliation or Confession]

We can enjoy the *primary* sacramental experience of God's mercy by confessing our sins. While only all *mortal* sins *must* be confessed, this *Rite's* sacramental grace also washes away all lesser, venial sins. And a spiritual 'check-up' helps nip sinful habits in the bud, before they bloom into full-blown sins, and strengthens us against temptation and other

distractions. Those guilty of mortal sin may *NOT* receive *Holy Communion* until they confess them to a *Priest*. *Confession* is also encouraged in *Lent* and *Advent*, before a *Baptism*, *Confirmation* or *Wedding*, or serving as a *Sponsor* or *Godparent*. Throughout *Lent* we will print a variety of *Examinations of Conscience* in the bulletin to assist you in preparing for *Confession*, as we did last *Advent*:

LENTEN CONFESSIONS

FRIDAY - MARCH 22 - 5:30 -7:00 pm

During Lent, like last year, confessions will not be heard on Saturdays.

Confessions will be heard on Monday evenings (2/19, 2/26 & 3/4, 3/11) at 6:15 followed by Mass at 7:00 pm.

LENTEN FAITH ENRICHMENT AT SJM

On Tuesday evenings during Lent at 7:00 pm various topics will be presented for your faith enrichment. The topics will usually be about 30 minutes long, but no longer than an hour. Follow the bulletin for the dates, the topics and the presenters.

2024 Catholic Annual Appeal 'CAA' during the Three-Year National Eucharistic Revival: 'Renewed and Sent on Mission by the Eucharist'

As noted in the start of this *Lenten insert*, we are in a three-year *National Eucharistic Revival*, which is intended to help us better appreciate, understand, and celebrate the *Eucharist*. We are truly transformed by the *Gift of Jesus Himself* in the *Eucharist* - a transformation that becomes visibly tangible in our concern for and outreach to others. The diocesan website heralds all that the *CAA* provides as an outreach to the community and the less fortunate: www.dioceseoftrenton.org. Please be as generous as your means permit. The appeal will begin the weekend of February 24/25.

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion March 24

In Procession, with *blessed palms*, we honor *Christ* as our *King* and reflect on His *Passion* and *Death*. *Masses* are:

Saturday: 5:00 pm

Sunday: 8:00 am - 10:00 am - 12:00

[PLEASE NOTE DIFFERENT SCHEDULE]

All children are invited to our special *Children's Liturgy of the Word* at ALL Masses this weekend; before *Mass* all children are invited to the center aisle; after the *Procession* they go to see a ½ hour age-appropriate video on *Christ's Passion, Death* and *Resurrection* and return later than usual, during the *Lord's Prayer*.

Monday—Wednesday of Holy Week

Daily Mass at 8:00 am

Chrism Mass on Monday, March 25—7:30pm

*Saint Robert Bellarmine Co-Cathedral,
Freehold*

Priests renew their *Ordination* promises and our *Bishop* blesses and consecrates the *Holy Oils*: the *Oil of Catechumens* used at *Baptism*, the *Oil of the Sick* used in the *Anointing of the Sick*, and the *Sacred Chrism*, used at *Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders*, and the blessing of *new churches & altars*. All are invited to our *Cathedral* for this ancient rite. Pray for our *Priests!*

Holy Thursday Morning – March 28

Morning Prayer at 9:00 am

[no morning Mass or any other Mass permitted]

The Sacred Triduum & Paschal Fast

Lent ends as we begin *Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper*; we then enter the *shortest* but most *central* liturgical time: the three-day *Easter Triduum*. To more fully join in *Christ's Death* and *Resurrection*, all are strongly encouraged to join in all *Triduum* events and the *Paschal Fast*, which is even more intense than the *Lenten fast*: all should fast from *Good Friday* until the *Easter Vigil* "as a way of coming to the

joys of the Sunday of the Resurrection with uplifted and welcoming hearts." [Ceremonial of Bishops # 295]

Holy Thursday - March 28

To begin the Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament at the end of Holy Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist is revered with incense and then carried, covered with a humeral veil, through the church, and into the Place of Repose

We solemnly celebrate Jesus' parting gifts of love: His abiding Presence in the *Eucharist*; His care and concern for us in the *Ordained Priesthood*; and our call to continue His work in *Christian Service*. For as Jesus said after washing the Apostles' feet: "If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do." [John 13:14-15]. In the *Mass of the Lord's Supper*, we serve by washing feet, giving alms through *CRS Rice Bowl*, and 'watching one hour' with the Lord at the *Place of Repose* through *Night Prayer* and then until *Good Friday's 3 PM Service*.

Holy Thursday Services

Morning Prayer 9:00 am

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:00 pm

Night Prayer 10:15 pm

Keeping Watch in the Presence
of the Blessed Sacrament

"When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour?" Matthew 26:40

Good Friday – March 29

The Cross which is in the narthex during Lent is brought into the church during Good Friday's Service. After all adore it, it is carried to all unable to come to it; then it is affixed in the Sanctuary for the Stations of the Cross. Throughout Eastertime, it reigns in the garden which is in the narthex as a promise that all who die with Christ will live with Christ forever!

We meditate on *Christ's Passion* and *Death* with ancient rituals and in profound silence. The church is

open all day for private prayer and for public services: *Morning Prayer*, the *Main Celebration of the Passion of the Lord* and the annual *'Living Stations'* performed and delivered by our Youth Group. *All* should visit the church this solemn day to thank *God* for His redeeming love!

Good Friday Services

<i>Morning Prayer</i>	9:00 am
<i>The Passion of the Lord</i>	3:00 pm
<i>Stations of the Cross</i>	7:00 pm

Holy Saturday - March 30

Ancient tradition prohibits *holy Mass* on this day; we keep watch at the tomb in solemn prayer. Pray for those who will be baptized and welcomed into our *Church* during this day of prayerful reflection.

Holy Saturday Services

Morning Prayer/ RCIA Rites and Easter Food Blessing	9:00 am
Easter Vigil Mass	7:00 pm

The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night

March 30 - 7:00 pm

Church law strictly requires that the *ONLY Masses* permissible on *Holy Saturday* begin *AFTER* nightfall, in darkness, so there can be *no 5:00 pm Vigil Mass* on *Holy Saturday*. The *Easter Vigil in the Holy Night Mass*, the climax of the liturgical year, which begins at *7:00 pm*, is a four-part ritual with roots in antiquity. The four parts are:

SERVICE OF LIGHT. The *Paschal Candle*, symbol of the *Risen Christ*, lit from the blessed fire, is brought into the darkened church. As all light their candle from the *Christ-Light*, the darkness of the tomb erupts into the warm glow of the *Risen Lord's* presence!

LITURGY OF THE WORD. We tell our scriptural story of *God's* marvelous, saving deeds throughout history.

LITURGY OF BAPTISM & CONFIRMATION. With blessed *Easter Water* we renew our *Baptismal Promises* and welcome our newest members through the *Sacraments of Initiation*, making *God's* saving deeds and the *Risen Lord* truly alive in us, His *Church!*

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST. In the highpoint of the *Great Three Days* and the entire year, our newest members share *Eucharist* with us for the first time. We renew our pledge to become *Eucharist* by being *Christ's Risen* presence in our world.

NOTE: There is *NO 5:00 pm Vigil Mass* on *Holy Saturday*; the *ONLY MASS* is *7 pm!*

Easter Sunday - March 31

NOTE THE DIFFERENT SCHEDULE!

Easter Masses

Saturday Easter Vigil: 7:00 pm

Easter Sunday:

8:00 am - 10:00 am
12:00 noon

One catechumen will receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil this year. Nick Santucci will be received into the Church.

The OCIA candidates will receive either Holy Communion and/or Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday. Please pray for our catechumen and candidates. They all have an interesting journey of faith. They are pictured on the picture board. Please keep them in your prayers and welcome them to the Catholic Church and Saint Justin the Martyr Parish. Easter joy continues as our Parish celebrates First Holy Communion for 58 of our children and the Confirmation of 60 of our young people this year.



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