

### Another Lent - ALREADY?

I doubt I'm the only one who wonders if *Lent 2020* ever ended; it seems as if we've been in a non-stop 'penitential mode' for well over a year! COVID-19 has 'forced' us to 'give up' so much, and although there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel, we still have a long way to go. So, as the saying goes, why not 'kill two birds with one stone' and intentionally 'intend' [or make as one's 'prayer intention'] all we are going through in these most challenging days? Or, as we 'vintage' Catholics used to say, why not 'offer it up' - for your own sins - and for the sins of others, and of the whole world?

As we have been learning the hard way during this pandemic: we must be ever-ready to adapt our plans, our expectations, our customs - and even our liturgical rites. With that in mind, allow me to offer what - I HOPE and PRAY - we will be able to do during *Lent* and *Holy Week 2021*. To start with, perhaps God is calling us to 'Enter Into Lent' in new ways, besides getting to church whenever possible.

**LENT AT HOME.** Since every Catholic home should already have religious items, like a crucifix, statue, icon, or other visual expression of our Faith, why not make it more prominent? Set up a Shrine or Prayer Table; all you need are: a cloth, ideally *purple* for *Lent*, *red* for *Passiontide*, and *white/gold* for *Easter*; sacred images; candles, which must NEVER be unattended when lit! And whatever else helps you to focus on God's presence. When the Second Vatican Council promoted setting up the 'Domestic Church,' perhaps this is what they had in mind!

**GET WITH THE TIMES.** Our Catholic Faith, which is 'ever-ancient, ever-new' must be expressed in modern ways. Readily available to us are so many 'virtual vehicles,' 'on-line' resources, and other means to stay connected, and to get educated, formed and updated! These days, via ZOOM and other means, we can even pray together! Come to daily Mass [a 'discipline' many used to practice each day of *Lent*] or watch daily Mass

on TV or the Internet; read each day's Readings for spiritual nourishment; you may find the Readings and a brief video reflection on them on the USCCB's [US Conference of Catholic Bishops] website: [www.usccb.org/bible/reflections/index.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/bible/reflections/index.cfm). Check out programs on EWTN or Sirius Radio's *The Catholic Channel*, which broadcasts *live* the 7:00 am weekday Mass from NYC's Saint Patrick Cathedral.

**MAKE A WEEKLY 'VISIT' TO CHURCH.** Check each week's bulletin, also online, to see when our church is open, and commit to making a regular 'visit.' Spend time before the Blessed Sacrament; walk the *Stations of the Cross*; light a candle; just come and pray!

**SAINT JOSEPH SHRINE.** We adorned our *Saint Joseph Statue* for the rest of the 'Year of Saint Joseph' [12/08/2020-12/08/2021] in time for March: the *Month of Saint Joseph*. My weekly bulletin articles in March will be about him; use the form on the next page to make your intentions to this powerful Patron Saint of the Universal Church, Unborn Children, Fathers, Workers, Travelers, Immigrants, Virgins, and a Happy Death. A holy card with the special 'Year of Saint Joseph' prayer will soon be available at his Shrine.

We will eventually have a votive candle at the shrine which you will be able to memorialize weekly.

**KEEP ALL LENTEN TRADITIONS.** Do not let the pandemic or any other obstacle keep you from performing the venerable, traditional *Lenten* triple play: *Prayer, Fasting* and *Almsgiving*. In addition to prayer, fast: from food; from optional activities; from whatever distracts you from prayer or good works. Confess your sins in the *Sacrament of Penance* or *Reconciliation*. Give to the poor via *Operation Rice Bowl* [mite boxes are available in the narthex], the Food Pantry cart, the *Catholic Annual Appeal* or other charities. May all we do this *Lent* bring us to an *Easter* of unending joy, and help us get to whatever the 'new normal' will be!

**Rev. Mark A. Kreder, Pastor**

## HOLY WEEK & EASTERTIME EVENTS

With so many 'unknowns' and the ever evolving rules and regulations, the *Holy Week* schedule, and events like *First Holy Communion*, *Confirmation*, *Retreats*, etc., are not yet set. However, we will continue to do the most we can, the best and safest ways we can, as often as we can, for as many people as we can! Amen! Pray for a cure to Coronavirus and all diseases!



### Ash Wednesday February 17

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. While the formula: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel." or "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return." will only be said once over all, *ashes* will be silently, individually imposed at the Mass or Service by the use of a Q-Tip, one per person, for safety's sake.

Ashes are distributed during Mass at:  
**12 noon & 7:00 pm**  
and at a Liturgy of the Word  
[no Holy Communion]  
at 4:00 pm

### Easter Precept or Easter Duty

All Catholics are obligated to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the *1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent, February 21*, and *Trinity Sunday, May 30*. Those conscious of serious, grave or mortal sin must celebrate the *Sacrament of Reconciliation* or 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 - 10:00 - 12:00 noon

### Daily Masses:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday:

8:00 am

Wednesdays during Lent: 6:15 pm.

Confessions before Mass at 5 pm.

All should attend Mass at least once a week, even on a weekday, to receive weekly Holy Communion.

### Food Collection - Operation Rice Bowl: ORB

To help feed the hungry locally and abroad, donate to our 'Operation Rice Bowl' [ORB] collections on Ash Wednesday and the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent or donate money and/or nonperishable food to our Joint Food Pantry, please leave items in the cart near the entrance to the Parish Hall. Return **ORB** mite boxes, found in the narthex, by *Holy Thursday*.

### Year of Saint Joseph Intentions

Use this form to offer intentions at the 'Year of Saint Joseph' Shrine; half of any donations will be used for a liturgical item and half will be donated to charity; drop your intention in the collection basket or by mail. Details to follow in a future bulletin article.

Requestor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Requestor's Address/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Intention's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Intention: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Optional: \_\_\_\_\_

## Stations of the Cross

This year, we will not be celebrating the various Stations of the Cross led by different groups. In lieu of physical stations at the parish, you can pray the Stations in two ways. Our Bishop David O'Connell will post Traditional Stations of the Cross on the Diocese of Trenton's YouTube channel which will be available starting February 19<sup>th</sup>. Also, the pictures of the Stations of the Cross in our Church are available on our website ([www.stjustin.org](http://www.stjustin.org)) under "News/Events". You can view the stations in our church and contemplate as you pray each station..

## The Sacrament of Penance [Reconciliation or Confession]

Even during the pandemic, 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, which we will do as we did last Advent:

## CONFESSION SCHEDULE

**FRIDAY- MARCH 19 - 4:00 - 6:00 pm**

**ARRIVAL.** All penitents are asked to enter via the main doors of the Church; they will be given a number and directed to the Church where Eucharistic Adoration will take place. They are invited to spend time before the Blessed Sacrament both before and after having their confession heard. Priests will hear confession in the classrooms of the Parish Hall. Penitents will be called by number to the Parish Hall by ministers who have offered to help. This avoids long standing and keeps safe distancing. It is also requested that you pray the Act of Contrition [a card will be provided]

privately, before or after you go to Confession. And, at all times, all **MUST** wear a mask and avoid all physical contact.

**THE RITE ITSELF.** In each classroom, two chairs, at a safe distance, will be set up for the Sacrament; please avoid all physical contact. Privacy is guaranteed by having only one Priest and penitent per room. The church will be open for those **who** wish to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, say their penance, **make a visit, or** you may simply leave after receiving Absolution. Begin with "*Bless me, Father, for I have sinned...*" or simply say, "*Father, you lead...*" You may remain anonymous, but should tell your state in life [*married, single, ordained, a parent, etc.*], and approximate date of your last confession. List all grave, serious mortal sins *by number and kind*: abortion, adultery, etc.; a general admission [*I'm impatient, rude, insensitive, etc.*] covers all lesser sins.

**During Lent, Confession will not be heard on Saturday afternoons. As we have done every year, we will add a Mass on the following Wednesday evenings of the Lenten Season (2/24, 3/3, 3/10 and 3/17). The Mass will begin at 6:15. Confessions will be heard at 5:00 PM.**

**ALL MUST ARRIVE AT 5:00 PM as Confessions MUST END BY 5:45 PM due to the 6:15 pm Mass!**

*NO Confessions will be heard during Holy Week, from Palm Sunday [03/28] until AFTER Easter, so come to Confession early! (Last scheduled Confession is Friday March 19<sup>th</sup>)*

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### EUCARIST ADORATION

*Tuesday evenings from 6pm to 7pm. Since we will not be leading the traditional Stations of the Cross this Lenten Season, we will give everyone an opportunity to spend some time before the Blessed Sacrament on Tuesday evenings starting February 23<sup>rd</sup> to March 23<sup>rd</sup>.*

*There is great value in silent adoration of our Lord. To pray in Eucharistic Adoration is to reverence and honor the Lord's presence in the Eucharist. The Lord is revered when our distracted minds are calmed before Him in prayer.*