



HOLY NAME OF JESUS PARISH
National Catholic Church
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LENTEN NEWSLETTER

THE SEASON OF LENT

Lent, in the Christian church, a period of penitential preparation for Easter. In Western churches it begins on Ash Wednesday, six and a half weeks before Easter, and provides for a 40-day fast (Sundays are excluded), in imitation of Jesus Christ's fasting in the wilderness before he began his public ministry. In Eastern churches Lent begins on the Monday of the seventh week before Easter and ends on the Friday that is nine days before Easter. This 40-day "Great Lent" includes Saturdays and Sundays as relaxed fast days. A period of preparation and fasting likely has been observed before the Easter festival since apostolic times, though the practice was not formalized until the First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. It was a time of preparation of candidates for baptism and a time of penance for sinners.



ASH WEDNESDAY – FEBRUARY 14, 2018

9:00 AM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist with the blessing and distribution of ashes to the faithful.

7:00 PM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist with the distribution of ashes to the faithful.

“Remember man, that you are dust and unto dust you shall return, but your soul shall return to God.”

LENTEN PENITENTIAL SERVICES

On Fridays, at 7:00 PM, our Church will hold Lenten Penitential services. We will alternate these Fridays between “Bitter Lamentations” and “Stations of the Cross”. All parishioners are called upon to attend and participate.

FEBRUARY 16TH – BITTER LAMENTATIONS 1
FEBRUARY 23RD - STATIONS OF THE CROSS 1
MARCH 2ND - BITTER LAMENTATIONS 2
MARCH 9TH - STATIONS OF THE CROSS 2
MARCH 16TH – BITTER LAMENTATIONS 3
MARCH 23RD – STATIONS OF THE CROSS 3



2018 - 21st Annual Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series
Four Visions of Repentance

I am happy to announce that our Parish will be participating in the 2018 Annual Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series. These gatherings will take place on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM in our parish halls. A cordial invitation is extended to all our parishioners to share in what I believe will be some very interesting and educational presentations. The following is the schedule for these discussions:

February 21st

First session: offered by the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Crosson-Harrington at Holy Name of Jesus National Catholic Church at 7PM
Session Title: “Repentance: Burden or Blessing?”

February 28th

Second session: offered by Rev. Randy Calvo at the Montague Congregational Church at 7PM
Session Title: “Repent and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:15)

March 7th

Third session: offered by Fr. Robert Koerber at the Hatfield Congregational Church at 7PM
Session Title: “The Purpose of Repentance”

March 14th

Fourth session: offered by the Rev. Allen M. Comstock at the Whately Congregational Church at 7PM
Session Title: Prophetic Repentance: “The Repentance of Jesus”

March 21st

Built in snow day if necessary.

Refreshments will be served after each gathering by the
host parish.

All Are Welcome

**In case of inclement weather, please contact your pastor
for information about a possible cancellation.**



LENT
THE THREE GREAT PILLARS OF
CHRISTIANITY

As we enter this holy time of Lent, we are reminded of the three great pillars of the Christian Church: **Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving**. Found in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47, Luke describes the early Christians:

“⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

To truly benefit from this season of Lent, one must make a serious, personal and humble commitment to walk these 40 days of Lent with their Lord, placing the emphasis on self-examination, seeking forgiveness as well as spiritual renewal.

The success of this Lenten period cannot take place without **prayer, fasting and almsgiving**. Just as a temple needs supports to exist, so does every true

follower of Jesus at Lent needs all three of these pillars to be a complete spiritual temple “unto the Lord”, for each pillar is dependent upon the other.

1. **PRAYER**: In the Catechism of the PNC Church, we teach that PRAYER is the “lifting up of our minds and hearts to God. It is our talking with God and listening to God.”. Throughout Holy Scripture, we are reminded of the importance and the benefits of prayer. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God speaks to Solomon: **“¹⁴If my people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”**

In the Sermon of the Mount, as found in the Gospel of Matthew 6:5-8, Our blessed Lord sets a standard for prayer: **“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷“And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”**

2. **FASTING**: The early Church Father Tertullian (c. 160 – c. 220 AD)) wrote concerning fasting: “Fasting possesses great power. If practiced with the right intention, it makes one a friend of God.”

In Matthew 6:16-18, Jesus gives insight into proper fasting: **“And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.**

3. **ALMSGIVING**: Again, in Matthew 6:2-4, Jesus speaks on the importance of almsgiving: **Thus, when you give alms, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”**

Through the power of prayer, the practice of fasting and the outpouring of almsgiving, we truly set our minds and

hearts in following our Lord during this season of Lent and will be rewarded by the grace of God.



THE LOTUS FLOWER

Flowers often pick up religious and spiritual meanings because they rise from dirt to only show their beauty as they unfold. Of the many flowers that God has created, one of the most beautiful of all is the lotus. The lotus is a delicate flower with many layered petals arrayed around a central core. Scholars believe the Egyptians viewed the Lotus as a symbol of rebirth because it appeared to sink at night and rise again in the morning. To a Buddhist, it represents not only purity, but also faithfulness during spiritual development rising out of suffering as well as direct spiritual contact. So much more for Christians.

Any gardener knows that without the key ingredients of light, water and nourishment, a plant cannot grow and survive. Lent, is a time for not only self-examination which leads to repentance, but by the grace of God one is enlightened as they come into a higher understanding of God through their devotion.

If we choose to walk with the Lord during this holy season, we must realize that we too need the essential ingredients of spiritual light water and food to grow. In keeping with this theme, I share with you what the Lord Jesus declared about Himself:

1. LIGHT: The very first creation of God was Light.
Our blessed Lord taught:

“I AM the Light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness but shall have light of life.”
- John 8:12

2. WATER: We learn from the Book of Genesis that the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters. Our blessed Lord taught:

“Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” -John 4:14

3. NOURISHMENT: Whether it be the manna that God gave to the children of Israel in their 40-year wandering, man needs nourishment. Our blessed Lord taught;

“I AM the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

- John 6:51

May this Lent be a time for own spiritual unfoldment as we walk with our Lord.



THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

-Matthew 16:24-25

The **“Way of the Cross”** is the way of “our cross” which we are told by the Lord “to take up” if we truly want to follow Him. During our lives, so many in our world can’t seem to get enough of material possessions and get lost while living solely in a physical world without a spiritual foundation.

To follow Jesus during Lent is to cast off all that which would prevents us from knowing Him in our life. We are called during Lent to stop and reflect. We are instructed by the Church to not place our emphasis on the physical and the temporary, but rather to concentrate on the spiritual and the eternal. “Seek first the Kingdom of God.” – Matthew 6:33 and that this search takes place internally; for the “Kingdom of God is within.” – Luke 17:21.

What does it mean to deny oneself? During Lent, some give up for these 40 days everything from chocolate to alcohol, cutting back on watching TV, spending so much time shopping at the Mall, and even cutting back of partying with our friends. Lent is not only in giving up of “stuff” but rather to discern and take upon a “new” self. We are called to strive during Lent to put on a better self.

Our Blessed Lord teaches us in Mark 2:22 that: “No one puts new wine into old wineskins; for if he does, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but new wine is for fresh skins.”

During this season of Lent, we are asked to take a personal inventory as stewards of the Lord Jesus as we

contemplate on His Divine Passion. The entire New Testament message is one of “redemption” and “salvation” that is based on the Cross of Jesus.

St. Paul brings this to mind in his First Letter to the Church of Corinth 1:18: “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” So therefore, may we all during this holy period of Lent, strive in the teaching of Saint Paul who wrote in Ephesians 5:1: **“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.**



PARISH CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY / MARCH 2018

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH – QUINQUAGESIMA

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH

7:00 PM – Adult Discussion Group. Tonight, we will discuss the importance of the General Synod and the upcoming General Synod of the PNC Church which will be held at Our Lady of the Snows Retreat Center in Belleville, Ill. October 1-3, 2018.

FEBRUARY 14TH – ASH WEDNESDAY

9:00 AM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist with the blessing and distribution of ashes to the faithful.
7:00 PM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist with the distribution of ashes to the faithful.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2018 – 65TH ANN. of the death of Prime Bishop Francis Hodur

9:00 AM – Holy Mass
7:00 PM - Lenten Penitential – Bitter Lamentations 1

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2018 - LENT 1

9:00 AM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist.
11:30 PM – Please be advised that I will be traveling to Ware, MA to celebrate Holy Mass.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19: 2018

7:00 PM – Parish Committee meeting
Please note: I call on our Nomination Committee to give their report, as for all the necessary reports that need to be filed from our Church groups. I thank those who have already worked hard and submitted their reports.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2018

7:00 PM – Lenten Penitentials – Stations of the Cross 1

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH – LENT 2

9:00 AM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist

FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 2018

7:00 PM – Lenten Penitentials – Bitter Lamentations 2

SUNDAY, MARCH 4, 2018 – LENT 3

9:00 AM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist
10:00 AM – LADIES ADORATION SOCIETY

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2018

7:00 PM – Lenten Penitentials – Stations of the Cross 2

SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2018 – SOLEMNITY OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE P.N.C. CHURCH

9:00 AM - Holy Mass of the Eucharist
10:00 AM – ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Please note: I extend to all our parishioners to come and be a part of this years Annual Parish meeting. We look to plan our future here together at Holy Name of Jesus.

FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2018

7:00 PM – Lenten Penitentials – Bitter Lamentations 3

SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2018 – PASSION SUNDAY

9:00 AM – Holy Mass of the Eucharist

FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 2018

7:00 PM – Lenten Penitentials – Stations of the Cross 3

* 2018 LENTEN SERIES DISCUSSIONS *

Please Note: For dates and time of the 2018 Lenten Series, please refer to the information of these discussions on Pages #1 -2 on this newsletter.

THANK YOU

For all those who gave to the **Souper Bowl a special word of thanks. At Holy Name of Jesus, we continue to show our faith for others in Christian love and compassion. May God bless all our efforts.**

NEXT NEWSLETTER: HOLY WEEK / EASTER

