



MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

Sunday, March 9, 2025

First Sunday Of Lent

Gathering: Hold Us In Your Mercy

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 51)

*Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned;
be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

Preparation: In Every Age BB 463

Mass Parts: Mass For Christ The Savior

Communion: Bread For The World BB 329

Recessional: **We depart in silence during Lent**

✠ PARISH TITHING ✠

Our Parish needs to take in **\$9700.00 each week in order to make ends meet.** This amount represents an adjusted budget offertory of \$8500.00 per week plus the combination of budgeted Property and Fuel second collections (\$4800.00 per month divided into 4 weeks or \$1200.00 weekly). Your weekly contribution helps ensure that the Parish remains a vibrant community. Please remember to submit your weekly gift even if you will be away. Consider signing up for electronic giving (see below). Especially in these trying times, your Parish depends on your responsible stewardship and support!

March 2, 2025

Offertory \$10,496.92
Property Management \$ 5,060.20



UPCOMING SECOND COLLECTIONS

March 9 Storm Relief Offering
March 16 Fuel
March 23 Easter Flowers

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish uses **Parish Giving** to provide parishioners with an opportunity to make your offertory and other contributions through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Parish Giving is a simple, secure, and convenient way to manage your stewardship without weekly envelopes and without worries. This program is available to parishioners at no cost. Log on to the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish website at <http://stlukenh.org>, click on the Parish Giving logo, and follow the easy registration instructions.

You can also use your smart phone to scan the QR code below. The link will take you directly to Parish Giving so you can donate.



Out of respect for the Lord and in consideration of fellow parishioners, please remember to silence or turn off your cell phones during Mass. Thank you.

PLEASE HELP US!

As you leave church, kindly take your Bulletin with you - or return it to the basket at the entrance of the Church, return your music book and Mass card to their proper place, and pick up after yourself as you leave. Thanks for being attentive and respectful!

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on Income

Annual Income	5% Commitment annually/ weekly	3% Commitment annually/ weekly
\$100,000	\$5,000/ \$100	\$3,000/ \$60
\$75,000	\$3,750/ \$75	\$2,250/ \$45
\$60,000	\$3,000/ \$60	\$1,800/ \$36
\$50,000	\$2,500/ \$50	\$1,500/ \$30
\$40,000	\$2,000/ \$40	\$1,200/ \$24
\$30,000	\$1,500/ \$30	\$900/ \$18
\$25,000	\$1,250/ \$25	\$750/ \$15
\$15,000	\$750/ \$15	\$450/ \$9

Suggested Weekly Contribution Based on a Percentage Increase

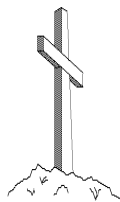
Your Current Offertory Contribution	25% Increase	30% Increase	40% Increase
\$75.00	\$93.75	\$97.50	\$105.00
\$50.00	\$62.50	\$65.00	\$70.00
\$40.00	\$50.00	\$52.00	\$56.00
\$35.00	\$43.75	\$45.50	\$49.00
\$30.00	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$42.00
\$25.00	\$31.25	\$32.50	\$35.00
\$20.00	\$25.00	\$26.00	\$28.00
\$15.00	\$18.75	\$19.50	\$21.00
\$10.00	\$12.50	\$13.00	\$14.00
\$5.00	\$6.25	\$6.50	\$7.00

TAX TIME SUGGESTION

Did you know? If you are 72 or older and need to take a “required minimum distribution (RMD)” from an IRA retirement account, a direct distribution to a qualified charitable organization, such as Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish, can save you money on your taxes. Such a donation will count toward your required minimum distribution but will be excluded from taxable income. Ask your tax preparer or IRA trustee for more details.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

If you would like an “end of year” financial statement of your contributions to the parish for 2024, **please call Jackie** at the Parish Office at 603-382-8324. **Financial Statements are issued on a request only basis.**



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will take place each Friday evening during Lent at 6:30 PM in **Plaistow**. **A Soup Supper will follow Stations on April 11.**

LENTEN EVENING PRAYER

Evening Prayer is sung at Newton at 6:00 PM on all Sundays of Lent. Join us for a quiet time of prayer and reflection. The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is available immediately after Evening Prayer each Sunday of the Lenten Season.



THE GOD MINUTE

Every morning a small group of priests, religious, and lay people start their day in prayer. Soft music, sacred scripture, and thoughtful reflection are weaved into a 10-minute prayer called The God Minute. It's then uploaded for you to access and prayer along with on your own time. And it's free. Listen with your coffee in the morning, while driving to work, or taking a walk. See how easy and beautiful prayer can be.

www.thegodminute.org

MEN OF ST. JOSEPH BREAKFAST

Bishop Libasci invites men of the Diocese of Manchester to Holy Mass and breakfast at St. Joseph Cathedral to celebrate the Feast of St. Joseph, patron of our diocese on **Saturday, March 22, 2025**. Open seating for Holy Mass. Seating for breakfast is limited to the first 240 registrants. Cost is only \$14. To register for the event go to www.catholicnh.org/mosj.

HOLY ANGELS CEMETERY CLOSED

Holy Angels Cemetery in Plaistow is closed from December 2024 until Spring 2025. This decision comes as result of the real dangers of snow and ice in the Cemetery and the costs to Parishioners to inter during the winter months. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.

BUSTED HALO

Busted Halo is a unique media resource sponsored by the Paulist Fathers of the US that utilizes a relevant and accessible voice to help people understand the Catholic faith, put it into practice in their everyday lives, and share it with others. Check out their site, podcasts and videos at www.bustedhalo.com.

WHILE AWAY THIS SPRING...

We appreciate all of you who remember to send in your Parish Offertory during the Spring even when on vacation or visiting other parishes. Thank you for remembering that our expenses also continue through the Spring months. We invite others to consider doing the same before or even after you return home.

✠ WEEKLY CALENDAR ✠

Sunday, March 9

10:00 AM Religious Ed – Gr. K to 6 *Plaistow*
 11:00 AM Grade 2 Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*
 6:00 PM Evening Prayer *Newton*
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

Wednesday, March 12
 Holy Angels Church Open
 All Day for Prayer

7:00 PM Lenten Journey *Plaistow*

Thursday, March 13

8:30 AM – 8:30 PM Eucharistic Adoration *Newton*
 1:30 PM Lenten Journey *Plaistow*

Friday, March 14

6:30 PM Stations of the Cross *Plaistow*

Saturday, March 15

3:00 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Plaistow*

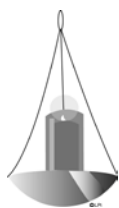
Sunday, March 16

10:00 AM Religious Ed – Gr. K to 6 *Plaistow*
 6:00 PM Evening Prayer *Newton*
 6:30 PM Sacrament of Reconciliation *Newton*

RESTROOM BREAKS DURING MASS

Attention Parents

Please be sure to accompany your young children when they need to use the restroom during Mass. This is for their safety and your peace of mind!



The Sanctuary Candle in Mary, Mother of the Church will burn this week in loving memory of

Richard Bell

by William Tucker

The Vigil Candle in Mary, Mother of the Church will burn this week

In Honor Of Shelly Young Bell

by William Tucker



PRAYER LINE

St. Luke's offers a prayer line as a resource for those seeking prayer assistance. To submit your prayer request please call Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 314 or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

✠ MASS INTENTIONS ✠

Saturday, March 8 ~ First Sunday of Lent

Dt 26:4-10; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13 (Vigil)
 4:00 PM Joseph Sheehan by Ray and Beverley Vigilione
Plaistow

Sunday, March 9 ~ First Sunday of Lent

Dt 26:4-10; Rom 10:8-13; Lk 4:1-13
 8:00 AM Vincent Early, Sr. by Dan and Kathy Sullivan
Newton
 10:00 AM Tess White (1st Anniversary) by the Parish
Plaistow

Monday, March 10 ~ Lenten Weekday

Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Mt 25:31-46
 8:00 AM Irene Lee by Nancy Lee
Newton

Tuesday, March 11 ~ Lenten Weekday

Is 55:10-11; Mt 6:7-15
 8:00 AM Frances Lewis (Month's Mind)
Plaistow

Wednesday, March 12 ~ Lenten Weekday

Jon 3:1-10; Lk 11:22-32
 6:30 PM Edward Murphy (5th Anniversary)
 by his family
Plaistow

Thursday, March 13 ~ Lenten Weekday

Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Mt 7:7-12
 8:00 AM Vincent Early, Sr. by Jack Brotz
Newton

Friday, March 14 ~ Lenten Weekday

Ez 18:21-28; Mt 5:20-26
 No Mass

Saturday, March 15 ~ Lenten Weekday

Dt 26:16-19; Mt 5:43-48 (Day)
Gn 15:5-12, 17-18; Phil 3:17-4:1; Lk 9:28b-36 (Vigil)
 4:00 PM Paul Caron by Armand and Rachel Lanseigne
Plaistow

Sunday, March 16 ~ Second Sunday of Lent

Gn 15:5-12, 17-18; Phil 3:17-4:1; Lk 9:28b-36
 8:00 AM Ruth Early by Dan and Kathy Sullivan
Newton
 10:00 AM Carl Jesionowski by his wife
Plaistow



CENTERING PRAYER FOR LENT

Lent is a time to follow Jesus more closely and learn from him how to pray in silence, spending time placing God at the center of your life, opening yourself to a loving Father, surrendering your will, and in trust allowing God to transform you. This interior prayer is how we pray as we Center. Centering Prayer is an ancient Christian practice available to all who seek transformation through a more intimate relationship with God. This daily practice deepens our faith as we come to better know our God as one who loves us unconditionally, just as we are, and trust God has plans to give us a future of hope. Centering Prayer helps us say to the Father, "Not my will but yours be done" (Lk. 22: 42). Please consider joining us and let God move you closer to him. All are welcome as we gather **Wednesday evenings from 6:00–7:00 p.m. via Zoom**. Following 30 minutes of Centering Prayer, we practice Lectio Divina. We listen to God's words in scripture, ponder, and share what we hear the Lord saying to us here and now and contemplate for the following week God's message to us and let it guide our choices and actions. Both practices strengthen our faith and reliance on God and deepen our personal relationship with God.

If you are interested in joining us or learning more about these practices, please contact Elizabeth McCarthy 978-462-7483 at Immaculate Conception Parish, Newburyport.

ASSISTED SUICIDE LEGISLATION RETURNS

A new bill to legalize assisted suicide has been filed in the New Hampshire Legislature for 2025 (HB 254). The Diocese of Manchester will be working alongside a coalition of advocates for people with disabilities, veterans, young people, and seniors to prevent the ghastly practice of assisted suicide from ever being allowed in New Hampshire. We are once again asking for your help because this year's campaign, like last year's, will demand a strong grassroots effort. Visit www.catholicnh.org/nosuicide to learn what you can do.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSINGS

Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Office, Holy Angels Cemetery Office, Saint Luke Food Pantry, and the Parish Liturgical schedule complies with the longstanding inclement weather policy of Saint Luke Religious Education Program and Holy Angels Pre-School-Kindergarten: **If the Timberlane and/or Sanborn regional school districts close because of inclement weather, ALL Parish Offices and Parish programs will be closed or suspended. All activities by any Parish or non-Parish groups will be cancelled for that day/evening on both campuses.**

In the event of a weather related closing, the scheduled weekday Liturgy will not be held and the intention (if any) will be moved to a conveniently available date.

Sunday (or Saturday evening) liturgies can never be cancelled, but all are advised to use prudence when deciding to travel to Church during winter storms.

ADORERS NEEDED AT ADORATION

We are truly blessed to have times for Adoration of Our Lord in our Parish. This time of prayer and intercession is not only a source of great grace for the individual but is a great source of grace for us as a parish family. We have many who have made the commitment to spend an hour each week with our Eucharistic Lord. Adoration takes place each Thursday in Newton from 8:30 AM to 8:30 PM. We also need people at all times so we can have 2 people at each hour. If you can commit to one hour a week in Adoration of our Lord, or if you can be a substitute, please contact Cathy Smith at 603-382-8324, ext. 305, or email her at csmith@stluketheevangelist.net.

The Church in Plaistow is open all day on Wednesdays for people to stop by and pray before the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle.

✠ PARISH DIRECTORY ✠

Parish Office 603-382-8324
Parish Prayer Line 603-382-8324 x 314
St. Luke's Outreach Ministry 603-382-8324 x 315
St. Luke's Food Pantry 603-819-4949
Preschool 603-382-9783

Fr. Albert Tremblay fr.albert@stluketheevangelist.net
Cathy Smith csmith@stluketheevangelist.net
Joyce Szczapa jszczapa@stluketheevangelist.net
Jackie Tremblay jtremblay@stluketheevangelist.net
Val Barczak mvmbarczak@comcast.net



MONTHLY FOOD DRIVE

**Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus
St. Jude Council #6617**

The Knights of Columbus and Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry would like to thank our parishioners for the ongoing support to feed those in need. Shopping lists and bags are provided on the 3rd week of every month with the general collection of non-perishable items happening the following (4th) weekend. Food donations can also be left in the plastic totes at the rear of either church or brought to the Parish Office any time they are open. Prefer not to shop? Gift cards or checks can be made out to Saint Luke Food Pantry anytime. Your generosity and support are greatly appreciated!

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
HAPPENINGS**

Knights' Weekly Rosary

Every Thursday evening, starting at 7:00 PM at Mary, Mother of the Church in Newton, the Knights and other parishioners pray the Rosary. We pray for world peace and for special intentions, including those added the night of the Rosary by people attending. On the third Thursday of each month, the Rosary intention is for the Respect of Life.

Please consider joining us. It is a very spiritually fulfilling ½ hour.

**THE KNIGHTS OF
COLUMBUS
ST. JUDE COUNCIL
#6617**



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A Men's AA Step Meeting is held on Sunday mornings from 7:00 to 8:00 AM at the St. Luke the Evangelist Parish Hall (Holy Angels.) Bring your own coffee. For more information, call Joe at 617-921-9899.

PROJECT RACHEL

Are you looking for renewal and freedom after abortion? Help and healing are available for mothers and fathers who have experienced abortion. Contact Project Rachel for confidential, compassionate care. Call 603-663-0192 or email ProjectRachel@rcbm.org.

MASS ATTENDANCE WHILE SICK

Anyone who has been recently exposed to COVID 19 or any other communicable disease should not attend public services of any kind. **Those sick should remain at home until such time as they are healthy.**

Liturgy online or on TV...

Boston Catholic Television catholicstv.org
Sunday Mass from Notre Dame
catholicstv.org/masses/notre-dame-mass
Salt & Light TV saltandlighttv.org
Eternal Word Television ewtn.com



**Saint Luke the Evangelist
OUTREACH MINISTRY**

Your "Dropped Dollar" Hard At Work

Thank you for your continued support of the St. Luke Outreach Ministry! Please know that your "dropped dollars" are being used wisely to help the poor in our area. Your generosity does not go unnoticed.

Drop-a-Dollar in the St. Luke Outreach Ministry box on your way out of church. Remember ~ 100% of your donation is used to help those who need a hand up, not a handout.

Our next meeting is on **Wednesday, March 19 at 7:00 PM**. We meet downstairs in the Church Hall in Plaistow. New members are always welcome!

If you seek assistance or need information about St. Luke's Outreach Ministry, call 603-382-8324 x315.

**Hear, O LORD, and answer me
for I am poor and needy.**

STORM RELIEF OFFERING



Two weeks of reduced collections left our Parish with well over \$16,000.00 in plowing bills and fuel charges. This situation has stretched the Parish's checkbook to the absolute limit. We already have scheduled Fuel (March 16) collection coming up, and we have added a **special collection on the weekend of March 9** to help defray the expenses of the winter storms and weather.

Please note that the special offering on March 9 will not have an envelope or an option on the Parish Giving system. You can make checks payable to Saint Luke Parish or put cash into an envelope and write your name or envelope number for financial reporting.

Please be generous... winter is not over, and we are counting on the whole community to help.



SPECIAL ADDED OFFERING - MARCH 9

FUEL OFFERING - MARCH 16

The Knights of Columbus, St. Jude Council #6617 have a **CHALLENGE** for our fellow parishioners of St Luke the Evangelist Parish.

To help our Parish pay off the plowing and fuel bills, the Council will match one for one every dollar you contribute to the **STORM RELIEF OFFERING** March 8/9 to assist paying off this bill up to \$7,500.00.



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THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

The wind and the sun were having an argument over which one was the stronger. Along came a traveler and they decided to settle the dispute once and for all. So, they agreed that whichever one could make the traveler take off his coat would be the stronger. The sun hid behind a cloud and let the wind have its chance to prove itself first. So the wind blew an icy blast of air but the harder the wind blew the more tightly did the traveler wrap his coat around himself. The wind blew and blew, but the traveler hung onto his coat. In disgust the wind finally gave up and challenged the sun to try. So the sun came out from behind the cloud and began to shine down on the traveler who felt the sun's genial warmth. As the sun shone warmer and warmer the traveler loosened his coat until finally he took it off altogether. So the sun was right, after all; it was the stronger!

This story describes something like the conflict between the devil and Jesus in the desert. Try as he might by offering every attractive thing - wealth, power, esteem - the devil could not prove himself the stronger. The gentle persuasion of prayer and fasting kept Jesus stronger and able to resist temptation.

The desert is a place of isolation and desolation; we have only God (the Holy Spirit) to rely on. If we try to overcome temptation by our own power we will be like the traveler - only wrapping the cloak of our own sinfulness more closely around us. But if we remember God's mighty and generous deeds (first reading) and that "the word is near" (second reading) we will be brought closer to God, justified and saved. Then, like both Israel of old and the early Christians, we can profess our faith in word and deed. The response to temptation is the expression of faith.

Not even the Son of God was exempt from being tested! We can expect no less in our own lives. Temptation, then, is not necessarily a sign of great sinfulness. It is an occasion for showing that our lives are turned to God, for remaining steadfast in the faith that we profess. Lent is not simply our desert time to overcome temptation. It is also a springtime of renewed relationship to God. It is a time when we are strengthened, with the gentle warmth of God's Spirit leading us, to overcome even temptations to wealth, power, and esteem. Our strength does not lie in force, but in relying on God to be near.

Lent is a time to examine our choices.

The ritual act of professing our faith is no substitution for living it in our daily lives. When we are tested our faith is put to the test, too, and we are faced with a choice of how we live. Lent is a time to examine our choices.

Just as God led Israel to a "land flowing with milk and honey" (first reading), so will God lead us to salvation if we "call on the name of the Lord" (second reading). For us, however, our desert is the demands of everyday living, and our salvation is found on the cross. Each day we take up our cross and lay down our life for the sake of others, we are building strength to resist temptation and come to greater faith. Our simple acts of kindness help us resist temptation. Our doing well whatever the task at hand helps us resist temptation. Our complimenting another, offering a word of encouragement helps us resist temptation.

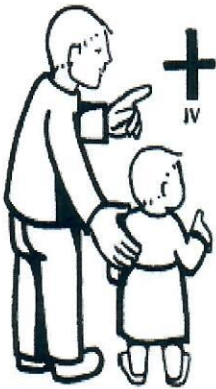
We do not have to go out into a desert to find temptation! But we do need a close relationship with God's to resist it. Lent is about celebrating that relationship, and making that relationship primary in our lives.

Lenten Prayer and Liturgy

The Church invites all people to special moments of prayer during the season of Lent. It is a common custom for people to make room in their schedule for daily Eucharist, which we celebrate as follows during the Lenten season:

Monday	8 am	Newton
Tuesday	8 am	Plaistow
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Plaistow
Thursday	8 am	Newton

Another Lenten custom involves taking a journey... to the Holy Land! Going on pilgrimage has always been an important part of our Christian tradition. By visiting a place where a religious event occurred, a pilgrim hoped to share in the experience associated with that place. The desire to visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land was very important to Christians long ago, but because of the danger and expense of travel, and the political climate of Palestine, such a journey was not always feasible. When the Friars of the Franciscan Order took over the care of the Holy Places in Jerusalem in 1342, they began to erect "Stations" in Churches back home in Europe. It was a way to "go" to the Holy Land without ever leaving home. The custom of the Stations quickly spread to parish Churches, and the devotion of the Stations of the Cross was born.

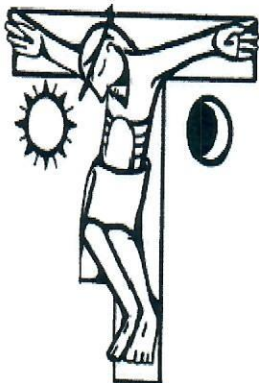


Praying the Stations of the cross

We walk the **Stations of the Cross** each Friday of Lent at 6:30 at PLAISTOW. Using various versions and forms of the Stations, and led by various groups in the Parish, we make Jesus' journey to the Cross our own. Our Lenten Soup Supper will be held following Stations on Friday, April 11.

Baptismal Font and Holy Water Font

During Lent, we pray and prepare to renew our own Baptismal promises even as we pray as a community for those to be Baptized. Following ancient custom, the Sacrament of Baptism is not ordinarily celebrated during Lent, and the Baptismal Font itself is sealed. We also "fast" from the Baptismal water usually present at the doors of the Church. The entire Church waits with Jesus in the desert, praying for the Living Waters of Easter.



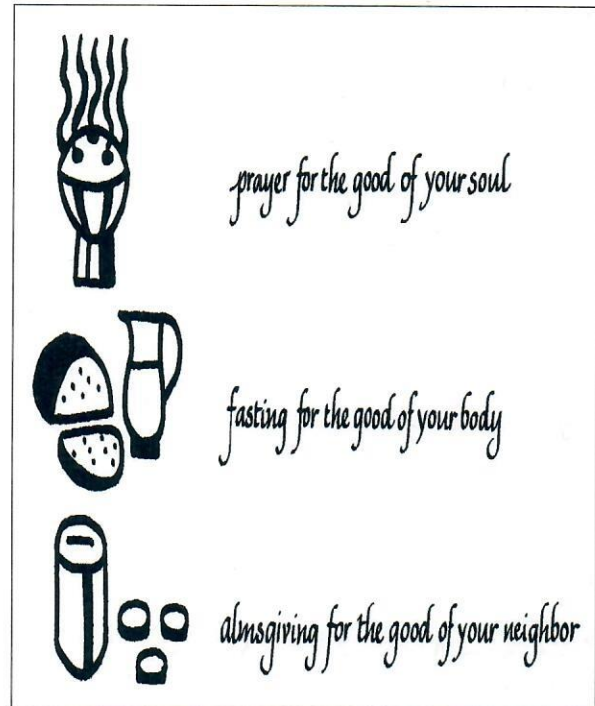
Lenten Space, Silence, & Music

During Lent, the Church's lighting is dimmed so as to encourage an atmosphere of prayer and introspection. Our Assembly's music is more meditative and somber.

We leave at the end of Mass in silence, reflecting on our mission as Disciples to pray, fast, and to give of ourselves in the coming week.

The Church asks us to give ourselves to prayer and to the reading of Scripture, to fasting and to giving of alms during the Lenten season. The fasting that all do together on Fridays is but a sign of the daily Lenten discipline of individuals and households: fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities. Likewise, the giving of alms is some effort to share this world equally not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and possessions and through work of many kinds for a just world.

FASTING means that anyone between the ages of 18 and 59 may eat only one full meal (with the other 2 meals being distinctly smaller). One may, however, enter more into the spiritual element of fasting and not partake of any meals at all. One fasts for a spiritual reason - (an end to sin, a reconciliation in one's life or family, an end to war or other disturbance, or for the spread of the Gospel or personal/corporate conversion) than for a personal dietary goal. **The Church requires all between the ages of 18 and 59 to observe the fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fridays and Wednesdays are also traditional fast days, but are not mandatory.**



ABSTINENCE is the discipline for those age 14 or older to forego the eating of any meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays of Lent.

The EASTER DUTY is the obligation to receive Holy Eucharist between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is an obligation for all those who are conscious of grave sin. A frequent celebration of Reconciliation is encouraged for all, especially during the Lenten Season.

Reconciliation is celebrated at Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish on Saturdays at 3:00 at Plaistow, and on the Sundays of Lent following 6:00 PM Evening Prayer at Newton. There is a communal Lenten Reconciliation Services at St. Michael, Exeter on Sunday, April 6 at 3 PM. Other area services will be announced as they are listed.



LENTEN REGULATIONS

FASTING

Fasting for anyone between 21 and 59 years of age means having only one full meal to maintain one's strength. Two smaller meatless and penitential meals are permitted according to one's needs, but should not equal the one full meal. One may, however, enter more into the spiritual element of fasting and not partake of any of the above-mentioned

meals. Eating between meals is not permitted; but liquids, including milk and juices are allowed. **Days of fasting are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Wednesdays and Fridays are also traditional fast days; however, one may fast on any day of the week.**

ABSTINENCE

Abstinence is the observance for all those 14 years of age or older to forego the eating of meat on: Ash Wednesday; all Fridays in Lent and on Good Friday. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, this discipline does not apply.

EASTER PRECEPT

The Easter Precept – or Easter Duty is the decree for all the faithful to **receive Holy Communion at least during the Easter Season** (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2042). The faithful must celebrate the **Sacrament of Penance at least once a year in preparation for the reception of Holy Eucharist.** Traditionally, the Church has marked the time in which one may fulfill the Easter Duty between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday. A monthly celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is encouraged for all.

PRAYER AND ALMSGIVING

All the faithful are encouraged to spend additional time in prayer during the Lenten season, and to participate in the devotional practices of the Parish. It is also praiseworthy for the faithful to give generously to charities and to their Church during this Season of Sacrifice.



Bringing Home the Word

First Sunday of Lent (C)
March 9, 2025

It's All Gift

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

There is one word that could almost be erased from our religious vocabulary. That word is “earn.” So many of us take on a Lenten program of penance to earn God’s forgiveness. Or we engage in prayer to earn indulgences that will lessen our time in purgatory. Somewhere along the line, we missed the class in which the primacy of God’s free gift of grace was taught. Consequently, we still might use language that emphasizes our own hard-won merit apart from God rather than freely given love as the basis of all

Sunday Readings

Deuteronomy 26:4–10

Then the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm, with terrifying power, with signs and wonders.

Romans 10:8–13

There is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all, enriching all who call upon him.

Luke 4:1–13

Filled with the holy Spirit, Jesus... was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil.

that follows. Today’s first reading refutes such thinking.

The passage from Deuteronomy contains an important creedal statement, describing the heart of ancient Israel’s faith. The people were instructed by Moses to commemorate the event of their founding as the special people of God. The creedal statement was probably recited during that commemoration. The statement itself describes how God called their ancestor and, from that ancestor, called forth a great people, delivered those people out of slavery, and then settled them in a land that became their own. Every event was God’s work. The people did nothing to deserve it. It was all gift. Why did God choose these people, make them great, free them, settle them, and provide them with abundant harvests? Because they were good? No! Because God is good. They earned nothing, deserved nothing. It was all gift.

Why is it so difficult for us to realize that we really do not give gifts to God? It’s just the opposite. When it comes to God’s grace, it’s all gift. †



Every event was God’s work. The people did nothing to deserve it. It was all gift.

A Word from Pope Francis

May this time of Lent also be a *time of the desert* for us. Let us take time for silence and prayer—just a little, it will do us good—in these spaces, let us stop and look at what is stirring in our hearts.... Let us find inner clarity, placing ourselves before the Word of God in prayer.

ANGELUS, ROME, MARCH 6, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What am I doing for Lent that reflects God’s generosity?
- How can I be generous to others?



The Temptations in the Desert

Paige Byrne Shortal

The First Temptation

One of my teenaged sons, upon hearing that Jesus was offered the power to turn stones into bread, mumbled under his breath that Jesus should have taken the deal. I asked,

“What do you mean?” “There are a lot of hungry people in the world, Mom.” Point well taken. What would be so wrong with taking the deal? If you could turn stones into bread, you would be able to feed the whole world! No more hungry little children with sad eyes and empty bellies. But it doesn't seem to be God's way to do things big. We are encouraged to feed the person on our path, not the whole world. Who is on our path? Maybe a neighbor or someone who comes to our parish food pantry. Maybe a child we meet through an appeal in the mail or at church.

The Second Temptation

The second temptation is kind of strange. The devil takes Jesus to the highest roof of the temple in Jerusalem and invites him to throw himself down, because God would take care of him. What is this about? The devil is suggesting that Jesus rewrite

the rules— both the religious rules about testing God and the rules of nature. Jesus is being offered power over death. “You don't have to suffer,” Satan is telling Jesus. “You don't have to die.” Who wouldn't be tempted to take this deal? But death, and sometimes suffering, is the way it works; it's part of the plan. We do what we can to avoid it, but, in the end, we accept God's invitation to make our suffering into prayer and, eventually, to come home to God.

The Third Temptation

The devil's third temptation is to offer Jesus political power over all the kingdoms of the world. This is the kind of power we long for when we say, “If I were the president...” or “If I were the pope...” or “If I were the pastor, or the principal, or the boss...” Or maybe, “If I win the lottery...” Think of how much good you could do! Jesus' response to each temptation is the same: *God is my only God*. Jesus does things God's way. And God's will for us is that we do what it is in our power to do with our resources and talents, not to long for the power, resources, or talents of someone else. †

From *Live Lent at Home: Daily Prayers and Activities for Families* by Paige Byrne Shortal, Liguori Publications (818691). Available from Liguori Publications. To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “Lent Day by Day: A Call to Love and Forgiveness”
by Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

The Israelites, led by God, wandered in the desert for forty years, undergoing many trials before entering the Promised Land. The desert came to be seen as the place that correctly shapes the heart. As the Scriptures developed, the desert came to mean more of a mystical place in the heart than a place on a map. Lent is time in the desert to courageously face the chaos and the demons within us, so the intoxicating joy of Easter might serve to bind us more closely to God.

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.



Lord Jesus, so that during this Lenten season we may be calmer, kinder, and more attentive to the needs of others, we pray—Lord, let us be like you. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

March 10–15

Monday, Lenten Weekday: Lv 19:1–2,
11–18 / Mt 25:31–46

Tuesday, Lenten Weekday: Is 55:10–11 /
Mt 6:7–15

Wednesday, Lenten Weekday: Jon 3:1–10 /
Lk 11:29–32

Thursday, Lenten Weekday: Est C:12, 14–16,
23–25 / Mt 7:7–12

Friday, Lenten Weekday: Ez 18:21–28 /
Mt 5:20–26

Saturday, Lenten Weekday: Dt 26:16–19 /
Mt 5:43–48