

2020

The Church sets the season of Lent distinctly apart from the rest of the liturgical year. More than any other occasion, the Church wants her people to be close to the sacraments and an active part of the community of believers. The three traditional pillars of the Lenten observance are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Through these, we recognize our need for healing not only as individuals but also collectively as a society. This is an important clarification for many people who tend to focus on Lent as strictly an individual penitential time, and thus miss the potential opportunity to bring life and healing to our community and our world. From the beginning of the season, ashes are given to the crowds on Ash Wednesday and near its end, palms are given to the masses on Palm Sunday. These disciplines offer the chance for a spiritual formation that will lead to a transformation, a “radical healing” of the human condition on both our personal and social levels.

**Change In Our Weekly Communal Liturgy**

From Ash Wednesday until the evening of the Lord’s Last Supper on Holy Thursday, there will be noticeable changes. Everything about Lent; its colors, Scripture, music, rites, liturgies, and communal practices should assist us in self-reflection.

*Environment:* The seasonal color for Lent is violet. Any liturgies of the season require this color, with the exception of “Laetare Sunday” (Rose), Chair of St. Peter, solemnities of St. Joseph, the Annunciation, the Chrism Mass (all white), and Palm Sunday (red). During Lent, the altar and sanctuary area will not be decorated with flowers or any other alternative decorations. The rubric of the Ceremonial of Bishop instructs the avoidance of decoration so that bareness and simplicity reign. “Laetare Sunday” translated, “Rejoice O Jerusalem” and emblematical of the joys of this life (3rd Sunday of Lent) is an exception to this rule.

*Liturgy and Music:* The most noted change is the forbidden use of “Alleluia” or “Hallelujah” (Hebrew origin, meaning “Praise Yahweh”) from any and every celebration. The “Alleluia” has been seen as the chief expression of praise of the choirs of angels and our use of the term during Mass is a way of participating in the angels’ worship. It is also a reminder that the kingdom of Heaven is already established on earth and that our participation in Mass is a participation in Heaven. The omission of the “Alleluia” is not to depress the mood of the liturgy, but to create a sense of anticipation and greater joy when the familiar word of praise returns with incredible flourish at Easter. We also drop the use of the Gloria with the exception of the solemnities of St. Joseph, patron saint of the universal church (March 19) and the Annunciation, the feast that propels us into the Christmas mystery (March 25). The use of instruments is minimal. The music chosen for Lent will be plaintive and reflective of the season. The proper parts of the Mass should still be sung but the processions and other hymns can be omitted or be sung antiphonally.

**Ways to Make Lent Meaningful For Me**

**PRAYER**

Daily Mass: Consider attending **Daily Mass**. Set up a modest schedule for yourself (once a week, every other day, or what comfortably works with your weekly schedule). Mass times at St. Vincent de Paul are 5pm on Tuesday evening, and 8am on Wed-Friday.  
In addition, the school children celebrate Mass every Wednesday morning at 9:00am.

*Non-liturgical devotions*

Way of the Cross: Consider **coming to Mass earlier each weekend** and participating in the Stations of the Cross (20 minutes before every weekend Mass during Lent)... Feb 29-March 1 through March 28-29, 2020.

Communal Penance Service: Have you been away from the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** for a long time? Come back and re-experience

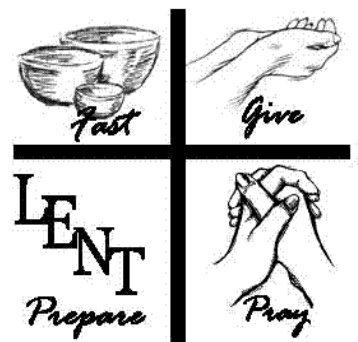
God’s tender forgiveness and loving graces. The date for Communal Penance Services at St. Vincent de Paul is...

**March 12th, 2020 (Thursday) 6:30pm**

Adoration Chapel: Consider spending some **quiet time at the Adoration Chapel** by SS Peter and Paul Parish (241 Apricot Street). The chapel is open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.  
Create a schedule for yourself and make it your Lenten mini pilgrimage each week.  
The quiet and solitude of the chapel will give you relief from the loud noise and business of the daily drudge and help replenish your spirit.

Say a Rosary: On the solemnity of the Annunciation (Wednesday, March 25th, 2020), consider **dedicating a rosary** on behalf of many religious orders commemorating their service under Mary’s patronage.

Daily Prayer: The little Black Books will again be available the Sunday before Lent. Consider purchasing one and use for your **daily prayer and reflection** each night before you go to bed.



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## FASTING

Pope Paul VI reorganized the Church's practice of **public penance** in his "Apostolic Constitution on Penance". To sum up those requirements,...

Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59 are obliged to **fast** on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting means partaking of only one full meal. Smaller amounts of food are permitted at breakfast and around midday or in the evening— depending when the person chooses to eat the main meal.

In addition, all Catholics 14 years of age and older must **abstain** from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all the Fridays of Lent. Abstinence forbids the use of meat, but not eggs, milk products or condiments made of animal fat. It is important to note however, that moral theologians remind us that some people are excused from fasting and/or abstinence because of sickness or other reasons.

Pope Paul VI reiterates for us of the divine law that each of us in our own way do penance. We must all turn from sin and make reparation to God. We must forgive and show love for one another just as we ask for God's love and forgiveness.

According to the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholics are encouraged to undertake some sort of **personal penance** or abstinence and it may be different from fasting or refraining from certain foods. It can be about fasting and refraining from other things and other activities that we normally enjoy.

## ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is linked to our baptism. It is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for what God has given to us. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptized. The giving of alms is an effort to share this world equally— through the distribution of money, of course, but also through the sharing of our time and talents.

Those who are able are expected to give a portion of their goods to help the less fortunate.

Your Help: **Your parish** needs your help right now! We need Ushers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Servers, Greeters, Videographers, and Musicians.

Consider giving of your time and service every other week, once a month, once every other month.

You tell us when you can help and we'll work it! Don't wait until our next stewardship drive to get involved. People come and go often and schedules are very fluid. Temporary or fixed, we adjust!

**Your Community** needs you right now! The *South Wood County Food Pantry* needs donations and Money. In honor of the solemnity of St Joseph (March 19), consider working at the *Neighborhood Table @* on a Thursday. The Neighborhood Table has a website. You can check out which organization is sponsoring the meal for the week. St. Vincent de Paul Parish is very active in this organization.

*The Care Closet*, Accessible by the WR Public Schools can always use your donations of clothes, shoes, coats, personal hygiene items, and many other items.

Donations: Consider picking up a soup can at one of the entrances of church that collects money for the hot meals program for our twin parish in Haiti. Put your can on the dash or floor of your car and every time you get loose change back from the drive thru, put it in the can. At the end of Lent, turn your filled can into the parish and your gift will find its way to the children of Haiti through the dedicated volunteer parishioners of St. Vincent de Paul Parish.

Consider giving an additional monetary amount to our parish family through the Bishop's Annual Appeal or in one of the extra envelopes you get each month. Your parish should be considered your "FIRST" charity.

During this solemn and hopeful season of Lent, we will confess our sins, voluntarily fast and abstain, and be on the lookout for opportunities to do acts of mercy and kindness throughout our busy days. We await with eager hearts and joyful anticipation for the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the message of hope that Easter Sunday brings. Wishing you a Holy Lent.

Karen Shirek  
Liturgical Coordinator

