

Dear Parishioners,

Each year the Church begins a 40 day journey across the desert, to Jerusalem, to the Cross, to the Resurrection. The season of Lent and the celebration of Christ's Paschal Mystery are meant to be a time of renewal in mind, body and spirit. St. Pope Leo the Great always called Lent – the great Springtime Retreat of the Church.

The question is, how will we keep these 40 days, this holy season? Some prefer the solitary mode of the hermit: quiet time, more prayer, reflective reading, and personal sacrifices. Others like the style of the Pilgrim sharing the journey with others as we walk along: Stations of the Cross, a discussion group and sharing a simple meal, breaking open the Sacred Scriptures.

One style is not better than the other. What is important is that we make a personal response to the three-fold call of conversion that lies at the heart of Lent: Prayer, Fasting, Acts of Charity.

Consider the following as possibilities for yourself and your family as we begin this season of renewal.

Daily Mass. One of our children recently asked me, “Father, what is a daily mass?” She thought we only celebrated mass on Sundays. Attending a daily mass during Lent is a wonderful way to start your day. The Scripture readings provide a Lenten guide and spiritual meditation for each day. Yes, it will take some time and effort to rearrange the family daily schedule but the spiritual rewards are more than worth it. Give it a try!

Reconciliation. Celebrating the Sacrament of Penance during Lent brings us back in union with God and the community. We will have both private and communal celebrations of the sacrament during Lent.

Sacrifice and Offerings. Each year we provide **Rice Bowls** as a reminder and an easy way to make an offering of alms for the poor. Keeping the Rice Bowl on the family table can serve as a reminder of our commitment of prayer and sacrifice during the Lenten Season. What a wonderful way to teach our children love for the poor and the hungry.

Prayer & Spiritual Reading. Take a copy of **Word Among Us** and spend 15 minutes a day reading and reflecting on the scripture meditation. Borrow a spiritual book from the Reconciliation Room off the Chapel.

Visit the Sick, Aged or In Prison. “Lord, when did I see you ...” A visit to a “shut-in” is always welcome especially this time of year. A handwritten card, note or letter is another way to reach out to our neighbor. The Diocesan REC (Residents Encounter Christ) Program accepts support letters for those who are incarcerated. “And He said: ...You did it for me”

Watch what you eat! Get some exercise! The rules for fast and abstinence are no longer as strict as they once were years ago. However, a great way to get back in shape is to embrace a “holy diet” as a way to discipline ourselves both in body and spirit. Invite someone to take a walk in the park, get some fresh air and enjoy the beauty of God’s creation move from winter to spring.

Make a Lenten Retreat on Wednesday evenings as we explore the Sacred Scriptures.

Each Wednesday evening of Lent at 7:00 PM we will gather in Church to explore the Book of Jonah, Storytelling in the Gospels and the Holy Women of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.

Fridays of Lent - pray the Stations of the Cross at Noon and join us for a simple lunch.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5:30- 6:30 PM Chapel

Come and spend a quiet moment with the Lord.

So, whether you are a Pilgrim or a Hermit, there are many blessings to receive and to share this Lent. Don’t miss the numerous opportunities around you. **Peace, Fr. Burke**

Please see the reverse side for Lenten Calendar

Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Latham, NY

Lenten Calendar 2018

ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14TH

9:00 AM Mass with the distribution of Ashes
12:00 Noon Liturgy of the Word and distribution of Ashes
5:30 PM Mass with the distribution of Ashes
(8:00 AM Mass & Ashes at St. Joseph Provincial House)

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS (RCIA) *Rite of Welcome & Acceptance for Catechumens and Candidates* *1st Sunday of Lent – February 18th*

We pray for all Catechumens and Candidates for Sacraments here in our diocese and throughout the World who will be enrolled today for the Easter Sacraments.

3rd SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 5TH **Hospitality Sunday – Come and Renew Parish Friendships**

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION **Saturdays at 3:30 PM in the Reconciliation Room off the Chapel**

OLA Lenten Penance Service
Prayer Service and Confessions
Monday, March 19th at 7:00 PM

LENTEN RETREAT

Wednesday's of Lent Feb. 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21 at 7:00 PM

Feb. 21	Jonah – part I Whale of a Tale	Fr. Burke
Feb. 28	Jonah-part II Walk to Nineveh	Fr. Burke
Mar. 7	Gospel as Narrative Story	Fr. Butler
Mar. 14	Women of the Hebrew Scriptures	Fr. Kane
Mar. 21	Women of the Christian Scriptures	Fr. Kane

FRIDAYS OF LENT

Stations of the Cross 12:00 Noon

The Way of the Cross is prayed at Noon followed by Soup Lunch in LaSalle Hall.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
5:30 PM – 6:30 PM Chapel.

OLA Youth Ministry presents: Mary's Stations of the Cross
Tuesday, March 13th at 7:15 PM