

Lent 2021 at St. Michael the Archangel Parish

What is Lent? Lent is a time of preparation. This 40-day journey of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, beginning on Ash Wednesday, helps us deepen our relationship with Christ.

- + **Prayer:** Deepens our relationship with God and helps us reflect on our lives.
- + **Fasting:** Removes obstacles between us and God
- + **Giving:** Helps us serve those in need and live Jesus's message of love.

It is also a special time of prayer for all those persons in R.C.I.A. throughout the world who are in their final period of preparation for Baptism and Profession of Faith.

Special Dates Throughout Lent

February 17: Ash Wednesday Mass and distribution of ashes at **8:00 am** and **7:00 pm**

Weekday Masses are at usual times throughout Lent **except for the Wednesday Masses. They will be at 7:00 pm on February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31.** The priest will be available to hear confessions after Wednesday Masses in the sacristy. Due to the pandemic, we will not have soup dinners this year. On Fridays, there is Adoration at 7:00 am, Rosary at 7:30, followed by Benediction and Mass at 8:00 am.

Stations of the Cross are Friday evenings at **7:00 pm** on **February 19, 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 2.**
****Confessions will be heard every Friday evening after Stations of the Cross.**

March 9: The Light is on for YOU – Priests will be available to hear confessions in all parishes of our diocese from **6:00-8:00 pm.** Father will be available to hear confessions in our parish during that time.

March 23: Parish Penance Service – Priests will hear confessions at **6:30 pm.**

March 28: Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord - Palms will be blessed at all Masses on March 27-28.

March 30: Chrism Mass at the Cathedral – Sign up online to join Bishop Rhoades for the blessing of the Holy Oils at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Ft. Wayne at **7:30 pm.** Some of these oils will be brought back to our parish to be used in the Sacraments of Baptism, Anointing of the Sick, and Confirmation during the coming year.

*There are three special days during Holy Week called The Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. "Though chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding for us the unity of Christ's Paschal Mystery." It would be best to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance before Holy Thursday to prepare your heart to take part in the "summit of the Liturgical Year."**

April 1: Holy Thursday Mass, 7:00 pm – Presentation of the newly blessed oils and Mass celebrating the Lord's Supper. Followed by Adoration and Confession until 9:00 pm.

April 2: Good Friday Service, 1:00 pm – Commemoration of the Passion and Death of the Lord
Stations of the Cross will follow at 7:00 pm.

April 3: Easter Vigil, 8:00 pm – Celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord

April 4: Easter Sunday – Masses at 8:00 am and 10:30 am

**Unfortunately, coffee and rolls in the Parish Hall is cancelled this year. However, the Youth Group is planning a special Easter activity for the children. More info to come!

Information About Fasting and Abstinence

Recognizing that penance is essential for our formation in Christian life, and to express our repentance, Catholics have some traditional practices we are expected to observe. These are in addition to Lenten practices that we choose for ourselves.

The Lenten Fast – We are instructed to observe Ash Wednesday and Good Friday as days of FASTING. This means that all Catholics between the ages of 18-59 are asked to eat only one full meal and two lighter meals on those days. No other food should be eaten between meals on those days. How about making every Friday of Lent a day of fasting?

The Lenten Abstinence – Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and ALL the Fridays of Lent are to be observed as days of abstinence from meat. No meat should be eaten on those days by anyone over 14 years of age.

Please note: If you are unable to keep a particular day of fasting or abstinence for a serious and/or honest reason, you excuse yourself. There is no need to “get permission” to do this. It would be appropriate to substitute some other kind of penance or religious practice if you dispense yourself. For example, you could give up a different food, drink, etc. It is important that we follow the SPIRIT of our Lenten practices.

Our Easter Duty – All Catholics who are able to receive the sacraments are expected to joyfully celebrate the presence of the risen Lord in His Sacramental gifts to His people by:

1. Receiving the sacrament of Penance if you are in a state of serious sin
2. Sharing in the Eucharist with the whole Christian community by receiving Holy Communion

We are asked to celebrate these sacraments sometime between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday on May 30, 2021.

These Lenten practices reflect only the minimum suggested and required by the discipline of the church. The true spirit of Lent should make us strive to do more!

Pray. Fast. Give.

We keep Lent in three three areas. *Why?*

We use our **HEADS** to *pray*.

We use our **HANDS** to *give*.

We think of our **BELLIES** when we *fast*.

Crisscross to make an “X” from your head to your belly and then your left hand to your right hand.

What marks the spot?

Your **HEART** – God is after your heart!

Pray to the Holy Spirit to cover you in a spirit of renewal.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to realign your heart, mind, and body to Jesus!

“Fasting detaches you from this world.
Prayer reattaches you to the next world.”

- Ven. Fulton Sheen

“Do you wish your prayer to fly toward God?
Make it for two wings: fasting and almsgiving.”

- St. Augustine