

CLOSING PRAYER:

~ A Prayer during the 1st Week in Lent ~

**O God,
You have searched me
And you know me
Better than I know myself.**

**From the womb,
You have been nearer to me
Than my mother or father.**

**You know the inner workings
Of my heart —
My deceit and faithlessness,
My love and fear,
My hope and desire.**

**You dwell within me
With an abiding presence,
And my prayer to you
Is more natural
That breathing.**

**Yet do I hide from you;
Yet do I run away
From your presence,
And each time
I run away as well
From my very self.**

**Bring me home,
O God.
Amen.**

Our Lady Chapel



Our Lady Chapel is a Roman Catholic community founded in the love of the Father, centered in Christ, and rooted in the Holy Cross tenets of building family and embracing diversity. We are united in our journey of faith through prayer and sacrament, and we seek growth through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in liturgy and outreach, while responding to the needs of humanity.

A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS:

A special note of thanks to everyone who came and enjoyed our annual indoor Chapel picnic. Despite the cold weather, another wonderful group gathered to enjoy Mass together and then to take some time to just relax and shed the winter blues. **A special note of thanks to Janet and Mike Heryak, Tina Newton, Mike Hughes, Sue and Ron Ryavec, Charlene and Dennis Kavran, Norma Rasoletti, Mary Schmidt, Linda Monitello, Judy Morgan, Patty Szaniszlo, and all the many others** who helped decorate, clean up, and those who brought the delicious goodies for us to taste. Also a big thanks to **AVI Food Service** and **/Swiftly the Clown** for their usual great job. See you in the summer for our summer Chapel Outdoor on Sunday, July 10th.

**LENTEN NOTES:**

During this sacred time, each of us is called to spiritual growth — particularly through a turning away from sin. Lent is a time for “new beginnings” — a time to grow in our relationship with God and each other. There are 3 major spiritual practices during Lent to which Scripture calls us: **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.**

—LENTEN REGULATIONS:

Ash Wednesday and **Good Friday** are days of **fast** for all between the ages of eighteen and fifty-nine. Fasting means that one full meal for the day is allowed, along with two light meals [snacks]. No eating between meals. Those not included in these “ages” are encouraged to take upon themselves some aspects of the fast, whenever possible.

Ash Wednesday and **All Fridays** during Lent are days of **abstinence** from meat, for those who are fourteen and older. Again, those not included in these “ages” are encouraged to participate whenever possible.

—SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL LENTEN EVENTS & SERVICES:

Telestai presentation in Chapel on **Friday, Saturday & Sunday, March 11-12-13.**

Lenten Communal Penance Service will be on **Monday, March 21st** at 7:00 PM

Other events will be scheduled.

COUPLE’S RETREAT:

Join us on **Saturday, February 20th** and share in this evening of prayer and reflection at Our Lady Chapel’s annual **Couple’s Retreat**. Most married couples with a family do not take enough time for themselves — their lives are focused on their children. Do yourself a favor, and take time for this evening together. The retreat is open to all married couples of the Chapel and Gilmour Communities. **The retreat will begin with Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 5 PM followed by dinner and discussion led by Fr. John in the Lennon Board Room, concluding no later than 9 PM.** Come even if you cannot make it in time for Mass; we would be glad to have you join us. **Cost for the evening is \$40 a couple.** If cost for the evening is a concern, please let Father John know. So mark the date on your calendars and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **Please RSVP to Patty at the Chapel Office at (440) 473-3560 or at szaniszlop@gilmour.org.**

**FAITH EDUCATION — FEBRUARY 21:**

Faith Education for this year continues. Our Sessions go from **8:45—9:45 AM**, with the hope that our children would then **participate in our 10:00 AM Family Mass. Register your family for classes by contacting Patty in the Chapel Office [(440)-473-3560].** If you have any questions, please call Patty in the chapel office. Thank you for taking care of this important responsibility. **Dates for February and March: February 21-28 and March 6-13.**

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Donna Polack, wife of Bill, who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.
- For Brother Tom Sisung, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for bronchitis and pneumonia.
- For Cassie Nannicola [‘17], sister of Frank [‘18] and Mia [‘19], who is undergoing treatment for pneumonia.
- For Ramon Ortega, who is critically ill following heart surgery.
- For Karen Bernardo who is recovering from serious heart surgery.
- For Bonnie O’Leary, Middle School Teacher, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Rob Solomon who is recovering from open heart surgery.
- For Eva Shea, aunt of lower school teacher, Theresa Stark, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer
- For Kathy Hronek who is recovering from cancer surgery.
- For Joseph Frantz [‘75], brother of Mark [‘65], David [‘66], Roger [‘69], and Peter [‘78] Frantz, who is seriously ill.
- For Ann Ally, mother of former Gilmour teacher Deshia Joseph, who is under the care of hospice.
- For Marge Sheldon, friend of Judy Morgan, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Ed Carrigan, uncle of LS teacher, Theresa Stark, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Carol Yost who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Vickie Norris, kitchen employee, who is recovering from serious heart surgery.
- For Kate Wilson, Niece of Brother Ken Kane, C.S.C., who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Justin Tarr who is critically ill with brain cancer.
- For Bun Riley, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Jim Spicer who is undergoing treatment for brain and lung cancer.
- For John O’Brian who has been diagnosed with a serious form of cancer.
- For Bill Slattery [‘77] who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Burkey, uncle of Rachel Burkey, member of music ministry, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Annie Trivassos who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Nicholas Zanella., who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Jan Botek, wife of Fred, mother of Fred [‘85], grandmother of Matthew [‘14], Jonathan [‘17] and Daniel [‘21] Botek, who is undergoing treatment for dementia.
- For Teddy Prusock, nephew of Lower School associate, Nina Prusock, who is undergoing neurological testing.
- For Kay Yunker, aunt of Mary Schmidt, great-aunt of Maggie Schmidt [‘12] who is under the care of hospice.

AMAZON.COM:

Please remember that when you want to buy something from Amazon.com, you need to first go to www.ourladychapel.org and click on the Amazon logo at the bottom of the home page! Because of this simple step — and at no cost to the purchaser — Our Lady Chapel receives a percentage of all purchases that are made from Amazon.com. Ever since we have begun this program, we have consistently been receiving significant checks from Amazon that are being credited to help pay for chapel expenses. This affinity program remains in effect throughout the year, so we ask everyone to continue to remember to start your purchases at Amazon on the Our Lady Chapel home page! Thank you.



PRAYER REQUESTS:

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:

- For Bob Atkinson who is undergoing medical testing.
- For Viola Saunders, mother of Lower School Head of School, Yvonne Saunders, who is recovering from surgery.
- For Elaine Willey, sister of Father John, who are undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Stephen Ungrady, father of Emily [*19], who is recovering from a stroke
- For Christina Parrilla, sister of Brother Carlos Parrilla, C.S.C., who is recovering from kidney transplant surgery
- For MaryAnn Rachuba, mother-in-law of Gilmour instructor, John Overman, grandmother of Michael [*22] and Jack [*25] Overman, who is ill.
- For Jim Virant, grandfather of Noah Virant [*20], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Todd King [*87], brother of Christie [*91] King, who is undergoing treatment for mirocondra
- For John DiCillo, husband of long-time Gilmour teacher, Bonnie, father of John [*83], David [*84], Dawn [*86] and Daniel [*88] DiCillo, who is seriously ill with lymphoma.
- For Jenny Blender, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Dorothy Kazel, mother of Daniel [*86] and Gilmour counselor, Jamie, who is undergoing treatment for cancer..
- For Mark LaCasse, brother of Upper School Associate, Linda Wheeler, uncle of Molly [*06] Wheeler, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Charles Babbush, father of Jeffrey [*83] who is ill.
- For Ali Priest, who is undergoing treatment for a rare muscular disease.
- For Sue Nyberg, godmother of Katie Leavitt, who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Ryan Berger [*15], brother of Cameron [*17] who is recovering from injuries sustained in an accident.
- For Drew Franco, son of Brian [*90], nephew of Jeff [*88] and Kristin [*94] Kirkpatrick, who is struggling with a seizure disorder.
- For Michael Palumbo, father of Michael [*14], Marisa [*15], and former Gilmour student, Christian, who is undergoing medical treatment
- For Colleen Lowman, grandmother of Religion instructor, Rachel Burkey, who is seriously ill.
- For Dennis Kavran, father of Dennis [*86] and Jennifer [*95], grandfather of Adam [*14] and Madeleine [*16] Miller, who is undergoing further treatment for cancer.
- For Donna Farkas who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Lexi Pappadakes, who is undergoing treatment for complications from surgery..
- For Rosemarie Lemieux who is ill.
- For Robert Heltzel [*65], father of Jennifer [*91] and Kathleen [*93] Heltzel, who is recovering from surgery
- For Matt Barry [*13], brother of Tim [*12], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Maria Ricci, friend of Linda McGraw, who is ill.
- For Jeff Warner, brother of Denise Calabrese, who is undergoing treatment resulting from a stroke and seizure.
- For Janice Feenstra, sister of Lisa Habe, aunt of Jack [*19] and Will [*20] Habe who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Phylis McGinley, grandmother of Middle school Head of School, Elizabeth Edmondson, great-grandmother of Mollie [*21] and Abigail [*23] Edmondson, who is seriously ill.
- For Karen Wanders, mother of upper school Head of School, Jonathan Wanders, who continues in treatment and rehabilitation
- For Betty Herten, aunt of Hope [*13] and James [*15] Herten, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.



MEN’S RETREAT — MARCH 3:

All men of Our Lady Chapel and Gilmour Academy and their guests are invited to join us for the Annual Men's Spring Retreat on **Thursday, March 3rd**. The retreat will begin with **Mass in Our Lady Chapel at 5:30 PM** followed by a hearty **dinner and discussion in the Lennon Board Room**. Father John will facilitate the evening of conversation and reflection. **Cost for the retreat is \$20.** [Please know that ability to pay for the retreat is not a condition for attendance]. If you cannot make it for Mass or for dinner, you are still welcome to attend the evening of spiritual conversation — come when you are able. . Mark the date on your calendars and give yourself a treat in the Lord. **Sign up on the retreat sheet located on the easel in the narthex of Our Lady Chapel or contact Patty in the Chapel Office (440) 473-3560 or szaniszlop@gilmour.org**



SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

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|--|------------------------------|
| Sunday, February 14: 1 st Week in Lent | 10:00 AM |
| Monday, February 15: | NO MASS |
| Tuesday, February 16: | 5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel] |
| Wednesday, February 17: | 5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel] |
| Thursday, February 18: | 5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel] |
| Friday, February 19: | 5:30 PM [Eucharistic Chapel] |
| Saturday, February 20: 2 nd Week in Lent | 5:00 PM |
| Sunday, February 21: 2 nd Week in Lent | 10:00 AM |

UPCOMING CHAPE ACTIVITIES:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| February 14 ----- | LifeTeen meeting | 11:30 AM—1:00 PM |
| February 16 ----- | Our Lady Chapel Council Meeting | 6:15 PM—7:30 PM |
| February 18 ----- | Sophomore Religion Mass | 10:15 AM—11:30 AM |
| February 20 ----- | Couples Retreat | 5:00 PM—9:00 PM |
| February 21 ----- | Faith Education Session #17 EDGE Meeting | 8:45 AM—9:45 AM 11:30 AM—1:00 PM |
| February 26 ----- | Kairos #41 Closing Ceremony | 3:00 PM—5:00 PM |
| February 28 ----- | Faith Education Session #18 LifeTeen Meeting | 8:45 AM—9:45 AM 11:30 AM—1:00 PM |
| February 29 ----- | MS parent/student Athletic Meeting | 4:15 PM—5:30 PM |

REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:

Lent is such an exciting time of year. There are so many ways to approach it. Lent is meant to be a journey which leads us to the renewal of our baptism; for some of us it will lead to first-time reception of the sacraments of initiation and entrance into the Church. Lent is also a time of decision-making — what does one decide to “give up”, or “give over”, or “give to”, or “give back”?

The real meaning of Lent is about receiving “again”. Through the Scripture readings and prayers of these days of Lent, we are reminded of how God gave to us his Eternal Son with a loving desire that we allow the Gift to be handed to us again and again. We come to each Eucharist to be regathered and reminded of the conditions by which the Son has been given and is now given to us. We prepare for our baptismal renewal by coming together as Church — as Christ’s Body — and we admit our condition to which we receive Him once more.

A large portion of the Book of Deuteronomy is dedicated to proper religious behavior within the Israelite community. On this 1st Week in Lent, Moses describes for us a bit of the history behind the liturgical actions of his day [Deuteronomy 26:1-11]. The role of the priests is to receive the first-fruits of the harvests. Then there is a communal prayer reflective of the reasons the fruits are handed over. God, through Moses, rescued Israel — and each person individually — from the slavery of Egypt. God handed over the soil as a gift, and the people were to multiply as well. The first-born of the family and of the flock were likewise dedicated in thanksgiving to the God. As a sign of dependence and gratitude for the soil, the people were to hand over some of what they had received. After this holy prayer of remembrance and surrender, the liturgical gesture will be to physically bow down in reverence of the presence of the One and Holy God.

In Luke’s Gospel [4:1-13], we hear the familiar drama of Jesus’ being tempted by the devil. Jesus had received His being baptized according to Jewish custom. Again, as the rescued nation of Israel passed through water from slavery in a foreign land to freedom on their own holy soil, so each Jewish person would enter the Jordan river to then emerge cleansed from personal slavery and again stand renewed on the ground of freedom. During His being baptized, Jesus heard His identity as the Beloved One — he heard it, received it, and then began living it. Now Jesus is led into the desert — a place meant to allow one to get in touch with themselves. The temptations by the devil and the responses of Jesus are at the heart of this struggle — who is Jesus; more importantly, who am I?

The key word in the devil’s presentation is “if”. This conditional word moves the whole scene into the subjunctive — or “contrary to present fact” mood. Jesus remains in the “in the indicative” — in the “affirmed actual fact” mood. The devil offers qualities to Jesus that he already possesses — the devil quotes scripture but adds: “if you are”; and Jesus replies with scripture, but denies the “if”.

Much has been spoken and written about how we too are tempted with offerings of power, domination and possessions — as was Jesus. Those are worthy temptations to consider, but in this context of Lent the more important reality to consider is how we are tempted to deny or relativize our baptism. Jesus lived out His “I am” because He had listened and believed He was the Beloved. We are preparing to enter again the water and grace of being reminded of who God in Christ, has said in the indicative mood and spirit, who each of us really is.

Jesus could listen to all temptations, challenges, and invitations to disown Himself, to fall down, to be unreal, because He listened once and often to the prayer of God over and within Him. Baptism — the Easter Sacrament — is our joining the Israelites as they entered often the river of remaining. Jesus lived Who He had received from God. We follow Jesus in and out of the same waters of indicative identity.



Conversely, when we are helpless we are open. That is why the desert is both the place of chaos and the place of God’s closeness. It is no accident that Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King felt God’s presence so unmistakably just at that point in their lives where they had lost everything that could support them — they were in the desert. Scripture assures us that it is there that God can send angels to minister to us. —taken from the writings of Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., which appear on the internet

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers

FOR THE DECEASED:

- For Mary Klonaris, grandmother of Samantha [‘10], Diana [‘12], and George [‘17] Klonaris
- For John Baker, Jr.
- For Brother Camillus Kirsch, C.S.C.,
- For Sister Pauline Panik, C.S.A.
- For Mary Lavin, D.C.D.
- For Maria Teresa Carnevale
- For Joseph Matsko
- For Edward Groody, father of Father Dan Groody, C.S.C.
- For Ron Krause, half-brother of maintenance associate, Dan Lipowski.
- For Angie Zupancic
- For Irma Iorio.
- For Jack Kilbane, cousin of Brother Robert Lavelle, C.S.C.
- For Kaitlin Skiles.
- For Mary Cser
- For Brother Jean-Jacques Dieges, C.S.C.
- For Brother Francis Kjeldgaard, C.S.C.
- For Norman Smoler
- For Mary Goode, aunt of Brother Emmanuel Goode, C.S.C.

PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:

- For an end to violence in our society.
- For the families who are grieving the loss of loved ones.
- For an end to human trafficking..
- For the unemployed.
- For those who struggle with family relationships.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For a special intention.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.

REMEMBER:

A person can live about forty days without food, about three days without water, about eight minutes without air, but only for one second without hope. —Hal Lindsey

THE DESERT — THE PLACE OF GOD’S CLOSENESS:

In her biography, *The Long Loneliness*, Dorothy Day shares how, shortly after her conversion to Catholicism, she went through a painful, desert time. She had just given birth to her daughter, and her decision to have the child baptized, coupled with her profession of faith, meant the end of her relationship with a man she deeply loved. She suddenly found herself alone — all her old supports had been cut off and she was left with no money, no job, few friends, no practical dream, and no companionship from the person she loved the most deeply in this world. For a while she just stumbled on, trusting that things would soon get better. They didn’t. She remained in this desert.

One day, not knowing what else to do, she took a train from New York to Washington to spend a day praying at the National Shrine of Our Lady. Her prayer there was wrenching and naked. She describes how she laid bare her helplessness — spilling out her confusion, her doubts, her fears, and her temptations to bitterness and despair. In essence, she said to God: “I have given up everything that ever supported me, in trust, to you. I have nothing left to hold on to. You need to do something for me — soon. I can’t keep this up much longer!” She was, biblically speaking, in the desert — alone, without support, helpless before a chaos that threatened to overwhelm her — and, as was the case with Jesus — both in the desert and in Gethsemane — God “sent angels to minister to her” [Luke 4:1-13]. God steadied her in the chaos. She caught a train back to New York, and that very night as she walked up to her apartment, she saw a man sitting there. His name was Peter Maurin and the rest is history. Together they started the Catholic Worker. We should not be surprised that her prayer had such a tangible result. The desert, scripture assures us, is the place where God is especially near.

Martin Luther King shares a similar story. In *Stride Towards Freedom*, King relates how one night a hate-filled phone call shook him to his depths and plunged him into a desert of fear. Here are his words: “An angry voice said: ‘Listen, nigger, we’ve taken all we want from you; before next week you’ll be sorry you ever came to Montgomery.’ I hung up, but I couldn’t sleep. It seemed that all of my fears had come down on me at once. I had reached the saturation point. I got out of bed and began to walk the floor. Finally I went to the kitchen and heated a pot of coffee. I was ready to give up. With my coffee sitting untouched before me I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing a coward. In this state of exhaustion — when my courage had all but gone — I decided to take my problem to God. With my head in my hand, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud. The words I spoke to God that midnight are still vivid in my memory: ‘I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left. I’ve come to the point where I can’t take it alone.’ At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never experienced Him before.”

God sends his angels to minister to us when we are in the desert and in the garden of Gethsemane. This incident in Martin Luther King’s life demonstrates how.

The desert, as we know, is the place where, stripped of all that normally nourishes and supports us, we are exposed to chaos, raw fear, and demons of every kind. In the desert we are exposed, body and soul, made vulnerable to be overwhelmed by chaos and temptations of every kind. But, precisely because we are so stripped of everything we normally rely on, this is also a privileged moment for grace. Why? Because all the defense mechanisms, support systems, and distractions that we normally surround ourselves with so as to keep chaos and fear at bay work at the same time to keep much of God’s grace at bay. What we use, to buoy us up, wards off both chaos and grace, demons and the divine alike.



We, in our turn, follow Him also in and out of the temptational fields of our lives. We forget so easily. If we don’t tell the stories of our pasts, we will forget who we are. As young Irish children, we would visit our aged relatives often — especially on St. Patrick’s Day. We would be lined up in front of them and we would sing the songs of our ethnic history accompanied with much sentiment. We would hear the old stories and be dressed in appropriate colors. We learned who we were by what we heard and then lived. My siblings continue these traditions with their children and grandchildren to this day. If they don’t celebrate their cultic and family histories, why they’d forget just how wonderful and blest they are.

Our forty days have begun. Our preparing to celebrate our identity has begun. We will listen to the stories, sing the songs, and do the things which reveal to ourselves who we really are. We will receive again our name — our holiness. The real new life flows from the truth that we will do those things which reveal who we know ourselves to be. The people of Israel knew who God named them by their being baptized through the Exodus. They were to live in community doing the holy things of which offering the first fruits was a sign. We too have received our names through our being immersed in the baptismal waters of indicativity. We are who God has claimed us to be and we are called to do those actions appropriate to that name.

—edited from the writings of Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

TETÉLESTAI IS COMING:

On **Friday, March 11th at 8:00 PM, Saturday, March 12th at 8:00 PM** and on **Sunday, March 13th at 2:00 PM**, the Cleveland

Performing Arts Ministries will present **Tetélestai** here in Our Lady Chapel. Depicting the final week of Jesus’ life, **Tetélestai** brings us right into the events surrounding the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus.

It is a marvelous spiritual opportunity for you and your family. The children will love the story telling of Jesus, the scene of the prophets, Jesus with his apostles and the holy women, the upper room, and of course, the resurrection. During the presentation, the cast moves throughout the audience, bringing them into the scenes. I really want to encourage you and your family to take advantage of this spiritual offering. There is no charge for admission. A free-will offering is taken as you exit if you would like to contribute. Each presentation will be followed by an informal reception in the Commons when you will be able to mingle with the cast.

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR:**

For the past year, our teens have been volunteering at **Our Savior Lutheran Church Food Pantry** [located right across the street from the chapel]. The Pantry is open on the **third Saturday of every month from 11:00 AM – 1:30 or 2:00 PM**. Our

Savior Lutheran’s Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank. During the course of the past year, the food pantry at Our Savior Lutheran Church served an average of 141 households each time. Our teens have loved this ministry and have been very faithful to it. **We would now like to open this ministry up to our entire Chapel Community. If you would like to help on any given third Saturday, please call Patty at the chapel office [440-473-3560] to let us know that you are going to volunteer, or email Elina Gurney at gurney.oh@gmail.com.**

**PEOPLE OF VISION:**

“Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.”

—Dale Carnegie

LENTEN MESSAGE OF POPE FRANCIS:

In the Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, I asked that “the season of Lent in this Jubilee Year be lived more intensely as a privileged moment to celebrate and experience God’s mercy” [*Misericordiae Vultus* #17]. By calling for an attentive listening to the word of God and encouraging the initiative “24 Hours for the Lord”, I sought to stress the primacy of prayerful listening to God’s word — especially his prophetic word. The mercy of God is a proclamation made to the world — a proclamation which each Christian is called to experience first hand. For this reason, during the season of Lent I will send out Missionaries of Mercy as a concrete sign to every one of God’s closeness and forgiveness.

After receiving the Good News told to her by the Archangel Gabriel, Mary, in her “Magnificat”, prophetically sings of the mercy through which God chose her [see Luke 1:46]. The Virgin of Nazareth, betrothed to Joseph, thus becomes the perfect icon of the Church which evangelizes — for Mary was, and continues to be, evangelized by the Holy Spirit, who made her virginal womb fruitful. In the prophetic tradition, mercy is strictly related — even on the etymological level — to the maternal womb [“rahamin”] and to a generous, faithful and compassionate goodness [“hesed”] shown within marriage and family relationships.

The mystery of divine mercy is revealed in the history of the covenant between God and his people Israel. God shows himself ever rich in mercy, ever ready to treat his people with deep tenderness and compassion — especially at those tragic moments when infidelity ruptures the bond of the covenant, which then needs to be ratified more firmly in justice and truth. Here is a true love story — God plays the role of the betrayed father and husband, while Israel plays the unfaithful child and bride. These domestic images — as in the case of Hosea [see Hosea 1-2] — show to what extent God wishes to bind himself to his people.

This love story culminates in the incarnation of God’s Son. In Christ, the Father pours forth his boundless mercy — even to making him “mercy incarnate” [*Misericordiae Vultus*, #8]. As a man, Jesus of Nazareth is a true son of Israel; he embodies that perfect hearing required of every Jew by the “Shema”, which today remains at the heart of God’s covenant with Israel — “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might” [Deuteronomy 6:4-5]. As the Son of God, Jesus is the Bridegroom who does everything to win over the love of his bride, to whom he is bound by an unconditional love which becomes visible in the eternal wedding feast.

This is the very heart of the apostolic “Kerygma”, in which divine mercy holds a central and fundamental place. It is “the beauty of the saving love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ who died and rose from the dead” [*Evangelii Gaudium*, #36] — that first proclamation which “we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis at every level and moment” [*Evangelii Gaudium*, #164]. Mercy “expresses God’s way of reaching out to the sinner, offering him a new chance to look at himself, convert, and believe” [*Misericordiae Vultus*, #21], thus restoring his relationship with God. In Jesus crucified, God shows his desire to draw near to sinners — however far they may have strayed from him. In this way God hopes to soften the hardened heart of his Bride.

God’s mercy transforms human hearts; it enables us, through the experience of a faithful love to become merciful in turn. In an ever new miracle, divine mercy shines forth in our lives, inspiring each of us to love our neighbor and to devote ourselves to what the Church’s tradition calls the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. These works remind us that faith finds expression in concrete everyday actions meant to help our neighbors in body and spirit — by feeding, visiting, comforting and instructing them.



rationalizing your way through immorality? — “Look, Father, things are different now. This is the way that everyone does this.” Are you rationalizing your way through immorality? How easily we sacrifice our wholesomeness to turmoil. How quickly we allow ourselves to be torn up inside. Sin is chaos. Human integrity — the wholeness of body and soul, physical and spiritual — is the focus of the first part of Lent. You and I have to begin Lent by looking within ourselves. Am I in peace, or am I in turmoil? If we are honest with ourselves, we all have to admit that over the past year certain things have crept into our lives.

They might seem small — hardly worth noting; but we rationalize, and bring havoc within ourselves — bringing chaos where there should be peace. Unless we are careful, our integrity can be compromised — we become less spiritual, less human. When we feel disjointed, torn up inside, just not happy with ourselves, then we need to be aware that something is wrong. We also need to know that the Lord does not want us hurting this way. He wants us to be whole and at peace. He gives us His power and strength to preserve and integrate our body and soul. The Psalmist said it best: “Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble, be with me Lord my God, I pray” [Psalm 91]. God is with us — “He is on our lips and in our hearts” [see Romans 10:8-13].

With Him we can conquer any enemy. With Him we can scale any wall. With Him we can fight off temptation. With Him we can preserve — or if needed, restore our integrity. If we want to make a good Lent, our main focus should not be on what we give up, what prayers we say, what charity we practice. These are all good, but if we want to make a good Lent, more than that, if we want to be better Christians, our focus should be on our integrity, the harmonious union of our physical and spiritual lives. Jesus Christ offers us dignity. Jesus Christ offers us peace. Jesus Christ offers us integrity.

—taken from the writings for Father Joseph Pellegrino, which appear on the internet.

ATTENDANCE:

If you attend Mass regularly here at Our Lady Chapel, it would be helpful if you filled out a form [name, address, phone number, children, etc.] indicating this fact, if you have not already done so. Such information not only helps us to know who is attending Our Lady Chapel; it also is of great assistance to us in record keeping [for our friend, the IRS] of any contributions which you may make.

ENVELOPES:

- When you need a **new supply** of envelopes, please feel free to take a supply of them from the table in the vestibule, or call Father John at the Campus Ministry Office [473-3560].
- When you **use** your envelope, please make sure that **your number** is on it. If you need to know your number, please call the Campus Ministry Office. Thanks.

WEEKLY OFFERING:

Baskets will be passed during the “Preparation Rite” and will be brought to the altar as part of the Offerings to help offset chapel daily operating expenses. When you choose to use the envelopes, your donations to Our Lady Chapel will be acknowledged so that you have a record for the IRS.

Total Offerings: Saturday [2/6/16] ----- \$ 664.00
Total Offerings: Sunday [2/7/16] ----- \$ 1,233.00
Total Offerings: Wednesday [2/10/16] ----- \$ 373.00

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

Father John will be available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you on **every Saturday** between **3:30 – 4:00 PM**. Confessions are also available “by appointment.” The Reconciliation Room is located in the small chapel directly across from Father John’s Office



INTEGRITY:

He was alone in the desert. No one would see Him. No one would witness His giving in to the devil. He had plenty of excuses available. He was hungry. He had been fasting for forty days. Why shouldn't He do it? He needed to eat. He felt within Himself the call to lead His people from oppression. With one meaningless action He could become powerful. Wouldn't it be worth it if He could establish Israel as the greatest empire in the world? He knew that He was special — chosen. What would be so wrong with His grasping at power when it was offered to Him? Maybe this is what He was chosen to do. Then there was that third temptation. He believed in scripture. Isn't it reasonable that He should demand a sign from Father?

The Father certainly was demanding a great deal from Him. There were plenty of excuses Jesus could have made if He had given in to the devil's temptations. But there was something that would be demanded of Him — He would have to sacrifice His integrity. He would have to sacrifice that spiritual part of Him that said: "Trust in God," for the sake of the physical part of Him that said: "Seize the moment." In the wilderness, where no one could observe, Jesus chose not self, but service of God. He used the Torah to assert that He quoted that human life is defined by more than physical subsistence, not by bread alone [Deuteronomy 8:30], and that service is owed only to the ultimate source of life, the creator, God Deuteronomy 6:13]. The third testing from the parapet of the Temple was the most severe, for in it the very support for Jesus' opposition to the devil was subverted. The devil quoted scripture — it would certainly not be the last time that evil would use scripture as a weapon. The devil told Jesus to test His son-ship against the promise of God to protect Him. Jesus rebuked the devil, again using the Torah — "You shall not test the Lord your God" [Deuteronomy 6:13]. He will not force the Father's hand. He will be the servant of whom Isaiah spoke [see Isaiah 50:10] who walks in darkness yet trusts in the name of the Lord.

Later on, Jesus will leap from another high place — at the end of the Gospel, Jesus leapt into his Father's hands as He cried out: "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" [see Psalm 30]. After the temptations, the devil left Jesus — for a time. He would return when once more the Lord was severely weakened — this time during the emotional turmoil of the Agony in the Garden. The devil would return, but again he would find the Lord strong in faith. Jesus's integrity was intact.

We are both physical and spiritual. We have the capacity to encounter the love of God. We have the ability to love as God loves. We also have free will. We are capable of compromising our existence, our integrity. When we sin, we lose the union of our body and soul — we plunge into turmoil. Sure, we might make believe that there is nothing wrong with us. We are certainly expert at rationalizing our actions, but inside we are torn up. When we sin we are in turmoil.

When we fight off sin, we are in peace. Every priest has had the humbling experience of walking with people on their journey from turmoil to peace. The experience takes place in the sacrament of penance. The priest is both an intermediary with God forgiving sins, and a witness to a person becoming whole. This is humbling because the priest is acutely aware of his own sinfulness — the times that he has chosen the physical over the spiritual, chaos over integrity. At the same time it is a beautiful experience for a priest to walk with a penitent towards peace. The priest is privileged to be part of a person becoming fully human, integrating the physical and spiritual dimensions of his or her life, trusting in God to be whole. St. Luke's Gospel [4:1-13] demands that we take the blinders off our heart and see where we are in turmoil. The Scriptures demand that we listen to the Word of God calling us to be the people whom the Lord created us to be. Jesus offers us peace over turmoil.

Where is your turmoil? Where do you lack integrity? Is it in your relationship with family and friends? Are hatred and grudges destroying you? — "But Father, you don't know what he or she said to me, did to me." Again, are hatred and grudges destroying you? Is your lifestyle wholesome? Are you



On such things we will be judged. For this reason, I expressed my hope that "the Christian people may reflect on the corporal and spiritual works of mercy; this will be a way to reawaken our conscience, which too often has grown dull in the face of poverty, and to enter more deeply into the heart of the Gospel where the poor have a special experience of God's mercy" [*Misericordiae Vultus*, #15]. For in the poor, the flesh of Christ "becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished, and the exiled — to be acknowledged, touched, and cared for by us" [*Misericordiae Vultus*, #15]. It is the unprecedented and scandalous mystery of the extension in time of the suffering of the Innocent Lamb — the burning bush of gratuitous love. Before this love, we can, like Moses, take off our sandals [see Exodus 3:5] — especially when the poor are our brothers or sisters in Christ who are suffering for their faith.

In the light of this love, which is as strong as death [see Song of Songs 8:6], the real poor are revealed as those who refuse to see themselves as such. They consider themselves rich, but they are actually the poorest of the poor. This is because they are slaves to sin which leads them to use wealth and power not for the service of God and others, but to stifle within their hearts the profound sense that they too are only poor beggars. The greater their power and wealth, the more this blindness and deception can grow. It can even reach the point of being blind to Lazarus begging at their doorstep [see Luke 16:20-21]. Lazarus, the poor man, is a figure of Christ, who through the poor pleads for our conversion. As such, he represents the possibility of conversion which God offers us — and which we may well fail to see. Such blindness is often accompanied by the proud illusion of our own omnipotence, which reflects in a sinister way the diabolical "you will be like God" [see Genesis 3:5] which is the root of all sin. This illusion can likewise take social and political forms — shown by the totalitarian systems of the twentieth century, and, in our own day, by the ideologies of monopolizing thought, and techno-science which would make God irrelevant and reduce man to raw material to be exploited. This illusion can also be seen in the sinful structures linked to a model of false development based on the idolatry of money, which leads to lack of concern for the fate of the poor on the part of wealthier individuals and societies — they close their doors, refusing even to see the poor.

For all of us, then, the season of Lent in this Jubilee Year is a favorable time to overcome our existential alienation by listening to God's word, and by practicing the works of mercy. In the corporal works of mercy we touch the flesh of Christ in our brothers and sisters who need to be fed, clothed, sheltered, and visited; in the spiritual works of mercy — counsel, instruction, forgiveness, admonishment and prayer — we touch more directly our own sinfulness. The corporal and spiritual works of mercy must never be separated. By touching the flesh of the crucified Jesus in those who suffer, sinners can receive the gift of realizing that they, too, are poor and in need. By taking this path, the "proud", the "powerful" and the "wealthy" spoken of in the "Magnificat" can also be embraced and undeservedly loved by the crucified Lord who died and rose for them. This love alone is the answer to that yearning for infinite happiness and love that we think we can satisfy with the idols of knowledge, power and riches. Yet the danger always remains that by a constant refusal to open the doors of their hearts to Christ who knocks on them in the poor, the proud, rich and powerful will end up condemning themselves and plunging into the eternal abyss of solitude which is Hell. The pointed words of Abraham apply to them — and to all of us — "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" [see Luke 16:29]. Such attentive listening will best prepare us to celebrate the final victory over sin and death of the Bridegroom, now risen, who desires to purify his Betrothed in expectation of his coming.

Let us not waste this season of Lent — this favorable a time for conversion! We ask this through the maternal intercession of the Virgin Mary, who, encountering the greatness of God's mercy freely bestowed upon her, was the first to acknowledge her lowliness [see Luke 1:48] and to call herself the Lord's humble servant [see Luke 1:38].

—Francis

CHARTING THE COURSE OF LIFE:

The first weekend in Lent always begins with an account of the Temptation of Jesus in the Desert when Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights. We can see how fitting this is when we realize that apart from the Sundays, Lent is forty days long. Of course, for us Lent is nothing like a desert — we do not leave our homes. Rather we spend this period of time in spiritual preparation for the great feast of Easter. But it is useful for us to think about the fact of the Temptation of Jesus. Of course, the temptations that Jesus experienced were “his experiences” — they are specifically designed to appeal to his particular status.

The temptations that we are subjected to are a bit more banal. We are more inclined to be led astray by the temptations of greed, lust, jealousy, and hate — to name a few. Our temptations can be summed up in one word — selfishness. This is the temptation to turn in on oneself and to give way to the desire to have our perceived needs gratified whatever the cost to other people. What we have to constantly fight against is a deep rooted self-centeredness which manifests itself in the overwhelming desire to acquire material things, in an uninhibited indulgence of lust, in a constant wish to judge and put down other people, and in the wish to exclude God from our lives.

All this runs clean contrary to the way we are made. Human beings are social animals — we entirely depend on each other. If we are prevented from interacting with other people, we shrivel up and die. Our intellectual development, for example, depends entirely on stimulating conversation with our fellow human beings. So temptations take us away from being fully human.

Jesus conquered the temptations he was presented with by a sort of spiritual joust with the Devil — each one quoting scripture at the other [Luke 4:1-13]. This was a battle which the Devil was bound to lose — Jesus being the Son of God was always going to be true to his divine nature, and the Devil hadn't a hope of winning the fight. But with us it is a bit different — we frequently lose the battle against temptation. Our will is weak, and the temptations too glamorous for us to be able to resist them. And in the modern age, the media has joined the battle, and millions of dollars are spent on subtle techniques to convince us to become materialists and to ignore the values that were ingrained into us by our parents.

Many of the things we find ourselves absorbed in are good in themselves, but we take them too far. For example, an interest in fashion is good in itself, but it can lead to an irresistible urge to be constantly buying the latest and the smartest clothes. We get so involved in fashion that we find no time for anything else. Or we can become absorbed in providing the best conditions for our family — which again is in principle something good. However, we can find ourselves desiring to live always in a bigger and better house, and spend more and more hours at work to raise the cash, ending up never seeing the family that we thought we loved so much.

The same goes for passing attractions to someone other than our spouse. It is good to be interested in other people, to be attracted to them and to socialize. But these things can get out of control, and we find ourselves pursuing inappropriate relationships and affairs which put the fundamental relationship with our spouse at risk. A big temptation for many in the modern world is internet pornography which can very easily become addictive and extremely hard to resist. It corrupts us by distorting our view of human sexuality and leaving us unfit for normal relationships.

The big question is how to resist these and a myriad other temptations? How are we to preserve our integrity? How are we to cope in a world in which we constantly pulled this way and that? How are we to overcome these things which inevitably pull us away from the person we want to be?

The first thing to observe is that much of the work which enables us to overcome temptation is done in childhood. It is in childhood that we learn how to maintain good boundaries; it is our parents who



LIVING THE MYSTERY IN OUR WORLD:

One of the most powerful convictions of our faith is that we follow a “God of history.” Our God doesn't sit around heaven all day just pulling our strings. We relate to a God who is part of us — a God who works through the same history all of us encounter every day. This novel belief goes back to the earliest days of our biblical faith. We are reminded about this as Moses delivers a profession of faith which all Israelites are expected to make — “My father was a wandering Aramean who went down to Egypt with a small household and lived there as an alien. But there he became a nation great, strong, and numerous”. As Moses continues, an amazing thing happens — the very history that he is relating becomes his own history — “When the Egyptians maltreated and oppressed us, imposing hard labor upon us” [Deuteronomy 26:1-11].

Biblical faith can't be understood without first understanding the history of those who profess that faith. God didn't work in peoples' lives just once upon a time. For our sacred authors, God continues to work in our lives right here and now.

Paul was convinced of that when he reminded the Christian community in Rome: “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” [Romans 10:8-13]. It's a word that's not only a part of their daily lives — it's also a word which cuts through the human-made distinctions cluttering those daily lives — in the Apostle's day and age, the distinction between Jew and Gentile. No matter our genetic or religious background, God's word is embedded in our history.

Perhaps that's why Luke — along with Matthew — lists three temptations that the historical Jesus faced before he began his preaching ministry. Jesus is not planning on becoming a cloistered monk or a detached philosopher. He's determined to proclaim God's word in the real world. That means that he will have to confront the pitfalls of a real world. In his situation, he'll have to avoid just taking care of peoples' physical needs, to sell out to the forces of evil, or to limit himself to doing only the spectacular. He commits himself for the duration of his ministry to fight against these three real world temptations. Jesus is determined to relate to others on the deepest levels possible — to be guided by God's plan for creation, and to do what's necessary for the people around him, even if it never makes the evening news. This is why Luke ends this scene in his Gospel with the comment: “When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time” — that time could have been just a few hours, or days at most. The historical Jesus had to confront these temptations throughout his ministry.

In this context, it's good to note that one of our Christian Scriptures' most significant concepts is rarely preached on. This concept is buried in the three Synoptic Passion Narratives which are proclaimed on Palm Sunday. And because of their length, there is not much time to homilize on anything — much less on one single line. That line simply says: at the death of Jesus, “the veil of the temple was torn in two” [Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, and Luke 23:45].

The huge tapestry which separated the temple's Holy of Holies from the Holy Place, was regarded as dividing the sacred from the profane. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are telling us that Jesus' death and resurrection destroyed that division. In their theology, now everything and everyone is sacred.

Does it help us do a double take on how we experience the sacred history of our everyday lives, or are we more secure trying to repair the veil?

—taken from the writings of Father Roger Karban, which appear on the internet

CHILDREN'S BULLETINS:

Each week, we are making available a **Children's Worship Bulletin**. There are **two editions:** [3-6] and [7-12]. They are available on the table as you leave. The Bulletin focuses on the readings for the week. These are wonderful tools for your children to learn more about the scripture readings for the week. We hope you will take them for your families or your grandchildren. Thanks.



- “There is no misery that could be a match for My mercy” [St. Faustina].

When you need humility:

- “Lord, have mercy on me! I make no effort to conceal my wounds. You are my physician, I your patient. You are merciful; I stand in need of mercy” [St. Augustine].
- “Lean on your Beloved, because the soul who abandons themselves in the hands of Jesus in all they do, is carried in his arms” [St. Clare].
- “Our sins are nothing but a grain of sand along the great mountain of the mercy of God” [St. John Vianney].
- “Just take everything exactly as it is, put it in God’s hands, and leave it with him. Then you will be able to rest in him — really rest” [St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross].
- “s gifts increase in you, let your humility grow, for you must consider that everything is given to you on loan” [St. Pio].
- “True progress quietly and persistently moves along without notice” [Saint Francis de Sales].
- “Great holiness consists in carrying out the ‘little duties’ of each moment” [St. Josemaría Escrivá].
- “Do you wish to rise? Begin by descending. You plan a tower that will pierce the clouds? Lay first the foundation of humility” [St. Augustine].
- “There is more value in a little study of humility and in a single act of it than in all the knowledge in the world” [St. Teresa of Avila].
- “The most powerful weapon to conquer the devil is humility. For, as he does not know at all how to employ it, neither does he know how to defend himself from it” [St. Vincent de Paul].

—taken from the writings of Rachel Penate, executive vice-president of LifeTeen.

LIFE TEEN:

Our next Life Teen gathering will be on **Sunday, February 14th** after Mass. Our topic is: **If you were going to send God a valentine, what would it look like?** Bring your friends. Come and try us out. Life Teen generally meets right after Sunday Mass — from **11:30 AM—1:00 PM** in the **Lennon Board Room**. Life Teen is open to **all high school aged young people**. **Just call the office and let us know that you are going to be coming**. We ask you to do this because there will be food involved. We have a great deal of fun together and we grow in our faith at the same time. **Respond to your texts and/or emails, or call the chapel office [440-473-3560] to be notified. If you can’t join us on February 14th, our next meeting will be on Sunday, February 28th. Topic of our conversation will have a Lenten Theme.** Please join us for a wonderful experience. Please continue to remember all our teens and young people in your prayers.



LIFE TEEN

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP — THE EDGE:

Our next EDGE gathering will be on **Sunday, February 21st** at after Mass. Our topic is: **How to make the most of your Lenten Journey**. Bring your friends. Come and try us out. Come and find out what **the EDGE** is all about. If you have not joined us before, that’s OK. **Just call the office and let us know that you are going to be coming**. We ask you to do this because there will be food involved. Our EDGE Youth Group has a Faith-Service-Social component, and we look forward to your participation. All are welcome. **If you can’t join us on February 21st, our next meeting will be on Sunday, March 6th when we will be going to Regina Health Center to minister to the patients — many of whom are priests and religious.** Please join us for a wonderful experience.



instill in us the vital habits of discipline and get us into good habits. It is our parents who teach us to share and to be unselfish. It is they who help us to lay down patterns of good behavior which stay with us for the rest of our lives.

For many years I was the chaplain to a women’s prison and I often observed that criminal behavior was passed down through families. If one parent had been in prison, there was a greatly increased risk that the child will also end up in prison. This was because the attitudes of the parent are handed down to the children, and their selfishness and disregard for the law is quickly learned by their offspring.

So the role of parents is crucial. It is vital that they instill in their children the values that will help them to live a good and disciplined life. The importance of this task cannot be underestimated. It is a sacred duty to teach one’s children the fundamental values of the Christian life and indeed it is the greatest gift you can give them. That is what you might call the remote preparation for resisting temptation, the work done in childhood where we are imbued with the values of truth, honesty, sharing and so on.

More difficult though is later in life when we are confronted with a major temptation. When we find ourselves faced with the desire to enter an inappropriate relationship, to steal a sum of money, to indulge ourselves beyond what is reasonable, to take advantage of another person, or to gossip about a neighbor — these are more difficult to resist.

One good way is to have clear and fairly rigid rules for your life. As we have noted this is easier if you have been taught the difference between right and wrong at an early age. But it is imperative to develop such rules for one’s life if we are not to be led astray.

Another way is to balance wrong actions with good ones. For example we might find ourselves engaged in salacious gossip about a neighbor. As soon as we realize what we are doing, then we ought immediately to try to turn things around and say something positive about that person to balance the negative.

Most often though resisting temptation is simply about will power — it is making a decision in advance about what to do in a given set of circumstances and then sticking to it. In this way we build up a body of good habits that will sustain us through our lives.

We have begun Lent; we resolve during Lent to live more like Christ, we want to live good lives and most of all we want to resist temptations. Let us then work hard to build up good habits and patterns of behavior that will keep us on the straight and narrow. Let us live disciplined lives with our ultimate priorities clear in our minds so that we can inhabit this world in a pure and contented way, sure and certain that the journey on which we are embarked has Christ as its goal.

—taken from the writings of Father Alex McAllister, S.D.S., which appear on the internet

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Monday: | Leviticus 19:1-18, Matthew 25:31-46 |
| Tuesday: | Isaiah 55:10-11, Matthew 6:7-15 |
| Wednesday: | Jonah 3:1-10, Luke 11:29-32 |
| Thursday: | Ester C:12-25, Matthew 7:7-12 |
| Friday: | Ezekiel 18:21-28, Matthew 5:20-25 |
| Saturday: | Deuteronomy 26:16-19, Matthew 5:43-48 |
| 2nd Week in Lent: | Genesis 15:5-18, Philippians 3:17-4:1, Luke 9:28-38 |

40 QUOTES FOR 40 DAYS:

Browse through Scripture, and you'll notice the number 40 is about as popular as Taylor Swift's Instagram — the Great Flood lasted for 40 days [Genesis 7:12]; Moses spent 40 days on Mt. Sinai [Exodus 34:28]; the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 days [Numbers 14:33]; Jesus fasted in the wilderness for 40 days [Matthew 4:2]. You are about to enter into the season of Lent, lasting 40 days.

Coincidence? No.

The number 40 represents something so beautiful. Lent is a period of preparation and cleansing [through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving] for something great that is coming. Lent is the perfect time to refresh our hearts and refocus ourselves on what really matters. That is why we give up the things [good and bad] that distract us and lead us away from God.

But, Lent is also a dangerous time to settle for unrealistic expectations or mediocre outcomes — especially when we start to question what saying “no” to that delicious already-prepared-cheeseburger-sitting-in-front-of-us-on-a-random-Friday-in-Lent can actually do for us.

Lent is so much more than meaningless abstinence — it is about giving up the little things to grow in our ability to not give in to the larger things. It is about growing in patience with ourselves and in relationship with God through prayer. It is about remembering God's incredible mercy and His never-ending desire to forgive us — to forgive you, to forgive me. It is about growing in humility, because the sooner we recognize we can't do it all on our own, the quicker we realize God has it all under control.

Yet, we remain human, and we forget these simple realities. So, we must be reminded that attaining sainthood isn't just a luxury for the few, but a reality for us all. This Lent, when you find yourself needing a little extra push to fight harder, see clearer, wait better, remember that 40 days is really not as long as you think it is.

When your patience is thin and fasting loses its meaning:

- “Fasting cleanses the soul, raises the mind, subjects one's flesh to the spirit, renders the heart contrite and humble, scatters the clouds of concupiscence, quenches the fire of lust, and kindles the true light of chastity” [St. Augustine].
- “You could say that prayer without fasting is like boxing with one hand tied behind your back, and that fasting without prayer is, well, dieting” [Matt Fradd].
- “When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you” [Matthew 6:6].
- “Fasting and almsgiving are ‘the two wings of prayer’ which enable it to gain momentum and more easily reach even to God” [St. Augustine].
- “Patience obtains all things” [St. Teresa of Avila].
- “Fasting is most intimately connected with prayer. For the mind of one who is filled with food and drink is so borne down as not to be able to raise itself to the contemplation of God, or even to understand what prayer means” [Catechism of the Council of Trent].
- “The goal of fasting is inner unity. This means hearing, but not with the ear; hearing, but not with the understanding; it is hearing with the spirit, with your whole being” [Thomas Merton].
- “Patience is power. Patience is not an absence of action; rather it is ‘timing,’ it waits on the right time to act, for the right principles and in the right way” [Fulton J. Sheen].
- “Patience is the companion of wisdom” [St. Augustine].
- “Have patience with all things, but first of all with yourself” [St. Francis de Sales].
- “Fasting is the soul of prayer, mercy [almsgiving] is the lifeblood of fasting. Let no one try to separate them. So if you pray, fast; if you fast, show mercy” [St. Peter Chrysologus].
- “Do you wish your prayer to fly toward God? Make for it two wings: fasting and

almsgiving” [St. Augustine].

When prayer seems difficult:

- “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit” [Psalm 34:18].
- “You don't need to use many or high-sounding words. Just repeat often: ‘Lord, show me your mercy as you know best.’ Or: ‘God, come to my assistance’ [St. Marcarius of Alexandria].
- “Seek God in all things and we shall find God by our side” [St. Peter Claver].
- “You don't know how to pray? Put yourself in the presence of God, and as soon as you have said: ‘Lord, I don't know how to pray!’ you can be sure you've already begun” [St. Josemaría Escrivá].
- “Seek a relationship when you pray — not answers. You won't always find answers, but you will always find Jesus” [Father Mike Schmitz].
- “Prayer is being on terms of friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret with Him who, we know, loves us” [St. Teresa of Avila].
- “By turning your eyes on God in meditation, your whole soul will be filled with God” [St. Francis de Sales].
- “If the lungs of prayer and the Word of God do not nourish the breath of spiritual life, we risk suffocating in the midst of a thousand daily cares. Prayer is the breath of the soul and of life” [Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI].
- “Prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy” [St. Therese of Lisieux].
- “Pray, hope, and don't worry. Worry is useless. God is merciful and will hear your prayer” [St. Pio of Pietrelcina].

When you struggle to find confidence in God's mercy and forgiveness:

- “God's face is the face of a merciful father who is always patient. Have you thought about God's patience, the patience he has with each one of us? That is his mercy. He always has patience, patience with us; he understands us, he waits for us, he does not tire of forgiving us if we are able to return to him with a contrite heart” [Pope Francis].
- “You do not need to wallow in guilt. Wallow in the mercy of God” [St. John Vianney].
- “Confession heals, confession justifies, confession grants pardon of sin. In confession there is a chance for mercy. Believe it firmly. Hope and have confidence in confession” [St. Isidore].
- “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” [Lamentations 3:22-23].
- “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” [John 1:5].
- “God creates out of nothing. Wonderful you say. Yes, to be sure, but He does what is still more wonderful — He makes saints out of sinners” [Soren Kierkegaard].
- “God acts mercifully, not indeed by going against His justice, but by doing something more than justice” [St. Thomas Aquinas].
- “God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy” [Pope Francis].
- “For you, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy to all who call on you” [Psalm 86:5].