



Mission Statement

Catholic Community of St. John Neumann

*FOUNDED on the teachings of Jesus Christ,
NOURISHED by the hospitality of the Califon Christian
Communities,*

*FORMED with a commitment to Social Ministry, and
STRENGTHENED by the Holy Spirit*

*The Catholic Community of St. John Neumann is
a jubilant people on a continuing spiritual journey of hope:*

TO CELEBRATE and DEEPEN our faith

TO SHARE our unique gifts, talents and treasures

TO CHERISH all life

TO LIVE in openness, acceptance and love.

Annual Parish Goal

*We, as ministers, will foster
an inviting and spiritual Catholic community for all,
especially to those away from the Church,
by growing in and witnessing to our faith in the mercy of God.*

A Christian Community of the Catholic Tradition

Diocese of Metuchen

Most Rev. James F. Checchio,
JCD, MBA
Bishop of Metuchen

Most Rev. Paul G. Bootkoski, DD
Bishop Emeritus

www.diometuchen.org

Our Parish

Rev. Abraham Orapankal, PhD
..... Pastor
Rev. J William Mickiewicz.....
..... Founding Pastor Emeritus
Earl Roberts.....Deacon
Mary Cangelosi..... Trustee
Fred Heimall..... Trustee

Mailing Address:

PO Box 455
Califon, NJ 07830

Office Center:

398 County Route 513
Califon, NJ
908-832-2513
908-832-7618 fax
www.ccsjn.org

Worshipping at:

398 County Road 513
(Church Center)

Saturday Vigil Mass5:30 p.m.
Sunday8:00 a.m.
Sunday10:30 a.m.
First Friday Holy Hour7:00 p.m.

Worshipping at:

390 County Road 513
(Neumann Residence)

Check the bulletin for any changes

Weekday Masses:

Tuesday8:00 a.m.
Friday7:00 a.m.

Reconciliation:

Saturday.....5:00 p.m.
Or anytime by appointment.

This Week at Saint John's

Mass Intentions

Tuesday, February 20

8:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

Friday, February 23

7:00 a.m. Intention of the Celebrant

Saturday, February 24

5:30 p.m. Frances Connolly, req.
Ledoux Family

Sunday, February 25

8:00 a.m. Mary Lorraine Fraire, req.
Diane Lehnert

10:30 a.m. Mary E. Byrne, req.
Brisson Family



Parish Calendar

Sunday, February 18 - 1st Sunday of Lent / Snow & Heat Collection

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
9:00 a.m. Small Group (Seton Room)
10:30 a.m. Mass - Abeles Baptism (Church Center)
3:00 p.m. Rite of Election for RCIA (Cathedral)

Monday, February 19 - Presidents' Day / Office Closed

6:30 p.m. OCP Meeting (Seton Room)
7:00 p.m. Small Group (Drexel Room)

Tuesday, February 20 - Lenten Weekday

8:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
11:00 a.m. Small Group (Church Center Loft)
7:00 p.m. Property Management Meeting (Drexel Room)
7:00 p.m. Budget Meeting (Seton Room)
7:00 p.m. Small Group (Neumann Residence)
7:30 p.m. Family Life Meeting (Upper Room)

Wednesday, February 21 - Saint Peter Damian, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

10:30 a.m. Small Group (Church Center)
7:00 p.m. R.C.I.A. (Upper Room)
7:15 p.m. Small Group (Office Center Kitchen)
7:15 p.m. Small Group (Drexel Room)
7:30 p.m. Book Club (Seton Room)

Thursday, February 22 - The Chair of St. Peter the Apostle

10:00 a.m. S.H.I.P. (Church and Office Center Kitchens)
5:00 p.m. Cleaning (Church Center)
7:30 p.m. Music/Bells (Church Center)
7:30 p.m. Small Group (Upper Room)

Friday, February 23 - Saint Polycarp, Bishop and Martyr

7:00 a.m. Mass (Neumann Residence Chapel)
6:00 p.m. Soup Supper - Hosted by Rel Ed. (Church Center)
7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross (Church Center)

Saturday, February 24 - Lenten Weekday

7:00 a.m. Men's Spirituality Breakfast (Office Center)
5:30 p.m. Mass (Church)
6:30 p.m. Coffee Hosted by Pastoral Council (Narthex)

Mass Schedule - February 24/25

Saturday	5:30 p.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Jim Murray
Altar Server	Upwood Family
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Joann Gardner
.....	2 Needed
Sunday	8:00 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	Chris Bitters
Altar Server	Patterson Family
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Diane Lehnert
.....	Dorothy Sima, Joe Sima
Sunday	10:30 a.m.
Celebrant	Fr. Abraham Orapankal
Reader	David Geerinck
Altar Server	Souza Family
Music Eucharistic Minister	Debby Kelemen
Ministers of the Eucharist.....	Donna Torczon, Peter Royal
.....	Doris Royal, Jane Albert, Jim DeVito

Sunday, February 25 - 2nd Sunday of Lent / Development of Peoples Collection

8:00 a.m. Mass (Church Center)
9:00 a.m. Coffee Hosted by Pastoral Council (Narthex)
9:00 a.m. Small Group (Seton Room)
10:30 a.m. Mass - Abeles Baptism (Church Center)
10:30 a.m. Children's Liturgy of the Word (Narthex)
11:30 a.m. Coffee Hosted by Pastoral Council (Narthex)
11:30 a.m. Discover St. John's Lunch (Drexel Room)

NEW AT ST. JOHN'S?

If you are new at St. John's, see one of our greeters at Mass to receive a small information packet to introduce you to the parish. Contact France Kennedy at 908-307-7879 to register at the parish.

Remembered at Mass



We stand together in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The following will be remembered during the Holy Eucharist: **Grady Gordon, Gladys Angeline, Roy Rittman, Grace Meleo, Pablo Perez, Virginia Kluge, and Marilyn Pepperman.**

Deceased: **Grady Gordon**, good friend of the Donovans, **Gladys Angeline**, aunt of Sharon Janks, **Roy Rittman**, father or Roy Rittman, **Grace Meleo**, Aunt of Jim King, **Pablo Perez**, father of Maritza Proano/Perez, **Virginia Kluge**, mother of Lynn Johnson and **Marilyn Pepperman**, mother of Alan Pepperman. May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord and may their families find strength in the Lord and comfort and support from family and friends.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK....

Dear Friends,

The Valentine's Dinner-dance we had a week ago was a fabulous success. I am not referring to the success in terms of the handsome amount we got which will go to help our teens to have a formative experience at the Catholic Heart Work Camp this July, but in terms of the response of the attendees who had a great time of fellowship and fun. The fact that so many stayed on dancing and having a good time even after the official conclusion, shows that people were truly happy and involved in it fully – thanks to Mary Connolly who did all the planning and organizing, together with Mike -her beloved husband and partner in mission - and with other wonderful people who will be gratefully acknowledged soon. Yet everyone had a real motivation in making it such a great success, making it possible for our youth to attend the CHWC and have a strengthening of their Catholic identity. Yes, it was truly a success.

Now, what about making LENT a success? We all need a similar motivation if we want to make Lent a success, meaning, to make Lent truly meaningful and fulfilling for us. The motivation is the awareness that we can be better persons, that we can go beyond our present unhappy state of mind and experience true peace and joy if only we are willing to make some changes in our lives. Any attempt to build a spiritual life that neglects the pillars of prayer, fasting and almsgiving is building on sand. That's why the gospel for Ash Wednesday is worth reading and reflecting over again. Please read *Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18. Jesus is teaching us in that passage:* Prayer purifies our intentions and relates all we do to God. Fasting detaches us from our comfort and ourselves. Almsgiving reflects our identification with the poor of Jesus' family and reminds us that our true wealth is not in things, but in the love of God. We all need to do a reality check on our spiritual lives to make sure we are committed to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Last Sunday I detailed the many opportunities our Parish is offering. It is so gratifying to see the great response many of you have given by acting on those suggestions already. Today I leave you with this prayer:

Lord, you know how much I need you and depend on you. You know my weakness and my faults. I put all my confidence in your love and mercy in my daily actions. I hope to learn to trust more in your power, your promise, and your grace. Lord, I wish to start this season of Lent with a sincere desire to grow in love, loving you more, loving my family and friends more, especially reaching out to those I am not so fond of. Therefore Lord, help me learn to change what needs to change in my life. Give me the grace to begin this Lent with great enthusiasm and love, practicing a Lenten program of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Help me live it with joy, knowing that I am living it in your presence to please you and to live in true fellowship with those around me. Amen.

Have a happy and holy Lent.
Your brother in Christ,
Fr. Abraham Orapankal



SOUP N STATIONS

Please join us for Soup n Stations each Friday in Lent. Soup Supper starts at 6pm and Stations of the Cross follow at 7pm.

The following is a list of the groups/ministries that will be sponsoring each of the soup suppers. (Feb. 23 - Rel. Ed., Mar. 2 - Fund Raising/ Finance, Mar. 9 - R.C.I.A., Mar. 16 - Mary Connolly, Mar. 23 - Pastoral Council)

If you have a special soup you like to make or just like to make any soup, please contact the office, 908-832-2513, and let us know which Friday will work for you. We hope that everyone can make at least one of the weeks during lent.

AUCTION DATE SET FOR SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 2018

It's time to gather up our resources of Time, Talent and Treasure - to insure this Crucial Fund Raiser is a success!

We are still seeking two people to co-chair this event. Please join us in the loft after the 10:30 Mass this weekend for a one hour planning meeting to help us get things started. Any and all levels of involvement is greatly appreciated.

1ST SUNDAY OF LENT

February 18, 2018

"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God...." Mark 1:14

Do you ever think about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to come into Galilee, knowing that John had just been arrested for teaching the same message that Jesus was proclaiming. It must have taken great love and trust for Jesus to do what the Father had sent Him here on earth to do. In the same way, following a life of stewardship takes great love and trust from us. We must be willing to surrender completely to God, trusting that God will always give us all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.

HOW I PLAN TO LIVE LENT

"For me, the Lenten season has always been a time to refocus on God and get my life in right order. I want to Live Lent so I can live faith with greater integrity and in deeper communion with God and my neighbor. I have come to realize that Lent is not so much about giving up things as it is about seizing the opportunity to be all that God has called me to be-a holy, healthy, and loving person-a disciple of Jesus Christ committed to transforming my faith into real-life action."
Theresa Rickard

Parish Contact Information

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Earl Roberts Deacon
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Sharon Janks Pastoral Administrator
Email sjanks@ccsjn.org
France Kennedy Pastoral Associate
Email fkennedy@ccsjn.org
Kerri Caldaro Financial Administrator
Email kaldaro@ccsjn.org
Wayne Infusino Maintenance
Religious Education 908-832-2162
Renee Ciszewski Director of Religious Education
Email renee@ccsjn.org
Jo Ann Jarvis Office of Catechesis
Email jjarvis@ccsjn.org
Social Ministry socialministry@ccsjn.org
Project Earth Garden... projectearth@ccsjn.org
Bulletin..... bulletin@ccsjn.org
Youth Ministry..... sjnygroup@gmail.com

Christian Formation

1ST EUCHARIST CLASSES

Saturday, March 3, 3:30 p.m.



The next First Eucharist session will be held on Saturday, March 3, at 3:30 p.m. in the Church Center.

LENTEN RICE BOWLS FOR CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES



Join our parish community—and nearly 14,000 Catholic communities across the United States—in a life-changing Lenten journey with CRS Rice Bowl. Throughout Lent we will pray, fast, learn and give as a way to reach out in solidarity with our brothers and sisters around the world. Prayerfully consider participating in this Lenten program – 25% of your giving goes to help needy families in our diocese and 75% goes to Catholic Relief Services' developmental projects around the world such as agricultural, water, education and microfinance projects that help families to support themselves. Rice Bowl packets will be available in the Narthex and will be distributed at all catechetical gatherings in February. Visit crsricebowl.org to learn more.

ADULTS INVITED TO GIFT SESSIONS WITH FR. ABRAHAM



Amoris laetitia (English: *The Joy of Love*) is a post-synodal apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis addressing the pastoral care of families and was released on 8 April 8, 2016. It follows the Synods on the Family held in 2015.

The exhortation covers a wide range of topics related to marriage and family life as well as the contemporary challenges faced by families throughout the world. It encourages both pastors and members of the laity to accompany and care for families and others in situations of particular need. *Amoris laetitia* also includes an extended reflection on the meaning of love in the day-to-day reality of family life.

During adult formation this month Fr. Abraham covered the topics discussed in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 8. It was well attended and well appreciated as it gave a greater understanding of the efforts of Pope Francis to bring about Pastoral changes for the good fo the whole church. Please consider joining similar sessions in the future. Contact Renee Ciszewski renee@ccsjn.org with any questions. Hope to see you at our next session.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STATION

Visit the religious education station! The table is located in the narthex next to the sacristy. This table will contain materials that are distributed to the GIFT Faith Formation families. The take home material provides additional reading, craft ideas and suggestions to enrich your family's faith journey. Our sacramental preparation class will display their most recent craft, sharing what they are learning as they prepare for First Eucharist. If you missed a session, are a grandparent or just looking for activities to share with your family, consider bringing home some of the materials displayed on the table. Contact renee@ccsjn.org with questions or comments.

Social Ministry

SOCIAL MINISTRY UPDATE

Have you been missing us in the bulletin? Thank you for bearing with us during this transition period with two new co-chairs coordinating social ministry as Father Abraham had announce in a prior bulletin. Please also check out the Social Ministry Bulletin Board in the narthex for more detailed information e.g. photos and card from St. Mary's Church in Coburn, VA.

Let's recap all that's happened in the last few months:

Back to School Giving Tree: Was a success, collecting school supplies and gift cards for our local families and Catholic Charities. We thank JT Altavilla for once again running this.

Our Bi-annual coat drive: We collected well over 300 coats. Almost 4x more than our last coat drive. The coats, hats, scarves & gloves were distributed to local families in need, as well as people in Newark, the Salvation Army and Operation Chillout, a veteran's outreach program. Special thanks to the entire office staff for supporting this program as well to all the generous people who donated coats within and outside of our parish.

Holiday Food Drive: During our Thanksgiving & Christmas food drive we helped 30 local families and individuals in need. We would like to thank Jeremy Hoffmann for once again helping run the food drives and thank everyone who helped buy, pack & deliver the food, even in the snow.

Christmas Angel Program: This program provided a special Christmas gift to all the children & teens on our list of Holiday Food Basket Recipients. With your help, we were able to fulfill a little wish from the children during Christmas.

Christmas Giving Tree: Was a big success. Items & gift cards were collected for our local families, Anderson House, Freedom House, Little Brook Nursing Home, Newton's Guest House, and S.H.I.P. We thank Karen Porto and her daughter for once again organizing the Giving Tree and also would like to thank Alyssa for assisting. The Giving Tree was beautiful!

A new Christmas Cheer program: Jim Murray originated and headed this wonderful and heartwarming new program at our church. With his team of volunteers, they delivered & set up Christmas trees with decorations to 5 local families in need to spread holiday cheer and a feeling of caring during Christmas. This program was received so well, that he is planning to expand for Christmas 2018.

All of the services provided were and are possible only because of our volunteers and the ongoing support and generosity of all of you! We are blessed to have such a great people surrounding and supporting us. We would like to thank Top O' the Barn in Califon for their ongoing monetary support and Clinton ShopRite, Mr. Colalillo, for their continues support by providing us with perishables during our food drives.

Thank you all & God bless, Susie Donovan and Susanne Erz

2018 ST. JOHN PARISH LIFE SURVEY

After months of development, numerous revisions and lots of discussion, the St. John's 2018 Parish Life Survey is now live! The survey was developed and sponsored by the Stewardship Ministry. The survey is an opportunity for us to learn about those features and elements of St. Johns that are important to our parishioners and to learn about areas of parish life you would like to see improvements.

- The survey will take you about 15 minutes to complete, a little shorter or longer depending on how much time you need to consider the various questions.
- Individuals (not families) complete the survey. Meaning each attending Parishioner should complete the survey independently so we get the most accurate profile of the Parish.
- You may complete the survey by pen & paper (available in Narthex) or online at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StJohn2018ParishSurvey>. The link is also available on the home page of our website: www.ccsjn.org.
- Please complete the survey by February 25th.
- The Stewardship Ministry will share the results of the survey in March.

We would greatly appreciate if you would consider completing the survey online rather than paper/pencil. This would reduce the need for hand tallying the results, which can be extremely time consuming. The electronic version will tally automatically for us! Thanks! We appreciate your time and look forward to your input!

LENTEN OBLIGATIONS

So that the Church of Metuchen may be spiritually one in a common observance of Lent, the following days of fast and abstinence are to be observed by all Catholics of the Diocese who enjoy the blessings of good health:

1. The days of fast and abstinence are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
2. All other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.
3. From the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday until the celebration of the Easter Vigil on the evening of Holy Saturday, the Easter fast should be observed so that, with uplifted and welcoming hearts, we may be ready to celebrate the joys of the Resurrection. This ancient tradition, intimately connected with the *Rites of Holy Week* and the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*, is encouraged, especially in those places baptizing catechumens at the Easter Vigil.

The obligation to fast applies only to Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59. To fast in the Catholic tradition means to limit oneself to one full meal during the day so as to experience hunger. The obligation of abstinence affects all Catholics who have reached the age of 14. Abstinence in the Catholic tradition means to abstain from meat. The obligation of fast and abstinence, as a whole, is a serious obligation. While failure to observe any penitential day in itself may not be considered serious, the failure to observe any penitential days at all, or a substantial number of them without good cause, would be considered a grave matter. Those unable to abstain for a valid reason on any given Friday of Lent are asked to perform some other penitential act, or to abstain on another day.

2018 BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Lighting a Fire in the Heart of Our World

By now you have received a letter from Bishop Checchio inviting your participation in the 2018 Bishop's Annual Appeal. The diocesan ministries supported by the Appeal directly impact many of the parishioners here in St. John Neumann. Your gift provides formation opportunities for our catechists, youth and young adults. Among other important ministries, your sacrificial gift supports our renewed efforts in Evangelization & Communication.

If you have yet to make your pledge to this year's Bishop's Annual Appeal, you will have the opportunity to do so next weekend, February 24/25, which has been designated as ***Bishop's Annual Appeal In-Pew Weekend***. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal to help our parish reach its goal. If we can exceed our goal, 50% of the amount collected over goal will be returned to us in the form of a parish rebate. Just as important as our financial goal is our goal of reaching **100% participation**. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and greatly appreciated.

A PROTESTANT TESTIMONY ABOUT LENT

"Growing up as an evangelical Christian, I experienced Lent as little more than a joke. "What are you giving up for Lent?" my friends would ask. "Homework," I'd say with a smirk, or "Obeying my parents." Lent was one of those peculiar practices demanded of Roman Catholics – another great reason to be Protestant, I figured. It never even occurred to me that Lent was something I might actually be interested in, or benefit from, or decide to keep, or come to value as a way of getting to know God better.

In the last twenty years I've discovered that Lent is in fact recognized by millions of Protestant Christians, in addition to Catholic and Orthodox believers. ... After ignoring Lent for the majority of my life, I've paid more attention to it during the last two decades. Sometimes I've given up something, like watching television or eating sweets, in order to devote more time to Bible study and prayer. (The television fast was especially tough because I love watching March Madness, the NCAA basketball tournament, on TV.) Sometimes I've added extra devotional reading to my regular spiritual disciplines. I can't claim to have had any mystical experiences during Lent, but I have found that fasting from something has helped me focus on God." <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/markd-roberts/>

MARRIAGE TUNE-UP

Ways to Turn Your Beloved Off. Let your body language show disdain or contempt. Rolling your eyes, a scowl, ignoring a request by walking away can speak louder than a yell. Check out any belittling mannerisms you may have that hurt your spouse.

PARENTING TUNE-UP

February 16 begins the 2018 Chinese New Year (<https://www.thechinesezodiac.org/horoscope-2018/>). This year the featured animal is the dog. Help you children learn about another culture - unless of course you are Chinese :-). Try these activities. (<https://www.activityvillage.co.uk/chinese-new-year>) Do you know anyone who is Chinese? Talk with them. Eat Chinese food today.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Joseph Angeline
George Bernard
Linda Caprio
Joan Cardierre
Jean Crickenberger
John D'Almeida
Barbara DelPiano
Sophia DeVita
Jennifer Bennett Duckworth
Cindy Feighan
Paul Ferri
Father Luigi Hargen
Liz Harmon
Jay Heyman
Fred Holub
Eleanor Horan
Manuel Jimenez, Sr.
Miriam Jiminian
Bonnie Lieberwirth
Lou Livoti
Dick McCall
Maggie McKeon
Jan McLeavey
Christine Meyer
Joan & Megan Myers
Mary Lou O'Brien
Nancy Patterson
Nilsa Perez Parsons
John Pfeufer
Ali Redling
Joel Rivera
Carmen Ruscetta
Anne Sacco
Richard Sepe
Noah Skinner
Michael Slivka
Dick Slusher
Nicholas Troiano
Don Velli
William Weimer
Josh Wilkes
Dana & Greg Wilson
Caden & Jill Zane
Joey Zieba

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Recruitment and Membership

Please join the members of the Pastoral Council during the weekend of February 24 and 25 at a Community Coffee held after each Mass. This is an opportunity for you to meet our Pastoral Council members, to discuss the Council's purpose, and to discern the possibility of becoming a member. We look forward to seeing you.

SUNDAY REFLECTION: "My Year of No Shopping"

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan. **Mark 1: 12-15**

Ann Patchett is the author of the best-selling **Commonwealth, Bel Canto** and eight other novels; she is also co-owner of Parnassus Books, an independent book store in her hometown of Nashville. At the end of 2016, she writes, "when our country had swung in the direction of gold leaf," she felt the anxiety and fear many Americans were feeling. Inspired by the experience of a friend, Patchett decided to opt out of the empty glitz and resolved that 2017 would be her year of "no shopping." Her ground rules: No clothes or electronics. Shampoo, batteries and printer cartridges were OK, only if she ran out. She could buy anything in a grocery store, including flowers. Plane tickets and eating out in restaurants were also OK. Because she's an author (and owns a book store), she would continue to indulge in buying books, and curtailed her gift-giving to books (one exception: a wedding gift for her editor).

Patchett discovered that "the trick of no shopping isn't that you don't buy things. You don't shop. That means no trawling the sale section of the J. Crew website in idle moments. It means the catalogs go into the recycle bin unopened on the theory that if I don't see it, I don't want it. Halfway through the year I could go to a store with my mother and sister if they asked me. I could tell them if the dress they were trying on looked good without wishing to try it on myself." She also realized the wisdom of what her parents taught her as a child: If you want something, wait awhile. Chances are the feeling will pass. And "once I stopped looking for things to buy, I became tremendously grateful for the things I received."

"The things we buy and buy and buy are like a thick coat of Vaseline smeared on glass: We can see some shapes out there, light and dark, but in our constant craving for what we may still want, we miss life's details . . . I came to a better understanding of money as something we earn and spend and save for the things we want and need. Once I was able to get past the want and be honest about the need, it was easier to give more of my money to people who could really use it. "For the record, I still have more than plenty. I know there is a vast difference between not buying things and being able to buy things. Not shopping for a year hardly makes me one with the poor, but it has put me on the path of figuring out what I can do to help."

This season of Lent challenges us to opt out of business as usual to discover to new paths to walk, new ways of seeing, new perspectives to embrace. In giving up shopping for a year, Ann Patchett rediscovered the wealth she already possessed. In Lenten desert experience, Christ calls us to lay aside the material and ephemeral in our lives in order to realize the lasting treasures that are ours: love, mercy, forgiveness, justice, compassion. These 40 days of Lent are an invitation to us to spend time in the "wilderness," to confront the hard choices we must confront in our lives: choices between the values of God and the values of "Satan," choices between the values we believe in the depths of our hearts and the "marketplace" values of prestige, wealth and security. In making these choices honestly, sincerely and faithfully, we come to a new realization of God as the center of our lives and hopes and a renewed focus on fulfilling the Easter promise in our own lives.

IS IT TOO LATE TO JOIN A SMALL GROUP?

Over 80 people have just enjoyed the first session of the small groups last week. Is it too late for you to join? NO! You are most welcome to join, or at least to give a try. Just contact France at the Parish Office.

Or, are you wondering, what's the point of joining a small group? In fact a pastor was asked this question. He gave many reasons, but at the end he said: *"But what I feel is one of the most important reasons to join a small group is time. Time is a limited commodity and, frankly, most of us use it badly. We commit to things that are temporal and will pass away, and waste so much of our precious energy growing in everything except love and knowledge of Christ. We unintentionally teach our kids that Church comes after sports and social obligations, and then we are surprised when they grow up and live the lesson we taught. By committing to a small group and being faithful to that obligation, you are declaring to yourself, your schedule and all who know you that you have faith as a priority in your life. A declaration like that will always bear good fruit."*

Parish and Community News

POPE FRANCIS: 10 OF HIS BEST TIPS FOR LENT

1. Get rid of the lazy addiction to evil: “[Lent] is a ‘powerful’ season, a turning point that can foster change and conversion in each of us. We all need to improve, to change for the better. Lent helps us and thus we leave behind old habits and the lazy addiction to the evil that deceives and ensnares us.”

2. Do something that hurts: “Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt.”

3. Don't remain indifferent: “Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians. Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience. God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation.”

4. Pray: Make our hearts like yours!: “During this Lent, then, brothers and sisters, let us all ask the Lord: *‘Fac cor nostrum secundum cor tuum’*: *Make our hearts like yours* (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent or prey to the globalization of indifference.”

5. Take part in the sacraments: “Lent is a favorable time for letting Christ serve us so that we in turn may become more like him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. There we become what we receive: the Body of Christ.”

6. Prayer: “In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could harden our hearts, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of God's boundless love, to taste his tenderness. Lent is a time of prayer, of more intense prayer, more prolonged, more assiduous, more able to take on the needs of the brethren; intercessory prayer, to intercede before God for the many situations of poverty and suffering.”

7. Fasting: “We must be careful not to practice a formal fast, or one which in truth ‘satisfies’ us because it makes us feel good about ourselves. Fasting makes sense if it questions our security, and if it also leads to some benefit for others, if it helps us to cultivate the style of the Good Samaritan, who bends down to his brother in need and takes care of him.”

8. Almsgiving: “Today gratuitousness is often not part of daily life where everything is bought and sold. Everything is calculated and measured. Almsgiving helps us to experience giving freely, which leads to freedom from the obsession of possessing, from the fear of losing what we have, from the sadness of one who does not wish to share his wealth with others.”

9. Help the Poor: “In the poor and outcast we see Christ's face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ. Our efforts are also directed to ending violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for these are so often the cause of destitution. When power, luxury and money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth. Our consciences thus need to be converted to justice, equality, simplicity and sharing.”

10. Evangelize: “The Lord asks us to be joyous heralds of this message of mercy and hope! It is thrilling to experience the joy of spreading this good news, sharing the treasure entrusted to us, consoling broken hearts and offering hope to our brothers and sisters experiencing darkness.”



SMILE WITH YOUR FAMILY



LENTEN EFFORT: A new pastor tried in vain to get his congregation to do something for Lent. Exasperated, he announced that he would be serving them prune juice for Holy Communion. When asked why he would dare entertain such a thought, his reply, “If the Holy Spirit won't move you—the prune juice will!”

AN OLD LENTEN JOKE: A bartender notices that every evening, without fail, one of his patrons orders three beers. After several weeks of noticing this pattern, the bartender asks the man why he always orders three beers. The man says, “I have two brothers who have moved away to different countries. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank as a way of keeping up the family bond.” Several weeks later, noticing that the man only ordered two beers, the bartender said, “Please accept my condolences on the death of one of your brothers. You know, the two beers and all...” The man replied, “You'll be happy to hear that my two brothers are alive and well... It's just that I, myself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent.”

WEEKLY COLLECTION

February 11, 2018

74 Donors Weekly.....\$3,619.00
11 Yellow Brick Road.....\$552.00
20 Catholic Spirit.....\$404.00
2 Snow & Heat.....\$150.00

February 12, 2017

66 Donors Weekly.....\$3,418.00
8 Yellow Brick Road.....\$275.00
20 Catholic Spirit.....\$280.00



STORE CARDS

Thanks to **17 families** who purchased the grocery and store cards last week. The total cards sold totaled **\$3,150.00**. The stores gave us **\$158.75**.

Amazon profit for the month was \$214.39. With a year to date profit of \$450.78. Thanks for participating

DAILY LENT JOURNEY

Have you decided your Lenten Plan yet? As Jesus had forty days in the desert, we too can take the time of Lent to take a spiritual journey to enrich our faith. Why not try Dynamic Catholic's video program that guides you through Lent using the Resisting Happiness Book that we the parish gift this Christmas. Sign up at <http://dynamiccatholic.com/bestlentever/> for daily 3 minute videos to help you explore your faith and your discipleship.

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES

Office Angels

Wed., Feb. 21 C. Behrens
Wed., Feb. 28 M. D'Avella

Store Cards

February 17 and 18

5:30 p.m. C. Crescenti
8:00 a.m. M. Kearns
10:30 a.m. H. Quigley

February 24 and 25

5:30 p.m. B. Cestonei
8:00 a.m. G. Battell
10:30 a.m. R. DeStefano

Church Center Plant Watering

Week of Feb. 18 M. Cangelosi
Week of Feb. 25 B. Sobey

Church Center Cleaning

February 22 Team D
March 1 Team E

Counting

Feb. 19 Kucharski/McCabe
Feb. 26 Malone/Cangelosi

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