

OLM Parish Family
Health Ministry Lenten Program
"Walk with Jesus on the Road to Jerusalem"



Third Sunday of Lent

Readings: Exodus 17:3-7; Romans 5:1-2, 5-8; John 4:5-42 or 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

"We cannot become starched Christians, those over-educated Christians who speak of theological matters as they calmly sip their tea. No! We must become courageous Christians and go in search of the people who are the very flesh of Christ!"

Pope Francis - Address, Vigil of Pentecost with Ecclesial Movements, May 18, 2013

Reflection

Today is the Third Sunday of Lent. Although different, all of the gospels for the Church's three-year cycle of readings invite us to remember the words of Ash Wednesday: "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel". They invite us to a conversion of heart. Jesus invited the Samaritan woman to repent of her sins and drink the Living Water to be truly converted. Jesus cleansed the temple and forcefully ejected the moneychangers. Finally, Jesus gave the example of the barren fig tree to remind us of God's great patience with us even in our failures. Our Church reminds us in so many ways of our duty to serve one another. Pope Francis's words above tell us to become courageous and go out and search for the "very flesh of Christ". Mother Teresa spoke much about the need to serve Jesus in one another. She wholeheartedly believed that Jesus lives in those we serve and that Jesus also calls us to serve him, especially when he said, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of the family, you did it to me". Start reaching out within your own family and when all are satisfied, broaden your reach.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to always recognize you in others.

Fasting

Today, fast from comfort. Taking a shorter shower, getting up from bed earlier or eating less are some examples.

Almsgiving

Give time away today. Help a family member or someone who is alone with a chore.

Intention

Pray for all who suffer in silence

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to recognize the needs of our family members and those who are near.

Faith Journey Questions

1. What effect does grumbling and complaining have on me and on others around me when I hear it or do it? What can I do to change my attitude?
2. When have I experienced God's pure, unconditional love for me?
3. The woman's encounter with Jesus changes her from a social outcast into a bold evangelist. How does my own relationship with Jesus call me to share the Good News with others?

Lenten Challenge

At the end of the day, take time to thank God for all the graces you received during the day.

Lent Quiz

What sacrament are Catholics encouraged to receive during Lent?

Prayer for Sundays of Lent

Heavenly Father, as I enter another week of my Lenten journey, guide me to the path that leads to you. Fill my heart with gratitude, patience, strength and peace as I strive to become the-best-version-of-myself, honestly admitting my shortcoming and sins. As I renew my resolve each day to become a better person, let me hear your voice in the deepest reaches of my heart. Give me rest in you. Help me to accept others, showing them your great love instead of casting judgment. Stay with me through the busy days this week and remind me that when I need comfort, solitude, wisdom or guidance, I can always turn to you. Help me develop discipline and generosity through fasting and almsgiving, and come closer to you through prayer this Lent. In your name I pray, Amen.



Third Week of Lent - Monday - Matthew 1:16, 18, 24a or Luke 2:41-51a

"Lent is a time for us to seek the gift of the Father's mercy through authentic personal and community renewal. This renewal involves prayer, fasting and charitable acts, and is most intensely experienced in the Sacrament of Penance. As we look forward to Easter, may our Lenten journey help us to put aside whatever hinders our friendship with God".

St. John Paul II, General Audience, February 17, 1999

Reflection

You are making your way through Lent with your family. Many of the readings remind us of the penitential aspect of Lent but also of the renewal of heart and reconciliation. If you haven't been to confession either yourself or as a family yet this Lenten season, try to put it into your schedule. (OLM Parish Penance Service is on Mon 4/3 at 7:30 PM in the Church). St. John Paul II explains that when we have sins or failings separating us from God and others, our friendship with God is hindered. Remind yourself and your children today about the importance of forgiveness and love.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, we want to clear our hearts and souls of anything that inhibits us from your friendship.

Fasting

Today, fast from a bit of comfort - an extra portion of food, a dessert, extra time in the shower or extra time to sleep. You know what you like and what will make a good sacrifice. (If you are a family, perhaps choose something for the WHOLE family to fast from together)



Almsgiving

Give ten minutes or more of your time to someone today when you'd rather be doing something else. (You may also choose to do this as a family)

Intention

Pray for those who have no one to pray for them.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us grow in holiness in our domestic church of today.

Lenten Challenge

Speak less and listen more. Give others the gift of your undivided attention.

Lent Quiz

What is the popular Lenten parish program for Catholic Relief Services called?

Third Week of Lent - Tuesday - Matthew 18:21-35

"When Christ said, 'I was hungry and you fed me', he didn't mean only the hunger for bread and for food; he also meant the hunger to be loved. Jesus himself experienced this loneliness. He came among his own and his own received him not and it hurt him then and it kept hurting him. The same hunger, the same loneliness, the same having no one to be accepted by and to be loved and wanted by. Every human being in that case resembles Christ in his loneliness; and that is the hardest part, that's real hunger".

St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Reflection

Just as Mother Teresa lived her life by the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in the Gospel of Matthew (25:31-46), so should we. This scripture passage meant so much to Mother Teresa that she went around preaching it whenever she could. Holding up her hand with her five fingers extended she would say these five words while closing each finger: "You-did-it-to-me". As a Christian do you see Jesus in your child, spouse, parents, family, friends or co-workers? Can you try to see him there and treat him with tender love and compassion today?

Beginning Prayer

Dear Lord, please help us to see that whatever way we treat one another, we are treating you.

Fasting

Today fast from negativity - turning away from a negative influence, not listening to it, deciding not to watch television or not listening to gossip.

Almsgiving

Try to think of others before yourself today.

Intention

Pray for the hungry, the thirsty and all the poor.



Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, open our hearts to the "hungry" in our lives.

Lenten Challenge

Do something for someone in secret.

Lent Quiz

Yes or No - During Lent, is the Alleluia sung?

Third Week of Lent - Wednesday - *Matthew 5:17-19*

How beautiful it is to stand before the Crucifix, simply to be under the Lord's gaze, so full of love.

Pope Francis - Twitter, April 12, 2014

Reflection

When we gaze upon the crucifix we generally first imagine the injustice and also the pain inflicted upon Christ. Pope Francis suggest that we find love in Our Lord's gaze. Take time today to ponder Jesus crucifixion and death, but also his resurrection and ascension to heaven. (If you have children talk to them about the meaning of Jesus' death on the Cross)

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross fo us and thank you for loving us that much!e

Fasting

Today fast from selfishness and spending time on comforts.

Almsgiving

Gaze upon a crucifix today and pray to understand the meaning of Jesus' crucifixion.



Intention

Pray for the poorest of the poor all over the world.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to think more of others rather than myself.

Lenten Challenge

Make a list of 10 things that you are grateful for in your life.

Lent Quiz

What is the English translation of "Kyrie eleison", which is Greek, that we pray during mass?

Third Week of Lent - Thursday - Luke 11:14-23

"In the end, Christ himself, the slaughtered Lamb, calls to all peoples: "So come, you of all races of men who are ensnared by your sins and receive forgiveness for your sins. Indeed, I am your forgiveness, the Passover of your salvation; I am the Lamb slain for you, I am your redemption, your way, your resurrection, your light, your salvation and your king. It is I who lead you to the heights of Heaven, I who will show you the Father who exists from eternity, I who will raise you to life with my right hand".

St. John Paul II, General Audience, March 31, 2004

Reflection

Jesus who suffered and died for us offers us forgiveness of our sins. He assures us that he will lead us to the heights of heaven. What more could we possibly want? So many times the allurements of the world cloud our vision and we forget about God's promises. Be sure to remember yourself and to remind your children to ask forgiveness of their sins. Pray an Act of Contrition today, either alone or with your family during your prayers. And if you haven't already done so, maybe take the time to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation either at our Diocesan-wide "Welcome Home to Healing" (each Monday, from 7-8:30 PM, at every church in the Paterson Diocese, a priest is available to hear your confession. You may also choose to attend our Lenten Penance on Mon 4/3 at 7:30 PM in the Church. The Sacrament of Reconciliation brings great peace and strength for the journey ahead.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us keep our eyes on you. Please forgive us of our sins.

Fasting

Today, fast from complaining. Remind yourself and your family that there is far too much to be thankful for, so we should not be discontented.

Almsgiving

Take time to think of someone who could use your help in some way. (encourage your children to do the same)

Intention

Pray for all those who live in conditions unworthy of human beings

Closing Prayer

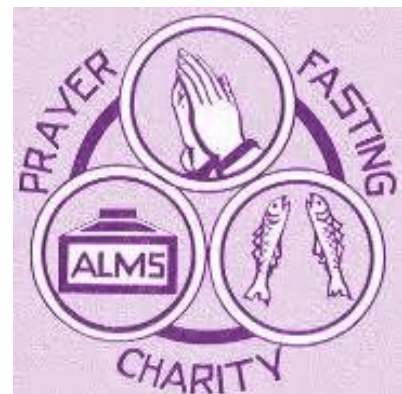
Dear Jesus, draw us closer and closer to you.

Lenten Challenge

Send a card to a relative, friend or fellow parishioner who is homebound.

Lent Quiz

Which well-known saint lived in the desert so they could focus on God and avoid worldly temptations?



Third Week of Lent - Friday - Mark:12:28-34

If during my life I could have suffered to offer one soul to God, one soul that would be snatched from the fire of hell. Oh! How happy I would be. Really, how could one complain about sufferings when one sees the fruit of suffering.

- Letters of St. Therese of Lisieux

Reflection

The season of Lent, as we know, is meant to be penitential. Perhaps we shouldn't be surprised when things don't go as smoothly as planned, even doing these simple exercises with your family. Use this season to try to master your impatience, anger, irritability and any vice that gets in the way of leading a virtuous life. When you are tempted to react to something harshly, turn your attention immediately to praying for the virtues you need. You can teach the children to be virtuous in the same way. Remember, we are all a work in progress - we do not have sparkling halos yet! It takes time. God will grant us the graces we need, and as St. Therese points out, lovingly offering suffering to God can help save souls.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, I'm sorry for complaining about my sufferings.

Fasting

Today, fast from feeling sorry for yourself.

Almsgiving

Offer comfort to others today. Be on the lookout for those who need encouragement. Make a phone call with your children to a lonely relative or neighbor to cheer him or her.

Intention

Let us pray for all those who live alone and those who are suffering.

Closing Prayer

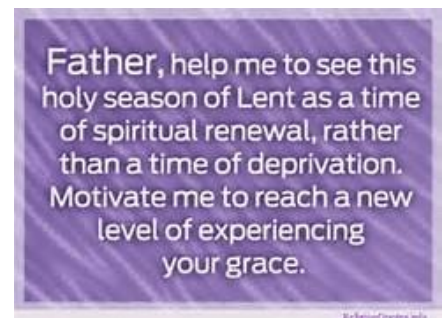
Dear Jesus, thank you for my life, just as it is.

Lenten Challenge

Plant a tree, bush or plant that will benefit others in future generations.

Lent Quiz

True or False: The main purpose of Lent is to give up something we like for 40 days?



Third Week of Lent - Saturday- Luke 1:26-38

Let each one ask him - or herself today: "Do I increase harmony in my family, in my parish, in my community or am I a gossip? Am I a cause of division or embarrassment?" And you know the harm that gossiping does to the Church, to the parishes, the communities. Gossip does harm! Gossip wounds. Before Christians open their mouths to gossip, they should bite their tongues! To bite one's tongue: this does us good because the tongue swells and can no longer speak, cannot gossip. "Am I humble enough to patiently stitch up, through sacrifice, the open wounds in communion?"

Pope Francis: General Audience, September 25, 2013

Reflection

Temptations to gossip abound for both adults and children alike. As adults, though, we should know better. We should never gossip. Take some time today to discuss the problems that Pope Francis talks about. Discuss together as a family that to be humble and rise about the temptation to gossip makes them a better and wiser person. They can be a stellar example to their peers and please God.

Beginning Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to be humble and loving.

Fasting

Today fast from gossiping and any temptation to be prideful.

Almsgiving

Make a point to place emphasis on others' good words and accomplishments.

Intention

Let us pray for those who are arrogant and who have been condescending toward us.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to light the way for others with your love.

Lenten Challenge

Clean up a common area at work, in the neighborhood, at school or home. Do it as a gift for the good of all.

Lent Quiz

When does the season of Lent end?

