

The Work of the People
The First Sunday of Lent

We have made a personal commitment to our preparation by deciding how we will enter into the Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving (doing good). These practices are ancient and date back to the time of the Israelites. In the Hebrew Scriptures we see that the sprinkling of ashes, wearing of sackcloth, and the practices of fasting are the central gestures of sorrow and repentance for the chosen people.

The use of ashes for all the faithful at the start of Lent began in the 10th century. In many ways it is ironic that on the day we hear Jesus speak of praying, fasting, and almsgiving being done in secret, we participate in what may be the year's most public physical statement of our belief in him. This year we return to a more ancient practice of sprinkling ashes on the crown of the head because of the pandemic but we are still called to heed the words: "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

On this First Sunday of Lent we hear from the book of Genesis. The drama of the building of the ark, it's loading, and the rising of the waters can overshadow what should be the most powerful moment in the story of Noah: The establishment of God's covenant with Noah and his descendants. The covenant is generated by God, who takes responsibility for its fulfillment, offering a sign of affirmation to humankind (the rainbow).

The passage from the First Letter of St. Peter connects the story of the flood with our Lenten journey. The author tells us that Jesus led us to God through his sacrifice. We receive the benefits of this sacrifice through the waters of Baptism. Our Lenten observance is intended to purify our acceptance of this great gift as we turn from sin and back to God.

In Mark's Gospel, the beginning of Jesus' journey is his experience of forty days in the wilderness. Mark's account is shorter than that of Matthew and Luke, which also makes its message quite direct. Jesus has been tested, like the Israelites were tested by the forty years of wandering in the wilderness to the promised land and Noah was tested with forty days afloat in the floodwaters. Under God's protection Jesus triumphs, proving his readiness for his earthly mission.

The reflection for this Sunday is from Fr. Jerome Kodell OSB, who is former abbot of Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas.

What, we might ask, does saying grace at meals have to do with God's covenant with Noah? The answer is in Pope Francis's encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si'*: "That moment of [meal] blessing, however brief, reminds us of our dependence on God for life; it strengthens our feeling of gratitude for the gifts of creation" (227).

"The sun rises and the sun sets," says Qoheleth (Eccl 1:5), implying that everything just drones on without meaning. Ho-hum. But God does not see it that way. God's love for us and commitment to us come through in the order of our universe. You can count on the sun and moon and stars in their places, God says, and the seasons following one after another. You can build your home here; in fact, the earth is meant to be, as Pope Francis says, "our common home."

This large vision may not impress us until it is translated into daily details. A priest began a memorable homily by standing at the lectern holding up his hands and wiggling his fingers. After a few moments he asked, "Did you ever think about what it would be like if you didn't have knuckles? Did you ever wonder why many animals put their faces in their food?"

There is no better time than Lent to rediscover God's covenant with us in the nitty-gritty of creation, in the day-to-day gifts. For this we say, *Laudato si'*! God be praised!

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: 1 Peter 5:1-4/Matthew 16:13-19
Tuesday: Is. 55:10-11/Matthew 6:7-15
Wednesday: Jonah 3:1-10/Lk. 11:29-32
Thursday: Esther 14:1, 3-5, 12-14/Matthew 7:7-12
Friday: Ez. 18:21-28/Matthew 5:20-26
Saturday: Deut. 26:16-19/Matthew 5:43-48
Sunday: Gen. 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18/Rom. 8:31b-35, 37/Mk. 9:2-10

ECUMENICAL PRAYER

The second of the Lenten Lunches for this year will be held on Wednesday, February 24 at Noon at St. Anthony of Padua. This will be Ecumenical Prayer only. All are welcome to attend.

LENT 2021 VIRTUAL RETREAT

Join Fr. Mike Polinek and Youth Ministers from the Diocese of Erie as they discuss specific topics on how they personally strengthen their relationship with God. The next scheduled will be with Nick Heise of St. Mary's on Monday, February 22 to discuss "Holy Spirit". To sign up and receive the Zoom link please email mpolinek@eriercd.org. The virtual retreats are on from 8:00 - 8:40 pm.

*"Lord,
help me follow you into new life
this Lent."*

WORSHIP

Monday, February 22
8:00 am + John E. Auer

Tuesday, February 23
8:00 am + For the Intention of Jim & Carol Rasavage

Wednesday, February 24
12:00 Noon + Lenten Prayer Service at
St. Anthony of Padua

Thursday, February 25
8:00 am + Living & Deceased Members of
Baker/Nowak Families (Rita Baker & Family)

Friday, February 26
8:00 am + Elizabeth (Liz) Novotny (Josie Osiecki)

Saturday, February 27
4:30 pm + Louise Rembielak
(Joan Rembielak & Phyllis Wronko)

Sunday, February 28
8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
Steve Scott (John & Kay Weagraff)
9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
Living & Decease Parishioners
12:30 pm + Latin Mass at St. Anthony of Padua

PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 23
After Mass - St. Anthony Novena
6:00 pm - AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
Stations of the Cross and Benediction
6:00 pm - AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA
Stations of the Cross

Saturday, February 27
3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession

Sunday, February 28
Before Mass - Confession - ST. BERNADETTE MISSION
After Mass - Confession - ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

Jesus went into the desert to put his life in perspective. This lent, take a fresh look at a difficult relationship in your life. Concentrate on the positive things that person does, not just the negatives. Try to understand why their behaviors 'bug' you. Can you honestly share your feelings with them without attacking them? Make Lent a time to MEND and FORGIVE!

FEBRUARY IS TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Over one quarter of youth (12-17) who have been in a romantic relationship during the previous year say they'd been the victim of digital dating abuse according to *Psychology Today*. Digital dating abuse is physical, sexual or psychological/emotional violence that occurs between romantic partners through the use of texting, social media and related online mediums. 81% of youth who had been the target of digital dating abuse had also been the target of off-line dating abuse. So what are some of the best ways for a parent to open up communication with their kids about a delicate topic like online dating? First and foremost, ask kids what they are doing online and then really listen to why they like or don't like what's going on there. Parents must be diligent about staying on top of the latest trends. Great parenting and online dating tips can be found in www.cyberwise.org. To see what the diocese is doing to help maintain safe environments for children and youth visit www.eriecd.org/childprotection/

RICE BOWL

Each Lent, the Church calls us to conversation through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Many people in our Diocese choose to bring these three aspects of Lenten observance to life through Catholic Relief Services' (CRS) Rice Bowl. This program helps to provide families around the world with the tools they need to rise above poverty and provide for themselves. The Rice Bowls will be available at both entrances to the church through Lent.

CATHOLIC SERVICE APPEAL

Thank you to the parishioners who have pledged for the 2021 CSA. If you have not yet made a pledge please consider doing so by returning the pledge envelope to our parish office. Thank you in advance.

LENTEN FISH DINNERS

The Knights of Columbus of Our Lady of the Lake Parish are again sponsoring fish dinners throughout Lent. Drive-through take out is the only option this year. Please enter through the Sunset Drive side.

Lenten Fish Dinners at All Saints Parish in Waterford will be Fridays through Lent. All dinners are take-out only, from 4:30 - 7 pm.

ST. BERNADETTE MISSION STEWARDSHIP

Offertory	\$202.00
Candles	8.00
TOTAL	\$210.00

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA STEWARDSHIP

Offertory	\$634.00
Maintenance	263.00
Candles	27.00
Faith Communication	10.00
TOTAL	\$934.00

CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

CHURCH NO.:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:
