

Fifth
SUNDAY OF
LENT

**It is when a person
walks at night that they
stumble, for they have
no light.**

**St. Michael
Netcong, New Jersey**



The Church of Saint Michael
March 26, 2023
The Fifth Sunday of Lent



Please remember in your prayers those who have died: Anne Dowd, Michael John Drinka, Joseph Sabatini Sr.

Please remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: May Lee, Special Intention, Lucy Pintos, Karlene Yaple, Joseph Conklin, Marysia Hancock, Bev Couter, Kathy Conklin, Charlie Raffay, Beth Couter, Special Intention, Carmen Pina, Paula DiElsi

Weekly Memorial

Sanctuary Lamp: Joe Francomacaro

Readings for the week

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sunday

Ez 37:12-14; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 or
 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

Monday

Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or
 13:41c-62; Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday

Nm 21:4-9; Jn 8:21-30

Wednesday

Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Jn 8:31-42

Thursday

Gn 17:3-9; Jn 8:51-59

Friday

Jer 20:10-13; Jn 10:31-42

First Saturday

Ez 37:21-28; Jn 11:45-56

Mass Intentions for the Week

Saturday, March 25, 2023

10am For The Unborn

5pm Louis Castaldi, Silvia Ann Dachisen

Sunday, March 26, 2023 Fifth Sunday of Lent

7am Doris Hartman, Nancy Rosa

9:30am Joseph Fenton, Jimmy Johnson,
 Ronald E. Costanzo

11:30am John & Mary Mintz

1:30pm Special Intention

Monday, March 27, 2023

10am Therese Tardive

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

10am Rosemary Nazare

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

10am Scott Dodenhoff

Thursday, March 30, 2023

10am Dolores Kenna

Friday, March 31, 2023

10am Pauline Milone

Saturday, April 1, 2023

10am Maria Eckert

5pm Paul D'Oliveo, Pat Buckley

Sunday, April 2, 2023 Sixth Sunday of Lent

7am Pauline & Carmine Milone

9:30am Santina & Vincenzo Fratangelo, Donnie LaBell

11:30am Orrie Martino, Chet Verdi

1:30pm Intention of Carmen Pina,
 Marina Mazuera de Marmolejo

TITHING – GOD'S PLAN FOR GIVING ST. MICHAEL'S HAS BEEN A TITHING PARISH SINCE 1988.

Sunday, March 19, 2023 \$6,090.00

WeShare \$2,260.00

From Fr. Mike

Once we have passed through the “Dark Night of the Senses” we are prepared to enter into the Illuminative way. One of the best examples I have ever heard is the analogy of a boat that is on the shore. You are able to push the boat into the water and when the tide comes in, it makes it easier to move the boat; this is the Purgative Way. Sometimes it is really easy (the moment of grace) and other times it is more difficult (when we sin). But overall, we feel that we are actually doing something positive, that we are making headway in our lives.

The Illuminative Way is when the tide goes out and the boat gets stuck in the mud. You can see the water but you are not there yet. It becomes a struggle to move the boat; we experience dryness in our prayers, going to Mass without feeling anything, prayer becomes unclear and less passionate.

Saint John of the Cross describes this as “The Dark Night of the Soul” where God seems so distant to us. Father Mike Schmitz explains it as such:

“The dark night of the soul is a state where consolation is gone everywhere, not just spiritually. There is no sight of God and a person perceives that there is no hope and no heaven. Yet, they choose God even if they begin to feel and think that He isn’t there or doesn’t exist. Here comes the point where one chooses God for Himself, not for what He does for us.

To grow through the dark night of the senses, patience and perseverance is required, as it is sometimes triggered by life-altering situations such as the death of a loved one, a divorce, or major financial loss—all of which may plunge one into a period of intense suffering, resulting in questions such as: “Why me?” “Why this?” “For how long?” “Is God listening or watching?” Unable to comprehend their painful circumstances and the reason for it, an individual enters a period of desolation—a state of suffering and loneliness, often finding that it is hard to pray or hear God’s voice. In this state, consolation does come but only after a long period of silence.

In the dark night of the soul, one asks questions such as: “Does God exist?” “Why can’t I feel or sense God’s presence anymore?” “What have I done wrong?” “What’s the point of following His will?” and “How can I persevere in such darkness?” In this state, there is a temptation to abandon the will of God because there is an inability to sense His very presence or believe in His existence. In this time, it becomes

difficult to hope or seek out the good during this unspecified period of suffering.

When a person encounters either of these two states, there is an opportunity to come through spiritually stronger and nearer to God. The dark night of the senses can occur at any time, while the dark night of the soul is initiated by God, who seemingly withdraws his presence to purify the soul. So that one may not be caught unaware by this experience, it can be helpful to learn from the experiences of the saints.”

It is easy to give up and believe that there is no hope, no heaven and maybe even no God. But we still can persevere, we can still just push through the difficulties that life seems to send our way. During this time, God purifies our soul even more. It is when we choose Him in the darkness of our lives, that our lives, love and intentions are purified.

This is not God teasing us, even though there are times that we do not feel anything. Again, we have to have trust in God and choose Him anyway. It is when we love God for who He is and not for what we get from Him. We choose Him just for being who He is: God. We must remember that God is not teasing or testing us, but He is trying to purify our hearts and souls so that we truly, authentically and more purely love Him. We have learned through her diaries that Saint Mother Theresa of Calcutta was in the Dark Night of the Soul for Twenty years. Unfortunately, we all have to pass through this stage, whether in this life or the next, to gain entrance into heaven.

So, if you find yourself in this dark night of the soul, do not give up! This is the time to lean into God even more. Spiritual desolation and depression are NOT the same thing; the first has to do with only your spiritual life; the latter casts darkness over every aspect of your life. So even if you are experiencing a dryness in your spiritual life, it does not mean you are clinically depressed.

Trusting in God even when we do not “feel” His presence is when our faith is the strongest. For let us remember the words of Jesus: “Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed” (John 20:29b).

Jesus makes it possible for us to be one with Him and His Father. We have to continue to choose Jesus even when we do not “feel” His presence in order to love Him forever in this life and in the life of the world to come. This is how our heart becomes the type of heart that can truly love God forever. So, keep pushing the boat; He will give you

the strength to lead you through this. Remain faithful with a heart that is even more loving, one that is truly purified, then our lives will be ready to be with God and see Him face to face. Let us remember that Jesus promised us "I am the Light of the world; whomever follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life" (*John 8: 12b*).

Tuesday, March 28th at 7pm
Maslow & Aquinas -
Guide to meaning and happiness
Presented by Fr. Mike & Jodi Suralik
All are welcome

FAITH FORMATION

Confirmation I, II and NET:

Service forms due:

- For Confirmation I: forms for service completed in Jan, Feb, March due 3/31
- For Confirmation II and NET: forms for service completed monthly through Feb.28 are due now. Form for March is due 3/31 and for April is due 4/30

Service opportunity for all Confirmation candidates on 4/1, 9:30 am. We will be preparing materials for Easter Mass. Please email or call Mrs. Rogalo at the Faith Formation office if you have not already responded that you will attend.

Confirmation II

Mass but no class on 3/26

Class 3/27 at 6:45 pm in the Church

For ALL teens/young people in Confirmation Prep (Confirmation II, Middle School Confirmation and NET group)



Reminder: you are expected to attend the Triduum masses/services on Holy Thursday (4/14 mass at 7 pm), Good Friday (4/15 service at 3 pm) and any Easter Mass (Vigil on Saturday 4/16 at 7:30 pm OR regular Sunday Mass

schedule on 4/17). Please bring your mass sheets and have them signed by Father, a Deacon or Mrs. Rogalo.

Faith Formation for Levels K-6

Family Session next week, 4/2: for families with children in Levels K-6. Families attend 9:30 am Mass

and a brief teaching after mass. PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND!

- Confirmation I service: after the 9:30 am Mass in rectory basement/food pantry

Adoration Chapel

If you're looking for something to "give" — not "give up" for Lent, consider giving an hour of peace to yourself by signing up for an adoration hour. We have the following hours in need:

Monday - 3:00 p.m. Partner

Of course, any hour can be taken. Contact:

Andrea 201-874-8769; Marie 732-885-7972



YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Ministry meetings are on Mondays at 7:00pm in the Youth Ministry room.

If you would like to join or if you have any questions, please email me at

youth.ministry@stmichaelnetcong.org

-Nicole

**Youth Ministry Silent Stations of the Cross
On March 31st at 7pm bilingual**

Confessions during Lent

Mondays from 7-8:30pm & Saturdays 4-4:30pm

Friday, March 31st

**Youth Ministry Silent Stations
7pm Bilingual**

Come Pray the Rosary

Monday through Saturday

9:30am in Church, before the 10am Mass

Knights of Columbus

" FORTY CANS FOR LENT"

Thank you to our fellow parishioners for helping the Knights of Columbus in our Forty Cans for Lent project. Because of your generosity, the parish food pantry has collected over 1,700 canned goods and other nonperishable food items. But, the need remains great. Please continue to donate as part of your Lenten sacrifice.

This week, peanut butter, jelly, pasta, pasta sauce, rice and box and packaged potatoes are especially needed. Thank you.

Congrats to William O'Mahony

Congratulations to Knight of Columbus William O'Mahony, who has received Knight of the Year Award for 2022. Presented by the Netcong Council Grand Knight Mike Rosa. William's many hours of hard work with the food pantry, family projects along with his many Financial Secretary duties earned him this award.

Ecumenical Cross Walk

will be held on Friday, April 7th, 2023 at 11 AM. Please join us as we walk with our Protestant brothers and sisters through the streets of Stanhope and Netcong reliving the Passion of our Lord. At each station there will be a brief hymn and reading. We will begin at the First Presbyterian Church in Stanhope at 11:00am and walk to the Stanhope UMC and then on to St. Michael Church for the conclusion. There will be five total stops and the procession will last around 90 minutes. Please see Deacon Russ or Father Mike if you have any questions.



QUINTO DOMINGO DE CUARESMA

Domingo

Ez 37:12-14; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33b-45

Lunes

Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62; Jn 8:1-11

Martes

Nm 21:4-9; Jn 8:21-30

Miércoles

Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Jn 8:31-42

Jueves

Gn 17:3-9; Jn 8:51-59

Viernes

Jer 20:10-13; Jn 10:31-42

Primer Sábado

Ez 37:21-28; Jn 11:45-56



Quinto Domingo de Cuaresma 26 de marzo de 2023

“Así habla el Señor: Yo voy a abrir las tumbas de ustedes, los haré salir de ellas, y los haré volver, pueblo mío, a la tierra de Israel. Y cuando abra sus tumbas y los haga salir de ellas, ustedes, mi pueblo, sabrán que yo soy el Señor... Yo pondré mi espíritu en ustedes, y vivirán; los estableceré de nuevo en su propio suelo, y así sabrán que yo, el Señor, lo he dicho y lo haré –oráculo del Señor.”

La Cuaresma nos ofrece la oportunidad de pensar sobre la muerte del Señor, pero también sobre la gloria de la nueva vida, la resurrección. El profeta Ezequiel tiene a Dios hablándonos sobre la prometida resurrección de la tumba que nos espera a todos. Lo que escribió hace siglos sobre Cristo y la resurrección de Lázaro, el amigo de Jesús, es una promesa para todos.

Evitamos hablar sobre la muerte, pero sabemos que moriremos y reviviremos para recibir nuestra justa recompensa.

Es el prometido espíritu que nos llena hoy para ofrecernos el don de la vida. Jesús es la resurrección y la vida. Nos consuelan las palabras de Jesús: ‘Padre, te doy gracias porque me oíste. Yo sé que siempre me oyes, pero le he dicho por esta gente que me rodea, para que crean que tú me has enviado.’”

Jesús desea que podamos vivir, pero Su vida sigue a la muerte.



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