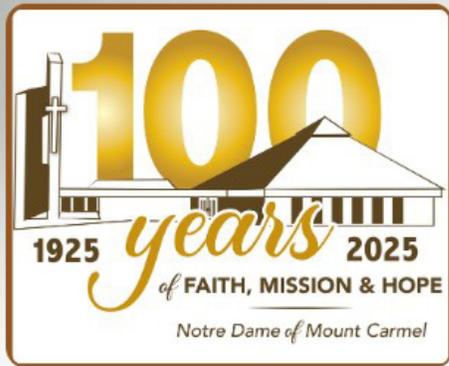


**Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church**

# **PARISH UPDATE**

[www.ndcarmel.com](http://www.ndcarmel.com)



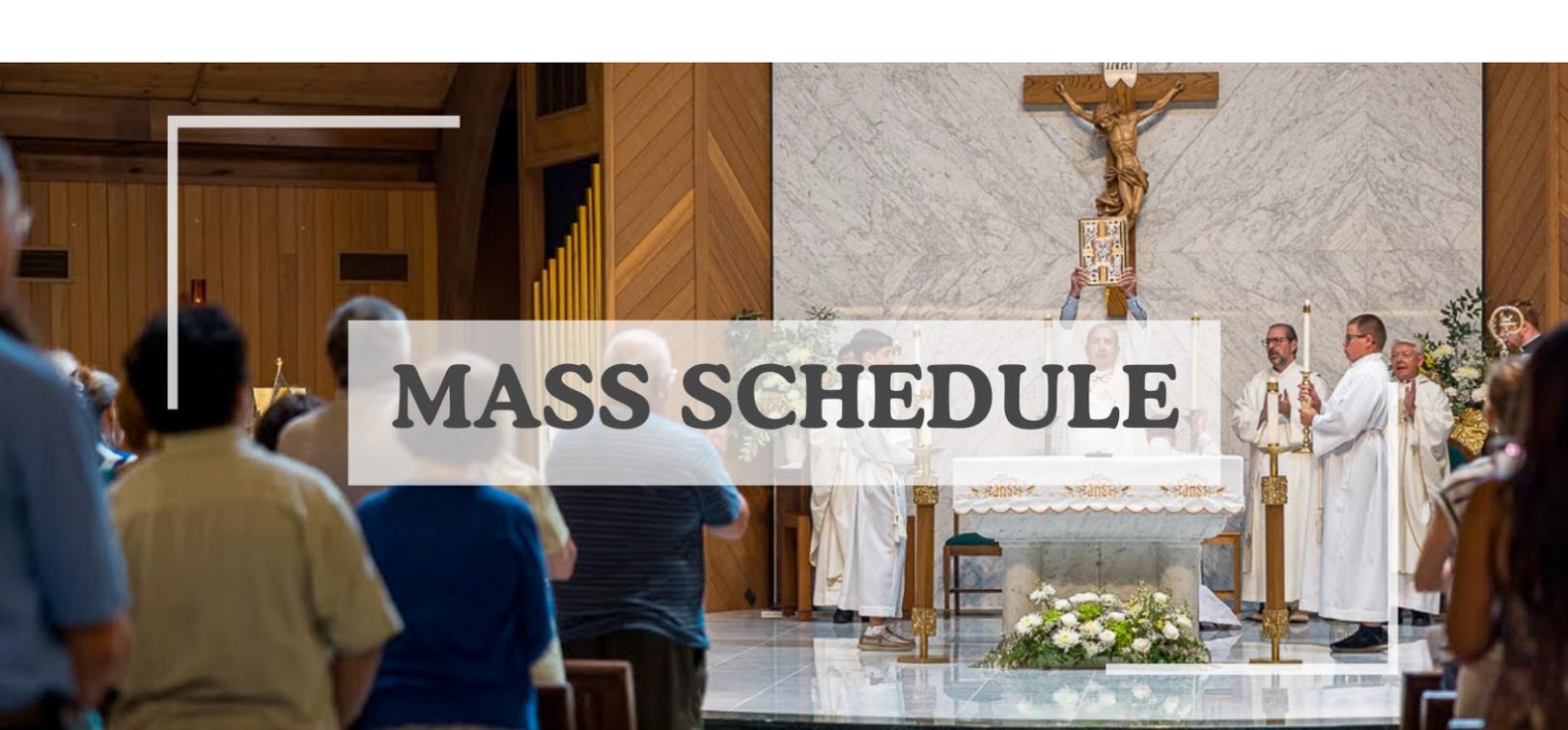
**NOTRE DAME  
OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH**

75 Ridgedale Avenue  
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927  
973-538-1358

[www.ndcarmel.com](http://www.ndcarmel.com)

**Parish Update: February 17, 2026**





# MASS SCHEDULE

## Sunday Mass Schedule

Saturday: 5 pm Vigil (*livestreamed on YouTube*)  
Sunday: 7:30 am  
9:30 am (Family Mass)  
11:30 am  
6:00 pm (Mass with Contemporary Worship)

## Daily Mass Schedule

Mon - Sat: 12:00 pm (*followed by praying of the Rosary*)  
Mon-Fri: 7:30 am LENT ONLY and through Wednesday of Holy Week.

## Upcoming Holidays (Parish Office Closed)

- Monday, Jan. 19, Martin Luther King's Birthday
- Monday, Feb. 16, President's Day

## Confession

Saturday: 12:45 pm to 1:30 pm  
(*Except Holy Saturday and when Christmas Eve or Christmas Day falls on a Saturday*)  
By Appointment with the Pastor (*call the parish office at 973-538-1358*)

## Adoration

Thursday: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the Chapel  
Friday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm in the Chapel

Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church  
75 Ridgedale Ave  
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927  
973-538-1358  
[www.ndcarmel.com](http://www.ndcarmel.com)  
Facebook: @ndcarmel  
Instagram: @ndcedarknolls  
YouTube: @NotreDameofMtCarmel

# *Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Staff*



**Fr. Vidal Gonzales (Pastor)**  
*fvidal@ndcarmel.com / x131*



**Deacon Joe Harris**  
*deaconjoeharris44@gmail.com*



**Deacon Eric Kispert**  
*erickispert@aol.com*



**Maria Cascio**  
*Parish Secretary*  
*parishsecretary@ndcarmel.com*  
*x100*



**Cristina Folan - Director of Communications & Evangelization**  
*commsupport@ndcarmel.com*  
*x105*



**Laura Balogh - Director of Family Faith Formation**  
*lbalogh@ndcarmel.com*  
*x121*



**Diane Byrne - Elementary Family Faith Coordinator**  
*dbyrne@ndcarmel.com*  
*x111*



**Marc Luciani - Sacristan**  
*mluciani@ndcarmel.com*



**Karen Fajardo**  
*Parish Bookkeeper*  
*parishbookkeeper@ndcarmel.com*  
*x 106*



**Abigail Schumer**  
*Music Director*  
*aschumer@ndcarmel.com*  
*x 109*



**Louis Castano - Director of Contemporary Worship**  
*lcastano@ndcarmel.com*



**Leo Ramirez**  
*Facilities Manager*  
*rou0510@yahoo.com/x120*



**Frank Figur**  
*Facilities Support*

**Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church**  
75 Ridgedale Avenue  
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927  
973-538-1358  
*feedback@ndcarmel.com*



## **Volunteer Main Office Support** *volunteer@ndcarmel.com / x100*



**Patty Gant**



**Agnes Loughlin**



**Mary Malone**



**Sallyann Augello**  
*Database Administrator*  
*registration@ndcarmel.com*

## ***Our Lenten Journey Begins Tomorrow!***



This sacred season invites us to pause, to look within, and to seek true transformation in the areas of our lives where the Lord is calling us to grow. Lent challenges us to “step up” in our thoughts, our words, and our actions—so that we may draw closer to Christ and love our neighbors more fully -- and not just the neighbors who are easy to love—our family members and friends—but especially those we struggle to love, the ones Jesus calls us to embrace with patience, mercy, and compassion.

In the weeks ahead, we will face many choices each day. May our Lord grant us the grace to open our hearts before we act, so that we choose what is good—with faith, with love, and with holy intention.

Below are some opportunities to ground ourselves spiritually for the journey!



NOTRE DAME OF MT. CARMEL CHURCH  
www.ndcarmel.com

*Ash*  
*Wednesday*

**February 18, 2026**

Mass with Distribution of Ashes:  
7:30 AM, 12 PM & 5:30 PM

Liturgy of the Word Service  
with Distribution of Ashes:  
9:30 AM & 3:30 PM



LENTEN PILLAR:  
*Almsgiving*



NOTRE DAME OF MT. CARMEL

**Hallow**  
PARTNERSHIP

STARTS **LENT** FEB

**The Return**

**Begins Ash Wednesday**  
**Feb. 18, 2026**

READY TO BEGIN?

JOIN THE WAITLIST



Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church

*LENT*  
**MASS SCHEDULE**

**MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY**  
**7:30 AM & 12:00 PM**

**THURS. FEBRUARY 19 - WED. APRIL 1, 2026**

Weekend schedule remains the same:  
Saturday: 12 PM & 5 PM Vigil  
Sunday: 7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM & 6 PM



Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel Church  
www.ndcarmel.com

*Welcome Home to Healing* *Forgiven*

**RECONCILIATIONS**  
*Every Monday during Lent*  
**7:00 - 8:30 PM**  
*In any church of the Paterson Diocese*

*The Sacrament of Confession will also be available  
at Notre Dame Saturdays, 12:45 PM (except Holy Saturday)*

## Finance Update: Monthly Offertory Collection



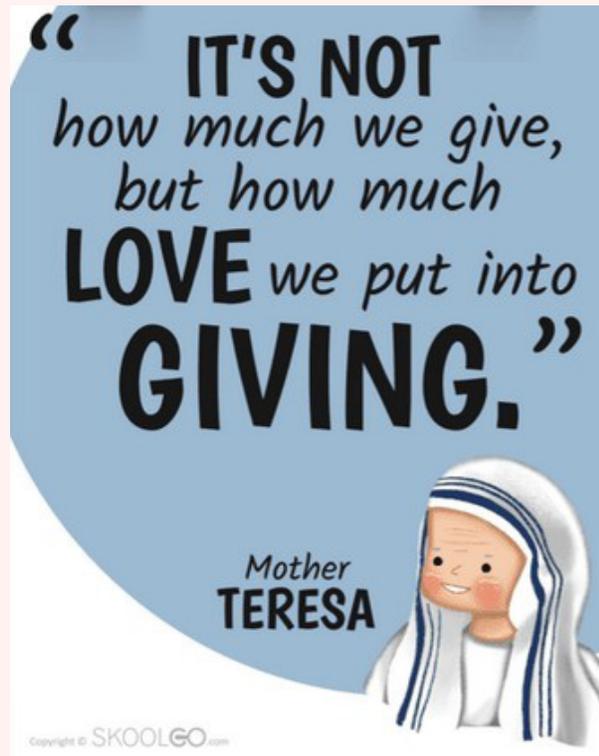
*"In living a stewardship way of life, we must discern how best to share our gifts. Discernment needs the Holy Spirit and a desire to follow God's will, not our own. Our own desires and misconceptions can cause us to use our gifts unwisely. The more mindful we are of how, when, and why we are sharing ourselves, the greater the impact for God's Glory." Everyday Stewardship: Living an Extraordinary Life*

OSV	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
2025	\$36,756	\$42,503	\$40,904	\$37,966	\$48,507	\$46,012
2026	\$42,062					
Offline	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
2025	\$37,171	\$29,603	\$38,035	\$31,709	\$53,725	\$55,387
2026	\$32,404					
TOTAL	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
2025	\$73,927	\$73,920	\$78,939	\$69,675	\$102,232	\$101,399
2026	\$74,466					

## Generous Hearts of Notre Dame: "I am worthy" -- Plaid House Update

By Kathleen Beck, Food Rescue Core Team

It has been nineteen weeks since Notre Dame parishioners and Confirmation candidates began cooking and delivering meals to Plaid House in Morristown. Our parish, from our youngest (the Bariletto and Jackson children) to our senior members, has embraced this initiative, delivering 35 meals to date. The young women of Plaid House have been physically nourished by the meals lovingly prepared every Monday and Wednesday. The volunteers have been nourished as well by the experience of feeding those in need, as they take to heart Mother Teresa's words:



*"When I drove up the driveway to the Plaid House, the first thing I saw was a park bench with the words 'I AM WORTHY' painted on it. I smiled when I saw it because I immediately thought, what a lovely, healing reminder message for the teenagers who live there. And, as I delivered the meal, I hoped that it also delivered the message of their inherent value and worthiness seen from all who are holding them in prayer while each meal is being lovingly prepared." Margie Sullivan*



***Double the Families, Double the Joy!*** "Our two families recently spent a wonderful afternoon together cooking, baking, and decorating a special meal for the girls at the Plaid House. As we worked, we talked with our children about why we provide these meals—to show these amazing girls that their community truly cares for them. The kids put so much time and effort into every dish, wanting to make sure the girls felt truly loved. They were so excited to drop the food off and

*are already counting down the days until we can do it all again in April!" The Bartiletto and Jackson Families*



Signups for meals for April-June 2026 are now open. More details about the Plaid House initiative can be found on the Notre Dame website [HERE](#). Ready to join us in spreading God's love? Click below!



**Coming Home: Welcoming Our 2026 OCIA Candidates on Their Journey to Full Communion**

**By Laura Balogh, Family Faith Director**

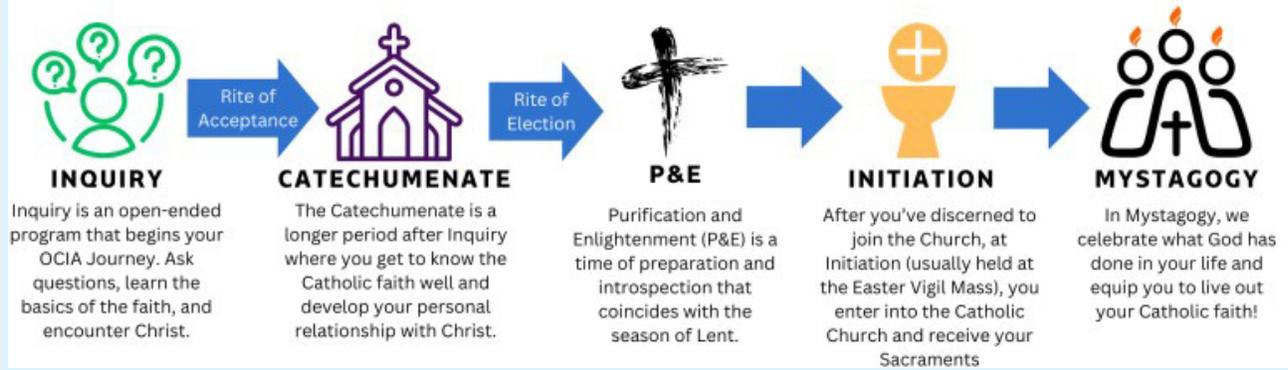
Last fall, our OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) ministry began adult formation for a faith-filled group of adults interested in becoming Catholic or taking the remaining steps to become fully initiated members of the Church. OCIA is the coming home of any adult into the full and warm embrace of God the Father and Holy Mother Church.

Our OCIA ministry here at Notre Dame is led by parishioners Claire & Jim Matlon.



This year, we have seven candidates in our group. ***Jenette Mathai Carlson***, who was baptized in the Protestant faith and wishes to become Catholic. She is preparing for First Communion and Confirmation. We also have the following six individuals who were baptized Catholic and seek the sacrament of Confirmation, which will complete their Sacraments of Initiation in the faith: *Michelle Bongiovanni, Genna Bongiovanni Taratuta, Madeleine Dale, Lauren Di Taranto, Natalie Gallerano, and Paige Jacobs.*

## STAGES OF OCIA PROCESS - AN OVERVIEW



**Candidates or Catechumens?** All the group members this year are considered *candidates*, meaning they have already received Trinitarian Baptism. *Trinitarian Baptism is the Christian practice of baptizing individuals "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," based on Jesus' command in the Gospel of Matthew 28:19.* Adults seeking Baptism are called *catechumens*. None of our members are being formed for this sacrament in 2025-2026.

The next step in the candidates' formation is an intense, prayerful, 6-week period of **Purification & Enlightenment**, which corresponds with the Lenten season, and includes an optional OCIA Retreat experience.

Let us lift our candidates up in prayer as they continue their journey of preparation, especially toward their **Initiation**, the celebration of their sacraments at the Easter Vigil Mass on **Saturday, April 4, 2026**. We pray as well for their continued faith as active and engaged disciples of our Lord!

Do you know anyone interested in becoming Catholic? Please contact Laura Balogh, Faith Formation Director, at [lbalogh@ndcarmel.com](mailto:lbalogh@ndcarmel.com) or 973-538-1358, ext. 121.

## Love in an Envelope: Young Adults Share Christ's Love

*"Our Young Adult Ministry had the joy of coming together for an evening we called **Love in an Envelope**, where we crafted Valentine's Day cards for the seniors at Harmony Village.*



*We made over 20 cards filled with prayers, kind words, and a lot of love. A couple of us delivered them in person, which meant so much -- seeing their smiles and spending a few moments with them was more than I can put into words.*

*This ministry and these moments of giving back sit so close to my heart, and I'm incredibly grateful to our young adults who showed up with such generosity and care. Thank you for helping us remind our seniors that they are deeply loved and never forgotten." Madeleine Dale, Young Adults Ministry Leader*



**Lent Trivia: It's a Family Affair!**  
By Diane Byrne, Elementary Family Faith Coordinator

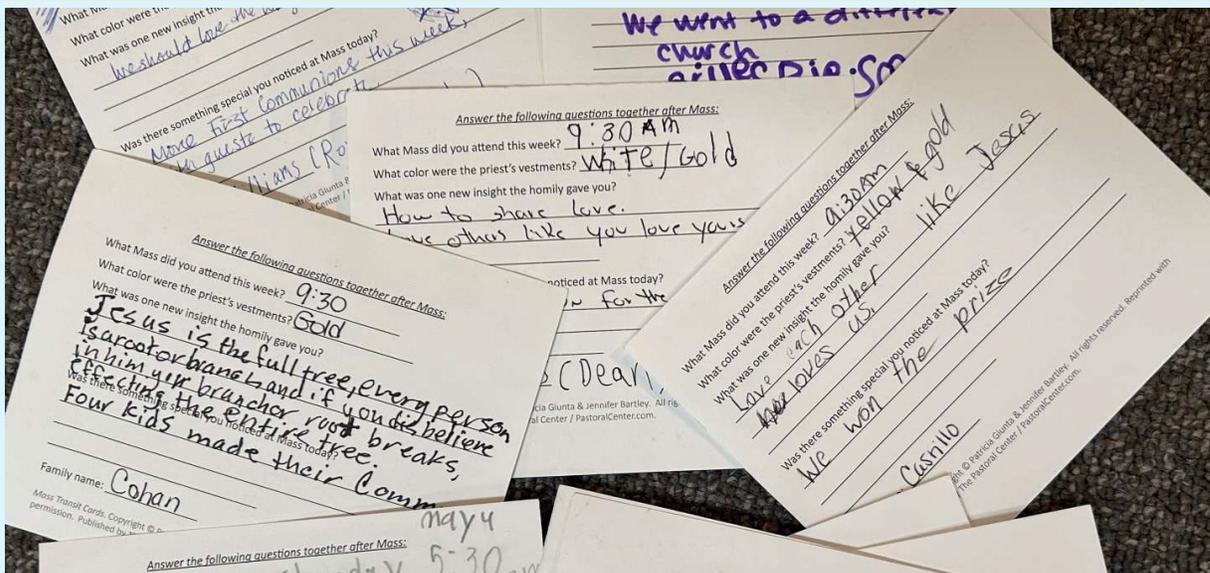
On Sunday after the 9:30 Mass, Elementary Family Faith hosted the fourth of seven family events. The activity for this event was Lent Trivia. Each table of families formed a team.



The families were read a statement regarding the season of Lent. If the table thought the answer was correct, a "True" sign would be displayed. If they thought it was incorrect, the "False" sign was held up.



The tables responded correctly to most of the statements. Some statements had mixed responses, such as "Ash Wednesday is a holy day of obligation in the Catholic Church." Overall, the activity provided a good learning experience for the families!



**What was one insight the homily gave you?**

- "Make good choices, shine bright."
- "Share kindness with everyone."
- "God does not want objects for us as gifts."
- "When you make a good choice your heart shines bright."
- "God gives us freedom. We need to follow the 10 commandments."
- "Learn the difference between good and bad."
- "Be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Try to do good."
- "You always have the choice to make a kind or bad choice but choose good like God wants us to."

**Was there something special you noticed at Mass today?**

- "I saw some of my friends at Mass today."
- "The Joyful Noise Choir were all dressed for Valentine's Day."
- "We sat in a different spot."
- "My cousins are in the choir."
- "Fr. Vidal said it was the last week to sing Alleluia until Easter."
- "A microphone for the choir."
- "Pretty Flowers."

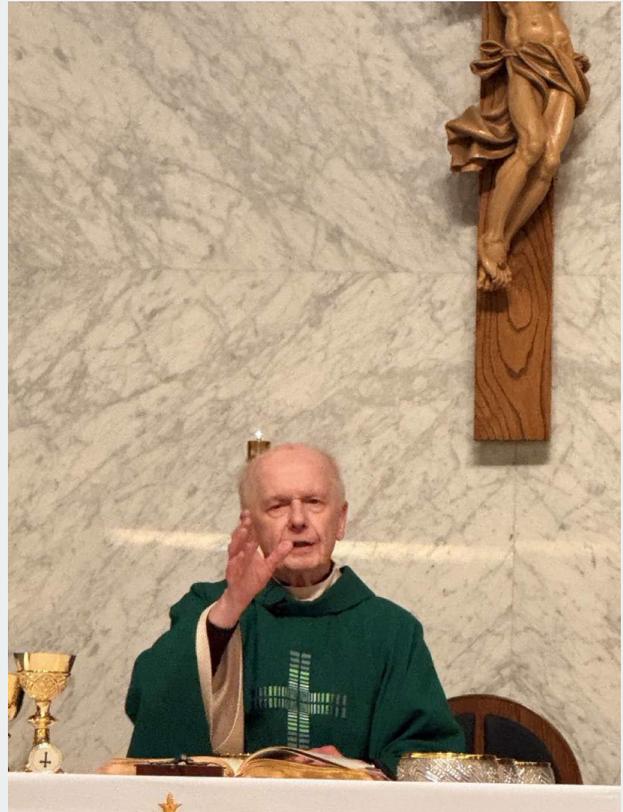
*"For Lent instead of giving something up,  
we should think of who we want to be."  
"God really wants us to show love, kindness,  
and respect."*

**This Week's Mass  
& Lamp Intentions**

**Parishioner  
Announcements**

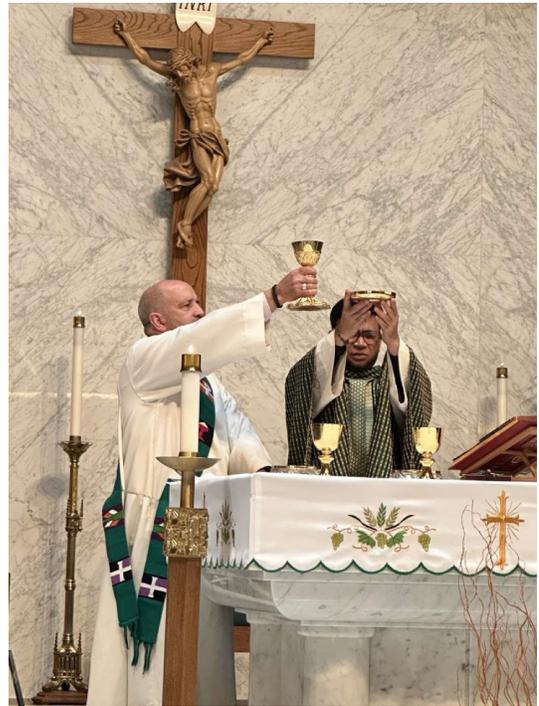
***Memories that Share Our Story...***

*5 pm Vigil Mass*

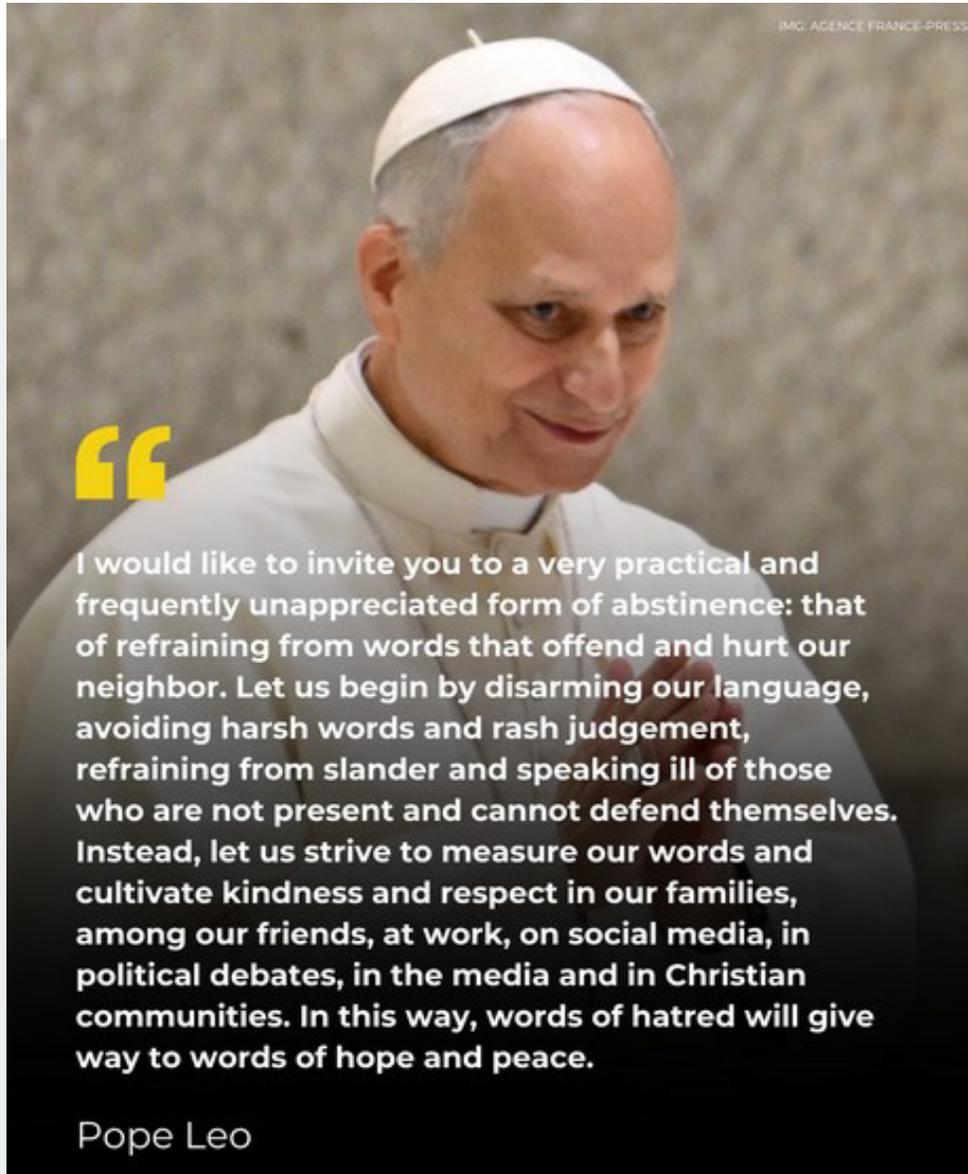




*Family Mass*



# *A Final Thought...*



“

I would like to invite you to a very practical and frequently unappreciated form of abstinence: that of refraining from words that offend and hurt our neighbor. Let us begin by disarming our language, avoiding harsh words and rash judgement, refraining from slander and speaking ill of those who are not present and cannot defend themselves. Instead, let us strive to measure our words and cultivate kindness and respect in our families, among our friends, at work, on social media, in political debates, in the media and in Christian communities. In this way, words of hatred will give way to words of hope and peace.

Pope Leo