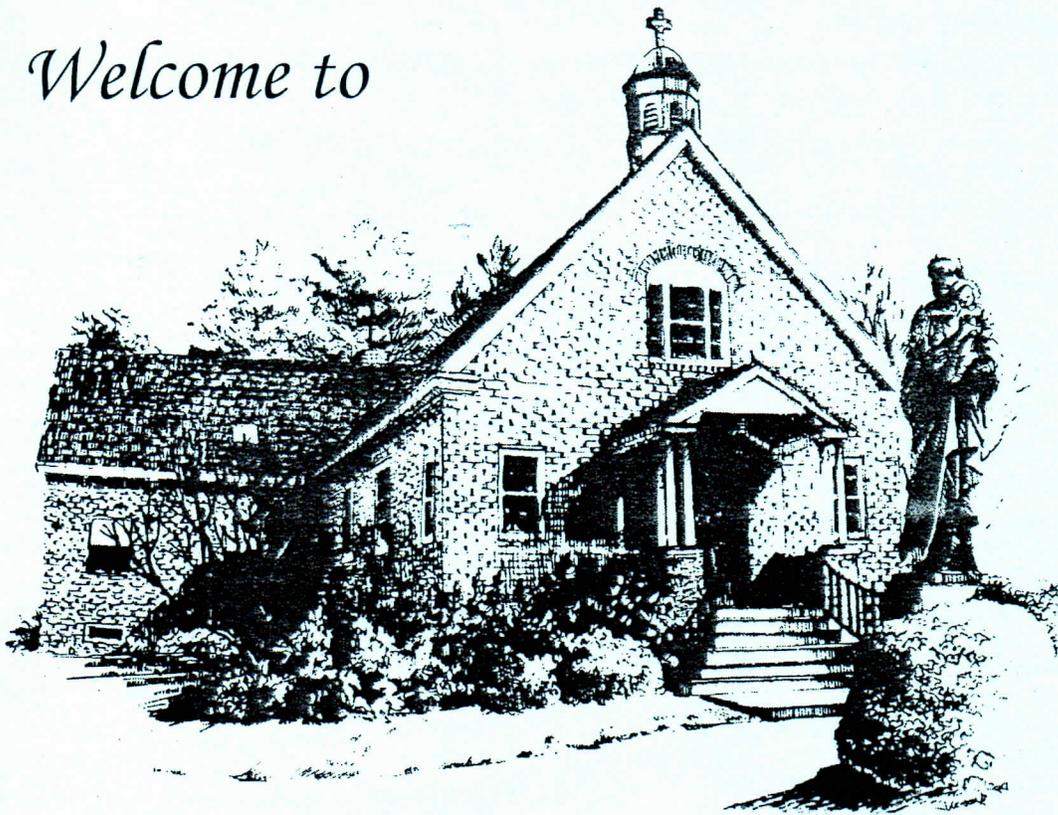


Welcome to



Saint Joseph the Good Provider Parish

52 West Street, P.O. Box 284 • Berlin, Massachusetts 01503-0284

PARISH STAFF

Fr. Thomas Tokarz, Pastor 978-838-9922
Sondra Pendergast and Lee Reardon 978-875-2035
Administrative Assistants
Mary Jo Kriz, Religious Education 508-341-1843
Cindy Long, Coordinator of Safe Environment
Maintenance Debra Anderson
Sharon Rainville, Organist 978-838-2276

TELEPHONES

Church: (978) 838-9922
Fax: (978) 838-9933
E-mail: stjoe9922@charter.net

MASS SCHEDULE

Lord's Day Masses
Saturday 5:30PM, Sunday 8:30AM & 10:45AM
Weekday Masses: Monday through Friday, 7:30AM
Holy Day Masses: 7:30AM & 7:00PM

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 4:30-5PM (or by appointment)

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

By appointment. Please call to arrange for date and instruction.

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Please call the rectory office at least one year prior to the marriage to make arrangements.

CARE OF THE SICK

Please advise us of parishioners who are sick or in the hospital, that we might keep them in prayer and, if possible, visit them. Anyone who is unable to celebrate Mass with us in Church is urged to advise us so that we might bring the Eucharist to them at home.

Your Family Parish

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK

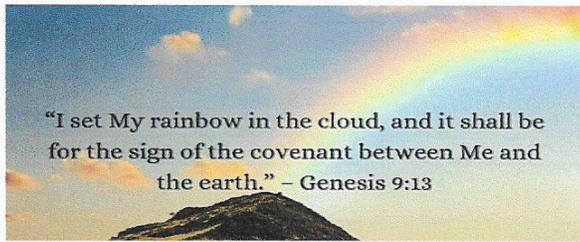
MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY 9:00 AM -12:00PM

Stewardship – Time - Talent –Treasure

Sunday Collection	\$	1,826.00
Fuel	\$	60.00
Repairs and Capital Improvements	\$	60.00
St. Pauley Clothing Shed	\$	101.91
Total Collection 2/7/21	\$	2,047.91
Retirement Fund for Religious	\$	100.00
Sunday Collection	\$	1,024.00
Fuel	\$	35.00
Repairs and Capital Improvements	\$	20.00
Total Collection 2/14/21	\$	1,079.00

This week's second collection is for The Church in Latin America. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that "the disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it". The theme for this year's Collection for the Church in Latin America is "Share Your Faith." Thank you for your generosity.

Year End Reminder: The office has completed the tallies for your yearly offerings to the Church. You may pick up your statements in the office following the Masses. Statements may be mailed upon special request. Contact the office at 978-838-9922 during regular office hours or e-mail: stjoe9922@charter.net



"I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth." – Genesis 9:13

Mass Intentions
Week End Schedule

- Sat Feb. 20th** 5:30pm Mass † Marie Spinney, requested by her husband Skip Spinney
- Sun. Feb. 21st** 8:30am Mass † Lorraine Lucht, requested by the Family
- Sun. Feb. 21st** 10:45am Mass † Mary Kathleen Shultz, requested by the Wrobel Family
- Sat Feb. 27th** 5:30pm Mass † Fredrick Lennon, requested by his daughter, Denise Davis
- Sun. Feb. 28th** 8:30am Mass OPEN
- Sun. Feb. 28th** 10:45am Mass OPEN

Week Day Mass Schedule

- Mon. Feb. 22nd**-7:30am Mass for Parishioners
- Tues. Feb. 23rd** -7:30am Mass for Parishioners
- Wed Feb. 24th**-7:30am Mass for Parishioners
- Thurs Feb. 25th**- 7:30am Mass for Parishioners
- Fri. Feb. 26th** - 7:30am Mass for Parishioners

For your Lenten Journey: please consider attending

† **Stations of the Cross** – held every Friday following morning Mass and Friday evenings at 7:00pm
What a powerful reminder of Christ's suffering for each of us.

Holy Saints this Week

- Mon. Feb. 22nd – *Feast of the Chair of St. Peter the Apostle*
- Tues. Feb. 23rd – *St. Polycarp*

Intercessions for Life

For all married couples: That they may witness to the generous love of God, through openness to new life by joyfully welcoming the gift of children;

We pray to the Lord

Tabernacle Light, February 21st – February 27th
In loving memory of Deceased Parishioners of St. Joseph the Good Provider

NOVENA TO ST. JOSEPH

Join Fr. Tokarz for our weekly novena to St. Joseph our patron saint on Wednesdays, after morning Mass. St. Joseph is our patron and we must pray to him for favors and blessings.



1st Sunday of Lent

"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 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.

Prayers for the sick: Skip Spinney, Judy, Paul, Kayleigh, Jerry, Mary, Al, Bob, Donna, Marie, Claire, Marty, Jean, Ed, Theresa, Laura, Jacqui, Lindsey, Terry, Mary Baer, Jennifer Berube, Elsa Polewarczyk, Ray Renzoni, Pat Renzoni, Cathy Simmons, Mark, Karen Baum, Jason, Don, Michael Shutt, Robert Wild, Evelyn Centeno

Liturgical Ministers

Saturday February 20th– 5:30 pm
Altar Servers:
Acolyte:
Lector:

Sunday February 21st- 8:30am
Altar Server:
Acolyte:
Lector: Lucille Roux

Sunday February 21st- 10:45 Mass
Altar Server:
Acolyte:
Lector: Jim Wrobel

Parishioners of St. Joseph the Good Provider, God created and destroyed. In creation, God made the trees, heavens, stars; the entire universe and creatures. God also created man to live and care for creation. Man did not co-operate with God. God sorrows over the corruption of the beings that God made with such care and love, and God's heart, in striking contrast to the evil inclination of the human heart, is grieved by their betrayal. God is pained by the brokenness of creation. God sends the flood, then, not as an act of revenge, but out of grief. Noah and his family were saved. The flood is in fact the means of re-creation. God washes the earth clean and both God and the earth begin again. Whatever dwells in our hearts that keeps us from hearing the harmony of all life in God's care; God will not give up on loving us into restoration and sets His bow in the sky as a promise of this new covenant. The first Sunday of Lent tells us of the temptation of Jesus. It is a short version compared with the other evangelists. Jesus proclaimed: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Gospel." The announcement that Jesus makes as he begins his preaching in today's Gospel was recalled on Ash Wednesday at the signing with ashes: "Repent and believe in the gospel." This is our challenge for Lent; indeed, it is the challenge of our entire life. During Lent, we are invited to strengthen and to renew the promises that we made at our Baptism, to reject Satan and sin so as to live as children of God. Through the grace of God that we received at Baptism, we follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and know that with Jesus' help, we will be victorious over sin. As we begin these 40 days may we begin to be restored; let us follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

NIECH BEDZIE POCHWALONY JEZUS CHRYSTUS! PRAISED BE JESUS CHRIST! - Fr. Tom Tokarz, Pastor

Pope Francis has proclaimed the church year, Dec. 2020 to Dec. 2021, as the Year of St. Joseph.

Here at St. Joseph the Good Provider we will celebrate this great saint on the feast day of St. Joseph, March 19, 2021 with Mass at 7:30am followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the day; ending at 7:00 pm with a Mass and Litany of St. Joseph. Please consider joining us for part of the devotion that special day. We will be taking sign-ups for blocks of time for adoration.

Religious Ed Classes - Reminder, classes scheduled Feb. 2021

Gr. 1 – 5 will meet Sun. Feb. 21, 28

Beginning with 8:30 Mass until 10:30am

Grades 7, 10 meet Sun. evening, 6:00 - 8:00pm Feb. 28

Grades 8, 9 meet Sun. evening, 6:00- 8:00pm Feb. 21

Religious Ed News

Grades 1-6, 8-9: Students in all grades will begin preparing for our Lenten journey as we help them understand the meaning behind these 40 days. It's not just about giving up candy. Lent is literally a time of reflection on the passion of Jesus; 40 days in which we reflect on the hugeness of what our Salvation is and the plan that God has for each of us through Jesus. It is a very prayerful time in which we prepare ourselves to celebrate the grace of our forgiveness, our gift of salvation and our hope in the Resurrection. Lent began on Ash Wednesday, February 17th. We will explore the many ways Lent is our chance to leave our old ways behind and adopt a new way of life. The word "Lent" comes from the old English, "lencten," which means "spring." Today we'll discover ways to 'spring' clean our hearts.

**Regional Confirmation Celebration
has been scheduled for**

Berlin, Bolton, Clinton, and Harvard

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be held on

Saturday, March 20, 2021 at 10:00 am

Bishop Robert J. McManus will preside at

St. John the Guardian of Our Lady

Union Street, Clinton, MA

Please remember to pray for the confirmands of our parish as they continue to prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, that they will welcome the gifts of the Holy Spirit



In the desert of temptation Jesus fasted from food, but feasted on prayer.
He fasted from water, yet drank from the holy scriptures.

LENTEN Regulations – Guide Lines for Fast and Abstinence
Abstinence from Meat – to be observed by all Catholics 14 yrs. and older. On Ash Wed., Good Friday, and all Fridays of Lent.

Fasting – to be observed by all Catholics who are 18 yrs but not yet 59 years of age on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday. Those who are bound to fast may take only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to needs. Eating solid food between meals is not permitted.



YOUR WAYS O LORD ARE LOVE AND TRUTH TO THOSE WHO KEEP YOUR COVENANT

Prayer in Time of Pandemic

*O God, whose Only Begotten Son bore the weight of human suffering for our salvation, hear the prayers of your Church for our sick brothers & sisters and deliver us from this time of trial.
Open our ears and our hearts to the voice of your Son: Be not afraid, for I am with you always. Bless all doctors and nurses, researchers and public servants; give us the wisdom to do what is right and the faith to endure this hour, that we might gather once again to praise your name in the heart of your Church, delivered from all distress and confident in your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.*



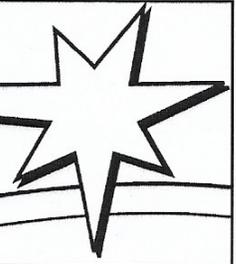
Amen.

Berlin Family Food Pantry

BFFP will be collecting items Feb. 28, the 4th Sunday of the month The Food Donation Box is at the Church entrance.
Thank you for your continued support and generosity!

REMINDER Altar Servers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers

Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

February 2021

St. Joseph the Good Provider Church
Rev. Thomas M. Tokarz, Pastor



Thoughtful Moments

Pray for friends

In his Gospel, St. Mark tells a story of a paralyzed man whose friends showed great determination to bring his needs before Jesus. The house in which Jesus was speaking was too crowded for their friend, so they lowered him through a hole they made in the roof (Mark 2:1-12). In response, Jesus changed the man's life. Amazing things can happen when we place our friends' needs before Jesus.

Just ask

Jesus tells us to ask God for what we need and to be persistent until we hear from Him. Don't worry about pestering God. Think of how eager we parents are to help our children—especially if they are struggling. It's the same with God – our perfect Father – who never tires of helping us.

"If you then...know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him"
(Matthew 7:11).



Observe a fruitful pandemic Lent

Once again, Lent will look different for many families. One goal of the season is to eliminate distractions and turn our hearts back to God. A few adjustments to your Lenten observance may help you transform your family's hearts, even in the midst of a pandemic.

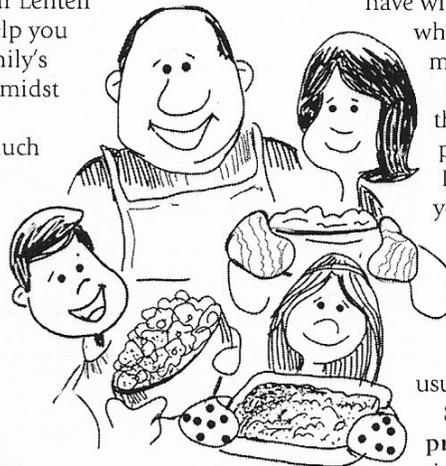
Offer it up. So much of what we are experiencing in the pandemic is sacrificial. Use visual aids to help children offer deprivation or sacrifices to God's purposes. For example, place a jar on your kitchen counter and encourage everyone to place a jelly bean in it each time they suffer a deprivation – a canceled sport season, a missed gathering, a scaled-down birthday celebration. Celebrate by

eating the candy at Easter.

Practice gratitude. Gratitude helps to keep everything in perspective. Stay aware of the pleasant moments you have with your family and do what you can to create more of them.

Be flexible. Accept that the landscape in a pandemic is different. Prioritize your family, your health and the health of your loved ones. Try not to hold onto specific ideas for accomplishing your usual activities.

Swap screen time for prayer time. Spending time watching or reading bad news or scrolling through social media sites filled with negativity creates stress. Turn to God in family prayer and rest in His presence in your lives.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why do Catholics believe Christ is in the Precious Blood and the Host?

Once the bread and wine has been consecrated during Mass, Jesus Christ is wholly present under the appearance either of bread or of wine in the Eucharist.

In fact, Christ is wholly present in any fragment

of the Host or in any drop of the Precious Blood.

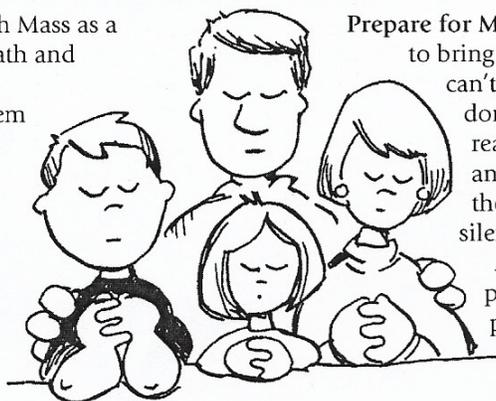
It is possible to receive the whole Christ in just one form or the other. However, it is most fitting to receive Christ in both forms during the celebration of the Eucharist.



Give your family the gift of "Little Easter"

Every Sunday is a "Little Easter," with Mass as a celebration of Christ's victory over death and sin. Many Catholic families find that strengthening Sunday habits bring them closer together and closer to God. Try these ideas:

Family forgiveness: On Friday or Saturday night, gather together and ask each other for forgiveness for offenses committed against one another. Then, if you feel comfortable, go to Confession as a family as often as you can.



Prepare for Mass: Participating in Mass is critical to bring strength to a Catholic family. If you can't attend in person, watch it together, but don't miss it. Before beginning, go over the readings you will hear at Mass so you can answer questions ahead of time. Spending the time waiting for Mass to begin in silence leaves time for prayer and reflection.

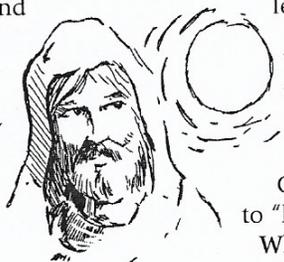
Mass intentions: Ask each person to pick someone for whom the family can pray during Mass. Write each name on a list and offer a family prayer for these intentions after Communion.

Scripture LESSON

Mark 9:2-10, The test of the Transformation

When Jesus met with Elijah and Moses on the mountaintop, they talked about the journey Jesus was going to make to Jerusalem and the Cross. Perhaps the holy men were offering support and comfort, and Jesus probably felt strengthened by the meeting.

Certainly he was bolstered by hearing the voice from Heaven. Still, he had a difficult road ahead and he realized that despite all of his efforts, some would refuse to listen and would be lost. But God knew that the desire to follow Jesus comes



from confidence about who he is. If we believe Jesus is God's Son then we will want to do what he says. So he

let the disciples witness the amazing meeting on the mountaintop, and he let them hear the heavenly voice proclaim Jesus as God's son and instruct us to "listen to him."

What can a parent do?

Society may try to tell us what is right, but Jesus' words are our final authority. Help youngsters test everything they hear against Jesus' words in the Bible and they will not be led astray.

Parent TALK



I had a hard time praying. Too many friends and family have been lost to the seemingly endless pandemic and I was spent. I was juggling working at home with supervising online

schooling. My husband lost his job for the second time in three years and we had used up our savings the first time. It felt like God was far away. He wasn't listening.

A few nights later I overheard our ten-year old saying her prayers asking God for help. She ended with, "Thanks for listening. Amen." Then she went to sleep. Standing outside her room, I realized that Tessa didn't tell God what to do. She asked for help, trusted that it would come, and left it to God.

I prayed for the first time in weeks and ended with, "Thanks for listening. Amen." I realized God is always listening. I was the one who had stopped talking.

Feasts & Celebrations

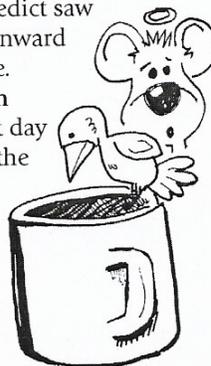
February 2 - The Presentation of the Lord. In accordance with the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple to make the required offering forty days after his birth. They were faithful observers of the law of the Lord.

February 3 - St. Blaise (316). Bishop of Sebaste, he was martyred for refusing to renounce his Catholic faith. Priests usually bless throats on this day because St. Blaise, reportedly a physician, healed many ailments of the throat.

February 10 - St. Scholastica

(543). Twin sister of St. Benedict, St. Scholastica founded a Benedictine community for women five miles from her brother's monastery. The twins visited each other each year and Scholastica died three days after their last meeting. St. Benedict saw her soul rising heavenward in the form of a dove.

February 17 - Ash Wednesday. The first day of Lent. Ashes from the burnt palms of the previous Passion Sunday are blessed and placed on the foreheads as a sign of penance.



Our Mission

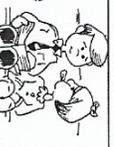
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 (Unless noted, Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and New American Bible (Rev.))

 = a day of abstinence from meat
 = a day of fasting and abstinence

Family Lent Calendar



"Lent is the liturgical season of forty days which begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Easter Triduum). Lent is the primary penitential season in the Church's liturgical year, reflecting the forty days Jesus spent in the desert fasting and praying" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>21 After Mass today, explain the Gospel and the homily in terms your children can understand.</p> 	<p>22 Contact Catholic Charities (703-549-1390, www.catholiccharitiesusa.org) to see how you can help those suffering most in the pandemic.</p>	<p>23 Invent a new family prayer you can say together each day.</p> 	<p>17 <i>February</i> If you are comfortable, take your family to the Ash Wednesday liturgy and wear ashes all day.</p> 	<p>18 Tape a drawing of a vase on the fridge and label it, "Lent." Each day draw a flower in the vase and watch Lent blossom.</p>	<p>19 Share a mealless family meal. Discuss your Lenten offerings to be sure all are doable and sacrificial.</p> 	<p>20 Choose a family Lenten offering, such as giving up desserts, attending or streaming daily Mass, or praying a family Rosary regularly.</p> 
<p>28 Before Mass today, pick a saint represented in one of the statues in your church and find out more about him or her during Lent.</p>	<p>1 Collect stuffed animals or soft pillows, wash them well, and bring them to a local nursing home. Older folks love soft things to hug.</p> <p><i>March</i></p>	<p>2 Ask each person to share a game, toy, or treat with someone else in your home.</p>	<p>24 Take stock of how your Lenten fasts are going, and refresh your commitment to them.</p>	<p>25 Before eating your family meal together, ask each person to say a spontaneous prayer.</p> 	<p>26 Pray for the people in the world who can't afford to have meat as a regular part of their diets.</p> 	<p>27 Turn off the television, unplug the computers, and take the phone off the hook for a half hour to pray a family Rosary.</p>
<p>7 Light a candle in church today for someone who passed away or who needs special help.</p> 	<p>8 Ask each family member to write a letter to Jesus thanking him for his sacrifice on the Cross.</p>	<p>9 Make cookies and share them after dinner tonight.</p> 	<p>10 Encourage each family member to perform an examination of conscience.</p>	<p>11 Place a crucifix or picture of Jesus in a central place to keep the focus on him.</p> 	<p>12 Every time a good deed is done, put a jelly bean in a jar. Share the jelly beans at Easter!</p> 	<p>13 Ask each person to make a sacrificial offering, such as doing an extra chore without being asked.</p>
<p>14 <i>Laetare Sunday</i> Have a special meal at home (or get takeout) to celebrate the half-way point through Lent.</p>	<p>15 Pick a friend or neighbor and perform an anonymous good deed for him or her.</p> 	<p>16 Encourage all family members to refrain from bickering today.</p> 	<p>17 Say a short prayer before each cross or crucifix in your home.</p> 	<p>18 Make up a box for a needy family or homeless shelter. Put canned goods, clothing, toiletries, and gently used toys in it.</p>	<p>19 Serve pretzels as a reminder that Catholics used to fast from milk, butter, eggs, cheese, cream, and meat.</p> 	<p>20 Make simple crosses out of construction paper. Write on them, "He died for me," and post them all over the house.</p> 
<p>21 After Mass, light a candle, and recite the Apostles' Creed as an affirmation of faith.</p> 	<p>22 Pray for the victims of the pandemic!</p> 	<p>23 Send a card to someone who might need cheering today.</p> 	<p>24 Give up a favorite toy or treat just for today.</p> 	<p>25 Play for someone who is sick and can't leave home.</p> 	<p>26 Place any final donations in the box you set up. Make a family trip to deliver it to its destination.</p> 	<p>27 If you feel comfortable, go to Confession or attend a Reconciliation Service. Then eat an ice cream afterwards to celebrate forgiveness.</p>
<p>28 Have a Palm Sunday procession around the house and take turns playing Jesus.</p> 	<p>29 Take a walk outside and look for signs of new life.</p> 	<p>30 Forgive someone who hurt you today.</p> 	<p>31 Get up 15 minutes earlier than usual today and pray as a family.</p>	<p>1 <i>April</i> Wash and dry each other's feet in commemoration of Jesus washing the feet of his Apostles.</p>	<p>2 Pray the Stations of the Cross today, and meditate on each one.</p> 	<p>3 Dress up a doll in a white garment and talk about the Baptismal vows we renew each year.</p>

Spend Lent with the Saints

Here are forty holy men and women to accompany you during Lent. Let their lives inspire you to courage, service, surrender, and fidelity. They will help you, as you journey with your family and faith community, to grow with them in faith, hope, and love.

Ten Who Changed Church or Society

Catherine de Hueck Doherty, Servant of God

According to Catherine de Hueck, “Christianity” is a verb. Her conviction is rooted in the failure of Christians to act during the Russian Revolution when many of her relatives were killed.

How can I demonstrate my Christianity?

Saint Joseph Calasanz

Joseph Calasanz was shocked by the desperation and ignorance of the poor he encountered in Rome. He wrote, “I have found the definitive way to serve God” and opened the first free school in Europe.

What can I do to alleviate suffering?

Saint John Bosco



Saints often have the ability to imagine new ways of accomplishing everyday tasks. For example, rather than employ the customary “fear of punishment” to teach children, John Bosco used faith, reason, and loving kindness.

Today, may your prayer be to find unfamiliar ways to respond to familiar situations.

Saint Camillus de Lellis

Camillus’ mother intentionally gave birth to her son in a stable in imitation of Jesus’ birth. Camillus spent years fighting and gambling before finally repenting and establishing a ministry of the sick.

Parenting largely involves sowing the seeds of faith and leaving the rest to God. Do I trust God?

Saint Catherine of Siena

Despite being almost illiterate, Catherine of Siena was named a Doctor of the Church for her writings. How? She dictated them.

Everyone has some physical or intellectual challenge. Before you feel defeated by your particular limitation, remember Catherine and ask, “How can I work around this?”

Saint Angela Merici

Angela Merici began what would become a worldwide community of educators by offering religious instruction to poor children in her neighborhood.

It’s easy to become overwhelmed by the innumerable needs of our families and the world. Instead, ask, “What can I do right here, right now?”

Saint Peter Claver, S.J.

Love is a verb; it must be demonstrated before it can truly be received by others. The Spanish missionary Peter Claver knew this and so ministered to people before ever mentioning the name of Jesus Christ.

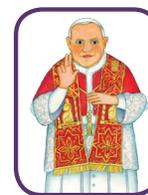
How can I show my love for others today?

Saint Teresa of Ávila

Teresa faced many adversities while reforming her religious order. She always recognized God’s active presence in her life, even when she faced difficulties. She responded to God’s faithfulness and mysterious ways through her life of service and prayer.

Where do I see God?

Saint Pope John XXIII



By all accounts, John XXIII’s greatest achievement was convening the Second Vatican Council. Yet he also performed innumerable small acts of kindness. For example, he regularly visited hospitals, prisons, and schools.

In God’s eyes, great and small acts of love are equal. Which will I offer today?

Saint John of God

There are two kinds of people in the world: those who criticize a situation and those who do something about it. St. John, appalled by the conditions in a hospital where he was a patient, founded his own hospital.

Instead of complaining, ask, “What can I do about it?”

Ten Strong Women

Blessed Virgin Mary



Young, pregnant, unmarried though engaged, Mary trusted in God and became the first disciple of her Son,

Jesus, the one who was to save his people.

Trust that God will be with you even in uncertain and frightening situations.

Saint Elizabeth

Elizabeth and Zechariah got a surprise from God in their old age: a child, who would become John the Baptist.

Where has God surprised you? Are you open to God surprising you again?

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary

After she was widowed at age 20, Elizabeth found herself and her children at odds with her noble relatives who did not care for her generosity toward the poor.

Conflict and rejection are part of life. Ask God to be with you in those times.

Saint Frances of Rome

Frances experienced several vocations. She cared for the poor and sick, nursed her disabled husband, and called together a group of women to minister to the plague-stricken of Rome.

Be willing to shift gears to serve God and neighbor.

Saint Margaret of Scotland

Margaret was a pious queen who held large feasts for the common people in the castle and would give away her coats and shoes to the poor while out riding.

What is something important you can give away to someone in need?

Saint Kateri Tekakwitha



Disfigured by the smallpox that killed her father and mother, Kateri became the first Native American to be canonized.

Try to look beyond appearances to see the goodness in every person.

Saint Elizabeth of Portugal

Elizabeth watched her son lead an armed revolt against his own father and twice rode out onto battlefields to make peace between family factions.

Find ways to be a peacemaker in your family, your community, and the world.

Saint Jane Frances de Chantal

“I regard her as one of the holiest souls I have ever met on this earth,” Saint Vincent de Paul said of Jane Frances. Even as the child of a wealthy family, she felt a connection to the poor who begged at the door.

What can you do to help the poor in body and spirit at your door?

Saint Hedwig

After her husband’s death, Hedwig joined a community of religious sisters, but she kept control of her property so she could still provide relief to the suffering.

Consider how you can use your resources to benefit the most people.

“The first end I propose in our daily work is to do the will of God; secondly, to do it in the manner he wills it; and thirdly, to do it because it is his will.”

Elizabeth Ann Seton

Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton



Mother of five and a widow at age 28, Elizabeth opened the first American Catholic orphanage and parish school

and is the first American-born saint.

Great things often start small. What little thing can you do for God and others today?

Ten Martyrs

Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, S.J.

Pro was imprisoned and executed in 1927 during an era of government persecution in Mexico. Falsely charged and facing a firing squad, Pro forgave his persecutors and stretched out his arms in the form of a cross.

Find a way to forgive someone who has wronged you.

Blessed Charles de Foucauld

Foucauld led a dissolute life before becoming a hermit in the Algerian desert and serving the local tribespeople. He was martyred during a rebellion.

How can you respond to God's invitation to find a better way to live and to serve?

Saint Lawrence Ruiz

Lawrence Ruiz, a Filipino member of a Dominican missionary team in Japan, was martyred in 1637 during a persecution of Japanese Christians. He was the first Filipino to be canonized.

What challenge confronts you today, and how can you respond faithfully?

Dorothy Stang, S.N.D. deN.

In 2005, 73-year-old Sister Dorothy Stang was murdered in the Brazilian Amazon where she had worked as a tireless advocate for landless peasants since the early 1970s.

Faithfulness over the long haul is not easy. Pray for perseverance in your own commitments.

Blessed Titus Brandsma, O. Carm.

Brandsma was a Dutch Carmelite priest and vigorous critic of Nazism. Arrested and sent to the Dachau concentration camp, he was a source of consolation to other prisoners. He was tortured, and murdered by lethal injection.

Pray for courage to be a faithful witness in times of trial.

The Trappist Martyrs of Tibhirine, Algeria

These Trappist monks were revered by Muslims in Algeria because of their prayerful example and their resolve to stay and serve during a time of violent unrest. In 1996, seven of the monks were martyred.

How can you be a witness for peace in a world filled with violence?

Saints Perpetua and Felicity



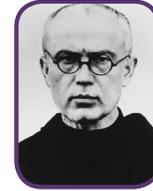
Perpetua, a 22-year-old nursing mother, was martyred in Carthage in 203 for refusing to renounce her faith.

Her co-martyr and servant, Felicity, was an expectant mother.

Mothers make tremendous sacrifices. Thank your own mother, whether living or deceased, for her sacrifices.

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Saint Maximilian Kolbe, O.F.M. Conv.



Kolbe, a Franciscan openly critical of Nazism after the German invasion of Poland, was arrested in 1941 and sent to

Auschwitz. He voluntarily died in place of another man condemned to death.

The word "compassion" means to "suffer with" another. Walk a mile in the shoes of someone who is hurting today.

Saint Isaac Jogues, S.J.

Saint Isaac Jogues of mission work: "Our single endeavor should be to give ourselves to the work and to be faithful to [God] and not to spoil his work by our shortcomings."

Take a moment to focus on some personal shortcoming you would like to change. Take a step in that direction today.

Saint Óscar Arnulfo Romero



At great personal risk, Archbishop Romero spoke out against violations of human rights and on behalf of the vic-

tims of the Salvadoran civil war. He was martyred as he raised the consecrated host during a Mass.

Sometimes faith calls upon us to take a risk. Ask yourself if you are playing it too safe in living your faith in the world.

Ten Little-Known Holy Ones

Saint Jeanne Jugan

Jeanne Jugan (1792–1879), founder of the Little Sisters of the Poor, was nearly 50 before she was confident of God’s plan for her.

Don’t be discouraged by your own uncertainty. Make each day a valuable next step.

Saint Benedict Labré

Benedict Labré (1748–1783) longed to be a monk but after several unsuccessful attempts realized he was meant to spend his life as a pilgrim devoted to praying at holy shrines.

Psalm 94 tells us: “For God will not reject his people.” Remember that when others reject you.

Venerable Pierre Toussaint



Pierre Toussaint (1766–1853) has been described as a one-man St. Vincent de Paul Society. Surviving

slavery and discrimination, Toussaint became much sought after by rich and poor alike for his wise counsel, humility, and unrelenting charity.

Adversities can be a motivation to help others rather than an excuse to fail.

Venerable Matthew Talbot

A preteen alcoholic, Matthew Talbot (1856–1925) vowed to get sober at age 28 and then spent the rest of his life offering his time and money to help others in need.

Despair led Michael Talbot to God. Pray for the same grace in your hour of need.

Saint Josephine Bakhita, F.D.C.C.

From Sudanese slave to Italian Canossian sister to history-making saint, Josephine Bakhita (1869–1947) refused to let others keep her from the path to which she knew she was called.

Commitment such as Saint Bakhita’s takes clarity and steadfastness. Make sure you are clear-eyed when you make a promise today. Then keep your word.

Blessed Solanus Casey, O.F.M.Cap.

Solanus Casey (1870–1957) ministered to thousands of people who came to the Capuchin Franciscan monastery where he served as porter and counselor.

Where do you find wise advice? Seek it most especially when you don’t think you need it.

“Thank God ahead of time.”

Solanus Casey, O.F.M.Cap.

Venerable Félix Varela

Father Félix Varela (1788–1853) escaped from Havana after he was condemned to death for promoting the abolition of slavery in Cuba. As a parish priest in New York, Varela came to the aid of Irish immigrants facing ethnic and religious discrimination.

Who could use your aid in their battle against unjust treatment?

Saint Sharbel Makhluf



The Lebanese monk Sharbel Makhluf (1828–1898) chose to devote his life to solitary prayer and spiritual reading. He

found great inspiration in Thomas à Kempis’ *Imitation of Christ*.

Include spiritual reading in your daily prayer routine.

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Saint Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J.

Alphonsus Rodriquez (1531–1617), revered spiritual advisor, became a Jesuit brother and the community’s doorkeeper after the deaths of his wife and children.

As he answered the door, Alphonsus would say, “I’m coming, Lord.” Try answering your door, phone, or e-mail with that same faith-filled attitude.

Saint Joseph of Cupertino, O.F.M.

Known as the “Flying Friar,” Joseph of Cupertino (1603–1663) was ordained a Franciscan and from that point on he reportedly experienced a remarkable series of ecstasies and supernatural events, including frequent levitation while he celebrated Mass.

Try defying the gravity of your spiritual burdens through contemplative prayer.



Diocese of Worcester
Office of the Bishop
49 Elm Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609

Lent 2021

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This year's Lenten journey to Holy Week and Easter will again be different. But COVID notwithstanding, the reasons for, and the fruits of, this annual holy season of prayer, penance and almsgiving remain the same.

Strive as we do, we sin. Strive as we may, sanctity, the goal of us all, can always be more fully embodied. In both our striving and our shortcomings we should never be discouraged. God's grace abounds.

We should always welcome this penitential but joy-filled season to narrow our focus on what is most important. For when, through deepened prayer, greater penances and more generous alms-giving, we turn from sin to grow in holiness, our greater awareness and receptivity to God's mercy, love and grace prepare us to share in and celebrate ever more joyfully Christ's Easter triumphs.

In these COVID times our personal circumstances may not allow us to gather in great crowds at church for Masses, weekly Stations, Bible classes or even the liturgies of Holy Week. We might worry that this may lead to a diminished Lent. But God will not be denied. He will not deny us an abundance of graces for a good Lent if we do not deny Him or forego a vigorous season of repentance as our circumstances allow.

On the way to the first Holy Week much of what the Apostles thought necessary seemed lacking and events did not play out as they hoped. Peter sought to deter Christ from the Cross. James and John wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume those who did not receive Jesus. Andrew wondered aloud what good five loaves and two fish were among so many. On Good Friday all seemed lost. But Christ rose and triumphed over all for all.

This Lent, our parishes and diocese will again be creative so that the Word will be preached, the Sacraments celebrated and the good works carried on. Together with those public liturgical gatherings that your prudent decisions allow you to attend, your deep private prayer and penances, pondering of Scripture, examination of conscience, and acts of charity will give glory to God and draw you closer to Him.

Let us then, like Christ led into the desert by the Holy Spirit for forty days of prayer and fasting, embark upon this Holy Season to repent of our sin, grow in holiness and draw closer to Christ. For it is only in Him, by the way of the Cross, that we will find and forever share in the deepest longing of our hearts, the love of the Trinity which triumphed at Easter.

With every prayerful best wish for a fruitful Lent, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester

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