

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

1312 Dallas Street
Waco, Texas 76704

Website: www.stjohnswaco.org
E-mail: saintjohn1312@yahoo.com
Phone (254) 753-6742

Pastor/Administrator: Father Cyril Ejaidu

Confession: Sunday 10:00-10:25 am

Mass: Sunday 10:30 am

Mass: Wednesday 6:00 pm

First Sunday of Lent

February 26, 2023

March 5, 2023

Lectors

Darren Sliva
Emily Stambaugh

Eucharistic Ministers

Gwendolyn Stewart
Heather Keahey
Heather Weekly

***Ministry for the
Sick and Homebound***

Mrs. Gwendolyn Stewart and
Mrs. Carolyn Brown

Photographer

David Haliburton

Bulletin

Celeste Sheehy

Live-Stream and Music

Greg Guerra



Parish Council Members

Chairman: Father Cyril Ejaidu

President: Ms. Faye Stewart

Vice President: Mr. Darren Sliva

Recording Secretary

Mrs. Carolyn Brown

Other members

Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Freddy
Duron, Mr. Freeman Hayes, Mr.
Stanley Glynn, Mrs. Sylvia
Glynn, Mr. David Gradel, Mrs.
Elvira Salinas, and
Mrs. Yvette Guardiola

Finance Committee:

Mrs. Bobbie Sharkey
Mrs. Carolyn Brown
Ms. Jessica Breda
Mrs. Joyce Fonteneaux
Mr. Matthew Sheehy

Knights of Peter Claver Council

and Court Council #385

Grand Knight

Mr. Joseph Quinones

Court #385 Grand Lady

Mrs. Teaberta Black

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry. Matthew 4:1-2

“Forty” is a significant number. In Scripture, it is used more than 145 different times. For example, the rain during the Great Flood lasted forty days and forty nights. Each time Moses went up Mount Sinai, he remained there for forty days and nights. The Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples for forty days before ascending into Heaven. And there are many other uses of “forty” throughout the Bible. Interestingly, forty is even significant within human nature, in that we develop within our mother’s womb for forty weeks before being born. The “forty” that we commemorate today is the forty days and forty nights that our Lord spent in the desert being tempted by the devil while He fasted and prayed. Forty is used to symbolize a time of testing, purification, trial or probation. For that reason, it should also be seen as a symbol of your entire life here on earth. In Saint Matthew’s version of Jesus’ temptation in the desert, He specifically uses the wording “forty days *and* forty nights.” Saint Bede, in commenting upon this, points out that this period of time not only symbolizes our entire lives, but the “days” represent the many graces and blessings we receive, while the “nights” represent the crosses we endure. As we begin our Lenten journey, it is important to once again apply the lessons of Jesus’ time in the desert to our entire lives. Let’s consider two lessons we can take from the passage quoted above. First, we see that Jesus was “led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.” This teaches us that Jesus not only endured temptation, He confronted it. He was not afraid of the devil and did not fear his attacks. Instead, He willingly faced those temptations, being led by the Spirit, so as to not only overcome them in His life but also to enable us to confront, in our lives, every temptation by the power and initiative of the Holy Spirit. We must never be afraid to confront temptations directly and confidently when the Holy Spirit is in the lead. A second important lesson is that Jesus voluntarily fasted during this time in the desert. This illustrates the importance of the virtue of temperance in life. If we see this period of forty as a symbol of our whole lives, then we will understand that temperance must always be part of our lives. When we experience the joys and blessings of life (the forty days), we must certainly celebrate them. But we must always do so with a certain self-denial, in that we must never allow the passing things of this world to become the primary satisfaction we seek. Saint John of the Cross teaches that we can even become overly attached to spiritual consolations. Conversely, when we experience the crosses of life (the forty nights), we must also practice a certain self-denial, in that we must not allow the difficulties we endure to discourage us or to distract us from seeking out and fulfilling the will of God. Fasting, meaning our acquisition of the virtue of temperance, must lead us always through the ups and downs of life, helping us to keep our eyes on the truths God has revealed to us and rejecting the lies of the devil. Reflect, today, upon the importance of embracing the virtue of temperance with courage

throughout life. Throughout life's many ups and downs, joys and sorrows, blessings and crosses, we must allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit, confronting every circumstance with courage and self-denial. Reflect upon any ways that you struggle with the crosses you endure or excessively cling to the consolations of life. Seek to embrace the road of virtue this Lent in imitation of Jesus' forty days and nights in the desert.

My temperate and courageous Lord, You confronted all temptation with courage and strength. You fasted throughout the forty days and forty nights so as to teach us how to navigate the ups and downs of life. Please give me the virtues of temperance and courage, and bestow the Holy Spirit upon me so that I may follow You into the desert of my own life. Jesus, I trust in You.

St. John's Offering

February 19, 2023

Regular Offering: **\$667** Building Fund: **\$100** Soul Food Dinner: **\$994**

Please add names of church members and their family members to the sick list in the foyer of the church so that we may pray for you. We will update the list weekly and remove names from the list monthly. If a name should remain on the list indefinitely, please notify Celeste Sheehy.

Sick List

Father God, we pray for all those who are facing sickness in their bodies.

We ask that you restore their health, soothe their pain, and ease their worries. Give them your peace and comfort.

In Jesus name, Amen!

Don McKelvain

Sonja Hemstreet Gaines

Hilde Ouellette

Jessie Hithe

Gary Gradel

Julie Hemstreet

Gloria Johnson

Justin Loucks

Diocesan News

March 17 – 19, 2023 – Come and listen to God inviting you into the desert of silence at a **Silent Lenten Retreat**. Fr. Harry Dean and Brian Egan will each give one reflection talk. Mass, Eucharistic Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be part of the retreat. The cost is \$280 for a private room and \$230 for a shared room

Announcements

We will have **pastries and coffee available in Sophie Hall after Mass** every Sunday except the fourth Sunday of the month. Please stop by and visit for a few minutes.

In conjunction with Shepherd's Pantry, we provide a **food pantry for the community in Sophie Hall on the second Saturday of every month.**

February 26, 2023, 3:00 pm – St. Mary of the Assumption in Taylor, TX will host **Austin Polyphony in Concert: A Musical Journey through the Church Year.**

Tickets are \$15 through February 24, \$20 at the door. For more information, see the flyers on the church doors, call 512-352-2175, or email luciano-laurentiu@stmarystaylor.org

February 27, 28, 29, 2023, 7:00 pm each evening – Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Cornhill, TX is hosting **Healing Mission with Paul Rymniak.** Please see the flyers on the church doors for more information.

February 28, 2023, 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm – The Dioceses of Austin will host the **relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis and St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia** at St. Peter Catholic Center on the Baylor campus in Waco.

March 3 – 31, 2023, 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm or sold out! St. Joseph's **Annual Lenten Fish Fry** every Friday at the St. Joseph's CCE Center, 9656 Elk Road, Elk, TX. Dine in or to-go plates \$12.

March 3 – 31, 2023, 5:00 pm – the fish runs out! St. Philip Catholic Mission of China Spring KofC will be hosting their **Annual Lenten Fish Fry** every Friday. 13095 Old China Spring Highway. Drive through or dine-in.

March 4, 2023, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm – Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Aux Court 385 will have a **Yard Sale** at the church. Tables can be rented for \$10.

March 4, 2023, 9:00 am – CDA #739 in Taylor, TX invites all women to join us for **Reflections on the Gospels from Ash Wednesday to Easter.** Meet in St. Mary's School Cafeteria followed by a salad luncheon. Please rsvp to jackievrana@gmail.com or call 512-352-2175.

March 25, 2023, 8:00 am – 2:30 pm - CDA DAY OF REFLECTION, KC Hall in West. Cheryl Maxwell, the former Director of Worship for the Austin Diocese, will speak. Lite breakfast & lunch provided. Sr. Mary Danielle Peters, member of the Secular Institute of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary will speak in the afternoon. Submit name, phone number & \$10 registration fee (checks made out to CDA #829), or cash, by FRIDAY, **MARCH 17**, to Ann Vanek, 810 N. Harrison St., West, TX 76691. For additional information, contact Ann Vanek (254-744-6553) or June Danker (214-208-7514). Registration includes the cost of the meal. Be sure to invite a friend. Come and enjoy a day of rest, reflection & spiritual enrichment during Lent.