



Equipping families to encounter Christ

This newsletter is meant to give everyone at St. Luke ideas to live their faith more fully and joyfully. Each month will focus on ritual and the celebration of the Eucharist. In addition, each newsletter will include useful information about the Catholic faith, activities, models of faith, and ideas for prayer. Please take what is useful for you and your family.

Some saints to celebrate:

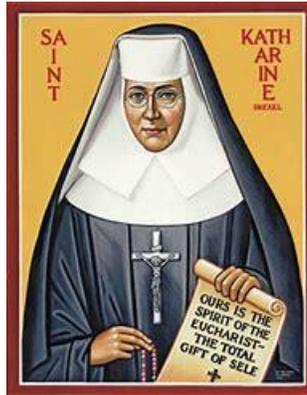
Mar 3 Katharine Drexel

Mar 7 Perpetua and Felicity

Mar 9 Anthony

Mar 17 Patrick

Mar 24 Oscar Romero



Ritual of the month:

Fasting

Ritual is a set of actions with meaningful and symbolic value. You can change eating habits for many reasons. Creating a fasting ritual goes a step further and makes it prayerful, intentional, and purposeful.

What is fasting? Fasting is going without food or drink for a particular amount of time. It can also be abstaining from a habit, behavior, or act. Fasting can be done for religious or health reasons and has concrete benefits. Spiritually, fasting adds power to prayer, instills discipline of one's passions, frees up time and resources to devote to others, and helps us to focus more intently on God. Medically, fasting aids in digestion, promotes blood sugar control, and reduces inflammation among other benefits. Fasting has been encouraged and required throughout the history of the Church. While the current obligations to fast are minimal, the Church still highly encourages fasting throughout the Forty days of Lent and as an opportunity to master discipline over our lives and our desires.

Assessment of fasting in your home: Take time before creating ritual to look at your fasting and ask:

1. What does fasting mean to you?
2. How do you participate in fasting during Lent?
3. What does your fasting look like? Is it full of hope or drudgery?
4. How can you use ritual to enhance both your understanding of fasting as well as the fundamentals?

With this assessment, consider the ideas below, choosing one or two and bringing them into your day, year, or holy day. Once you have established your Fasting Ritual, consider deepening the experience with an additional idea, while maintaining simplicity and peacefulness in your Domestic Church.

“Return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.”

Joel 2:12

Fasting as Prayer

With this assessment, consider the ideas below, choosing one or two and bringing them into your time with the Lord. Remember that the idea is to create meaning and purpose, allowing you to savor the experience. It does not take a lot to do this. Simplicity is important.

“Fasting of the body is food for
the soul.”

St. John Chrysostom

Here are some ideas for creating a fasting ritual:

- The Liturgical calendar – use the calendar of the Church to encourage you to fast. Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and the weekdays of Lent are traditionally fasting periods in the Church, although only the first two are obligatory.
- One hour before receiving Eucharist – the Church requires those receiving communion to abstain from food and drink one hour before receiving the sacrament. Use this time to meditate on the Lord, preparing for Mass and the receiving of Eucharist.
- Every Friday – throughout the year, the Church encourages fasting through abstinence of meat every Friday. You may choose to substitute a different sacrifice in place of meat.
- Ember Days – these are three fasting days which occur four times a year, according to the seasons. They are an opportunity to reflect on where our food comes from, our impact on the earth, our obligation to stewardship of the earth, and can unite us to the rhythm of the seasons God has created.
- United with petitionary prayer – consider uniting your requests to the Lord with fasting. Suffering and right sacrifice offered to God for others can bring you closer to God and create more intentionality in your requests.

“This, rather, is the fasting that I wish:
releasing those bound unjustly, untying
the thongs of the yoke; setting free the
oppressed, breaking every yoke;
sharing your bread with the hungry,
sheltering the oppressed and the
homeless; clothing the naked when you
see them, and not turning your back on
your own.”

Isaiah 58:6-7



The Solemnity of Saint Joseph

March 19

For the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church, Pope Francis declared this the year of St. Joseph, from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021. See this for more information: <https://yearofstjoseph.org/devotions/st-joseph-table/>

Saint Joseph was a husband, father, carpenter, and a faithful servant of God. He shows us how to be open to the path of the Lord and obedient when we hear His call.

Suggestions for celebrating Saint Joseph:

Watch and learn about the life St. Joseph (for kids):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4NBV840xTc>

www.holyheroes.com has stories of the saints. Check out this disk which contains the stories of St. Katharine Drexel and St. Joseph:

<https://www.holyheroes.com/St-Joseph-St-Katharine-Drexel-CD-p/gscd3.htm>

St. Joseph was the “bread-winner” for Mary and Joseph. Serve a lovely loaf of bread with your evening meal.



Book suggestion:

Song of the Swallows by Leo Politi. This story concerns the swallows of San Juan Capistrano and how they are known to return on the feast of Saint Joseph. Ages 3+

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding. In all ways, acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.

- Proverbs 3: 5-6

“Each of us can discover in Joseph -- the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence -- an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble,”

Pope Francis

The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

March 25

On this day, we take time to celebrate Mary's fiat (her "yes") to the Lord's request that she be the mother of God. In her yes, the second person of the Holy Trinity became incarnate, flesh, and a part of our physical world. This emphasizes the dignity of the human person and highlights the need to advocate for the dignity of life, from the moment of conception to the point of natural death. Take time this day to discuss this teaching of our faith with your children.

Because this is a solemnity, our Lenten penance obligations are lifted. Prepare a special celebration – waffles are traditional on this day.

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Luke 1:38

Mary's Fiat

Mary said "yes" to the Angel Gabriel when asked if she would be the mother of the Son of the Most High. In doing so, she replaced Eve's disobedience with her own obedience and became the New Eve.

What is your fiat? How are you saying "yes" to the Lord?



Christian Initiation

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC) is the process by which adults and children from 3rd grade to 100 years old become full, participating members of the Catholic Church. Catechumens are unbaptized seeking initiation and candidates are baptized outside the Catholic faith and now seeking initiation into the Catholic faith. Receiving sacraments are our YES to the Lord!

Lent is a special time of preparation for the baptism of the catechumens. As a parish, we support and pray for those preparing for this sacrament.

The catechumens will be baptized and receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation at the Easter Vigil:

Kevin Dunn

Christina Hayashi

Clara Lenaeus

Sonia Lenaeus

The Candidates will receive Confirmation at the Easter Vigil:

Katy Kendrick

Brad Serka

Melisa Upon

Please take all of March to pray for both the catechumens and the candidates that the Holy Spirit comes upon them, opening their hearts to their role as disciples of Christ.

Catholic Cooking

Pretzels

Pretzels are a traditional Lenten bread. The shape represents arms folded in prayer, with the three holes representing the Trinity.

Ingredients

(One can creates one large pretzel)

1 can of Pillsbury refrigerated classic pizza crust

1 Tbsp baking soda

1 egg, beaten

1/2 c. water

Coarse salt as desired

Directions

1.Heat oven to 375 degrees. Put parchment paper on large baking sheet. Unroll dough; reroll into long rope, stretching carefully to about 55" long.

2.To make pretzel shape, from dough into U shape. Twist ends together twice; press down dough where dough overlaps in an X. Pick up ends and fold over so they rest over bottom on U Shape, pressing ends to stick. Place pretzel on cooling rack.

3.Heat ½ cup water until hot, add baking soda, and stir until dissolved. Brush pretzel with soda mixture. Let stand at room temperature for 5 minutes.

4.Brush pretzel with beaten egg, sprinkle with salt. Transfer to baking sheet. Bake 18-20 minutes or until golden brown. (from www.pillsbury.com)



Prayer Pretzels

Around the year 610, an Italian monk made a treat for the children who had learned to recite their prayers. Christians in those days prayed by folding their hands across their chests with each hand touching the opposite shoulder. This clever monk formed the dough so that it would look like hands folded in prayer. These little breads were called *bracellae*, the Latin word for "little arms." Today, we call them pretzels.

Holy God, may these pretzel snacks remind us to always turn to you in prayer. Amen.

Movie Recommendations for Lent:

The Ten Commandments (1956) – ages 9+

Ben Hur (1959) – ages 12+

Quo Vadis (1951) – ages 9+

The Miracle Maker (Claymation) – all ages

Jonah: A Veggie Tales Movie (animation) – all ages

Joseph: King of Dreams (animation) – for kids

The Prince of Egypt (animation) – all ages

Virtue of the Month

Temperance

Enjoying things in a proper, balanced way

Temperance is one of the four cardinal virtues, along with wisdom, justice, and fortitude, and is generally defined by control over excess. This is lived out in various ways, such as through abstinence, chastity, modesty, humility, prudence, self-regulation, forgiveness, and mercy; each of these involves restraining some impulse, such as sexual desire, vanity, or anger. When we practice moderation and balance in things we touch, see, taste, hear, and smell we strengthen ourselves for spiritual battle, enabling ourselves to choose good rather than being overly interested in or enslaved to lesser goods. Moderation does not mean always fasting and it does not mean just between pleasure and pain. We are called to fast and we are called to feast. It is important to be intentional in each and to do each so that they balance each other.

- Discuss balanced meals and reasonable portions. Why is nutrition important? (K-adult)
- Discuss video games or social media. What is the difference between having fun and being addicted? What happens if someone spends too much time on these activities? (3rd grade-adult)
- Discuss how you spend your time. Is there a balance between prayer, rest, work, and play? (K-adult)

“Temperance is simply a disposition of the mind which binds the passions.” St. Thomas Aquinas

The Year of the Eucharist

June 14, 2020-June 6, 2021

The Mass is a sacrifice. While Christ is not continually physically being sacrificed during Mass, we believe that in the Mass we participate in the one everlasting sacrifice of Jesus on the cross which is also connected to the Last Supper. The life offered on the cross is the same life offered in the Eucharist. This sacrifice does not happen in chronological time but God's eternal time where the past, present, and future exist together. At Mass, we are celebrating the memorial of the sacrifice as well as participating in it. And so, because Christ's death brought the forgiveness of our sins, the sacrament of the Eucharist also brings forgiveness of our venial sins.

To truly prepare ourselves to participate in the sacrifice of the Mass, we fast one hour before receiving the Eucharist. In doing so, we are preparing our bodies to receive the nourishment of the soul.



Catholic Social Teaching

The theology of Catholic Social Teaching began with *Rerum Novarum*, or Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor, an encyclical issued by Pope Leo XIII on May 15, 1891. It is an open letter, passed to all Catholic that addressed the condition of the working classes. The Church has continued expand upon these teachings through various encyclicals and documents, including *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life) by St. John Paul II in 1995, *Deus Caritas Est* (God is Love) by Pope Benedict XVI in 2005, and *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) by Pope Francis in 2013. (from www.usccb.org)

There are seven themes of modern Catholic Social Teaching (see here for more information <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching>):

1. Life and Dignity of the Human Person
2. Call to Family, Community, and Participation
3. Rights and Responsibilities
4. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
5. The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
6. Solidarity
7. Care for God's Creation

Music

Mahalia Jackson – “I’m on My Way”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7o7GnV30kJA>

Slave spirituals often connected the Israelites’ freedom from Egyptian slavery and the journey to Canaan to their own freedom and journey. It is a powerful reminder that music can strengthen us and connect us to the Lord during times of trial.



Models of Faith

Katharine Drexel – (1858-1955) A wealthy heiress born in Philadelphia, PA, Katharine became a nun at the age of 33, establishing the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She spent millions on establishing missions for Native Americans and in establishing the first Black American college, Xavier University, in New Orleans. Canonized in 2000, she is the second American to be canonized and the first to be born a U.S. citizen (St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is the first American to become a saint and being born in 1774 became a U.S. citizen after her birth). She is the patron saint of racial justice and of philanthropists.

Oscar Romero – (1917-1980) Romero was Archbishop of San Salvador, El Salvador, from 1977 to 1980 when he was shot and killed by a government death squad while saying Mass. In the 1970s in El Salvador, Salvadoran peasants began fighting for the right to land ownership and the government responded with extreme brutality, killing thousands. Priests, suspected of communism, were also killed. As Archbishop, Romero spoke out for the poor, living out the Church’s “preferential option for the poor” in Catholic Social Teaching. He spoke strongly, in hundreds of homilies, knowing that he was putting his life in danger. He was canonized in 2018.

“You cannot reap what you have not sown. How are we going to reap love in our community if we only sow hate?” St. Oscar Romero

Mortification

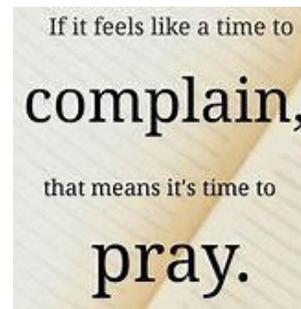
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“In all things we suffer tribulation Always bearing about in our body the death of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies” (II Cor 4:8-10)

Mortification is denying ourselves pleasure to lessen the strength of our selfish love. We are called to temperance and that is a difficult virtue to develop. Lent gives us a special time devoted to the practice of self-denial through fasting, sacrifice, and abstinence. We are especially called during this time to slough off the things of this world and focus on the Lord through prayer and attention to the needs of others. COVID-19 has been a trying time, imposing sacrifices on us that we have not chosen. While we all may be disinclined to choose an additional sacrifice beyond COVID-19, consider choosing a fast or a sacrifice that can strengthen you, giving you the fortitude to continue your journey through the pandemic with God’s grace and mercy.

Ideas:

- One day a week or more with no television
- One day a week or more with no news or social media
- No swearing
- No complaining



Prayer

Psalm 31

Prayer in Distress and Thanksgiving for Escape

Many of us have “hit a wall” in January and February with COVID-19 and the restrictions we have endured for the safety of our community. March marks a year of living with the pandemic. Take some time to cry out to the Lord in distress, but also thanksgiving. Both lament and gratitude can help to reset our minds and give us strength to endure.

Liturgy of the Hours

St. Luke, in normal times, offers vespers in Advent and Lent. We are not doing that in person this year. However, we recommend the livestream prayers from Mount Angel Abbey in Oregon. Vespers are at 5:20pm. Here is the link:

<https://www.mountangelabbey.org/monastery/mass-prayer-schedule/live-streaming/>



Litany of St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

*Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

Jesus, hear us.

Jesus, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven,
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,
God, the Holy Spirit,
Holy Trinity, One God,

*Have mercy on us.
Have mercy on us.
Have mercy on us.
Have mercy on us.*

Holy Mary,
St. Joseph,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Renowned offspring of David,
Light of Patriarchs,
Spouse of the Mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster father of the Son of God,
Diligent protector of Christ,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Head of the Holy Family,

pray for us.

Joseph most just,
Joseph most chaste,
Joseph most prudent,

*pray for us.
pray for us.
pray for us.*

Joseph most strong,
Joseph most obedient,
Joseph most faithful,

*pray for us.
pray for us.
pray for us.*

Mirror of patience,
Lover of poverty,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Model of artisans,
Glory of home life,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Guardian of virgins,
Pillar of families,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Solace of the wretched,
Hope of the sick,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Patron of the dying,
Terror of demons,

*pray for us.
pray for us.*

Protector of Holy Church,

pray for us.

Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world,
Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world.
He made him the lord of his household.

*spare us, O Lord.
graciously hear us, O Lord.
And prince over all his possessions.*



Let us pray, — O God, in your ineffable providence you were pleased to choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of your most holy Mother; grant, we beg you, that we may be worthy to have him for our intercessor in heaven whom on earth we venerate as our Protector: You who live and reign forever and ever.

Saint Joseph, pray for us.



