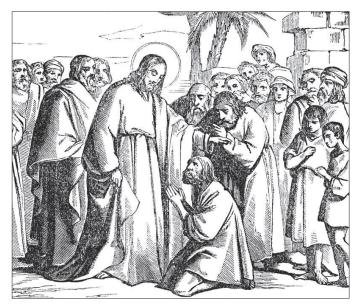
Sixth Sunday *in the season of* Ordinary Time



WORLD DAY OF THE SICK + + + WORLD MARRIAGE DAY





HOLY MASS SCHEDULE SEE BULLETIN FOR HOLY DAYS

Saturday Vigil	4:00pm
Sunday	8:30am
-	10:30am
	12:30pm
	5:00pm
Daily	

Monday-Friday 6:30am Monday-Saturday 8:15am

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

2:00pm on first and third Sundays. Pre-Baptism class is at 2:00pm on second Sunday. All by appointment. Sponsors need letter from their pastor.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

2:30-3:30pm every Saturday; Weekly Holy Hour with Confessions from 6:30-7:30pm every Wednesday. Anytime upon request. (Call for appointment.)

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

No date should be set prior to seeing a priest or deacon six months before desired date.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK Please contact the Parish office.

614.885.7814 SAINTMICHAEL-CD.ORG 5750 NORTH HIGH STREET WORTHINGTON, OHIO 43085

FIND US ON facebook facebook.com/stmichaelworthington

SAINT MICHAEL STAFF DIRECTORY

Website: saintmichael-cd.org Parish Office: 614-885-7814

MINISTERS TO THE PARISH

Pastor: Fr. Michael J. Lumpe Parochial Vicar: Fr. Wojciech Stachura, SAC Priest in Residence/Diocesan Judicial Vicar: Fr. Robert Kitsmiller Priest in Holy Service: Fr. Peter Fegan, O.P. Permanent Deacons: Dcn. John Crerand Dcn. Bill Demidovich Dcn. Klaus Fricke (Retired) Pastoral Minister: Sr. Riya Mary srriya@saintmichael-cd.org Youth Minister: Jake Asuncion jasuncion@saintmichael-cd.org Director of RCIA: Jake Neal jneal@sjchcc.org

PARISH OFFICE

Business Manager: Kris Jesse kjesse@saintmichael-cd.org Office Manager: Kathy Trafford ktrafford@saintmichael-cd.org Receptionist/Secretary: Rhonda Marinelli rmarinelli@saintmichael-cd.org Marketing & Communications: Rebecca Lund rlund@saintmichael-cd.org Campus Facility and Safety Director: Steve Moore smoore@saintmichael-cd.org Safe Environment Coordinator: Bethany Cook bcook@saintmichael-cd.org

Choir Director/Organist: Ron Barrett rbarrett@saintmichael-cd.org

ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

Website: stmichaelworthington.org School Office: 614-885-3149

Principal: Sr. Mary Regina, O.P. principal@stmichaelworthington.org Preschool Director: Laura Wells lwells@stmichaelworthington.org

PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

Athletic Association Representative: Liz Trolli smaa@saintmichael-cd.org Knights of Columbus Representative: Seth Walker grandknight@kofc11445.com St. Vincent de Paul Society Representative:

Elaine Miracle svdp@saintmichael-cd.org

SAINT MICHAEL INFORMATION CENTER



LOW-GLUTEN HOST

If you are in need of a low-gluten host, please scan this QR code for full details.



NEW MEMBERS

Registering in a parish is a declaration of your desire to be part of a Catholic community and a commitment to the life of the parish family. We are often asked to

provide affidavits for parishioner standing. We can only do this if a person is a registered, active, and contributing member in our parish. You can register by scanning the QR code above or by visiting our website at www. saintmichael-cd.org.

BULLETIN DEADLINE

To submit a bulletin request, the request must be made no later than 12:00 p.m., Monday. Send bulletin requests to rlund@saintmichael-cd.org with "BULLETIN REQUEST" in the subject line with all details and contact person for questions. Early submission deadlines may be required surrounding holidays. All bulletin requests are subject to approval.

HOMEBOUND MINISTRY

St. Michael's Homebound Minstry is available to bring the Eucharist to the homebound. If you or a loved one within St. Michael Parish boundaries would like someone to bring the Eucharist to you, please reach out to Sr. Riya Mary to coordinate. She can be reached by calling the Parish Office or by emailing srriya@stmichael-cd.org.

St. Michael offers online giving as a convenient tool for you to use. Scan the QR code to learn more or to set up online contributions.

ADORATION CHAPEL

There is no better way to spend an hour of your week than in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Consider signing up for Adoration. Our Adoration Chapel offers Eucharistic Exposition on Thursdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m., Thursday morning through 9:00 p.m., Friday evening. Adoration is available at all other times with the Blessed Sacrament reposed in the tabernacle. Registration is easy to do from your phone. Visit StMichael.WeAdoreHim.com to sign up. You can also visit the Church on Wednesdays for our weekly Holy Hour with Confessions from 6:30-7:30 p.m. each week.

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME FEBRUARY 11, 2024

DAILY MASS INTENTIONS Sunday, February 11 8:30 a.m. + Dr. Robert D. Blute, Jr. (St. Michael Choir) 10:30 a.m. + Ron Cottrell (The Damo Family) 12:30 p.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of our Parish 5:00 p.m. + Bill Smith (Michael & Nora Kazor) Monday, February 12 6:30 a.m. Special Intention of Diane Vincent 8:15 a.m. + Patricia Reynolds **Tuesday, February 13** 6:30 a.m. + Souls in Purgatory 8:15 a.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our Pre-K Students Wednesday, February 14 - ASH WEDNESDAY 6:30 a.m. The Conversion of Fallen Away Catholics 8:15 a.m. For the School 11:30 a.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of our Parish 6:00 p.m. All Souls in Purgatory Thursday, February 15 6:30 a.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our Kindergarten Students 8:15 a.m. + Marie Orlik (Lauren Jazwiec) Friday, February 16 6:30 a.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our First Grade Students 8:15 a.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our Second Grade Students Saturday, February 17 8:15 a.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our Third Grade Students 4:00 p.m. + Jo Kell (Katie & Marion Carrillo) Sunday, February 18

- 8:30 a.m. For the Living & Deceased Members of our Parish
- 10:30 a.m. + Antonio Capoccia (Nicky Capoccia)
- 12:30 p.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our Fourth Grade Students
- 5:00 p.m. Special Intention of the Parents & Families of our Fifth Grade Students



ASH WEDNESDAY MASS TIMES

February 14

6:30 am *8:15am

11:30am

6:00 pm



*all-school Mass

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Total\$	20,735.25
Online Giving\$	10,260.00
Envelopes\$	10,475.25
FEDRUART 4, 2024.	

PARISH CALENDAR FEBRUARY			
SUNDAY, February 11	Hoagies for Heaven Distribution after all Masses 11:30 a.m. RCIA (UMR) 2:00 p.m. Baptism Class (UMR) 3:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group (MH) 6:00 p.m. High School Youth Group (MH)	Thursday, February 15	Eucharistic Exposition (AC) 5:30 p.m. Cub Scout Meeting (U) 6:30 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study (LMR) 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice (C)
Monday, February 12	6:30 p.m. Boy Scouts (U) 6:30 p.m. K of C 4th Degree Meeting (LMR) 7:30 p.m. K of C Meeting (LMR)	Friday, February 16	Eucharistic Exposition (AC) 5:00 p.m. Fish Fry (U) 7:30 p.m. Stations of the Cross (C)
Tuesday, February 13	11:30 a.m. Live Wires (MH) 7:30 p.m. WFF Bible Study (UMR)	Saturday, February 17	Girl Scout Cookie Sales after Vigil Mass 2:30 p.m. Confessions (C)
Wednesday, February 14	Ash Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Melchizedek Project (UMR) 7:00 p.m. Holy Hour & Confessions (C)	SUNDAY, February 18	Girl Scout Cookie Sales after all Masses 11:30 a.m. RCIA (UMR) 2:00 p.m. Baptism (C) 6:00 p.m. High School Youth Group (MH)

(U) = Undercroft/Cafeteria, (S) = School, (C) = Church, (G) = Gym, (MH) = Marian Hall, (SL) = School Library, (UMR) = Meeting room on the first floor of the Parish Ministry Center, (LMR) = Meeting room in the basement of the Parish Ministry Center, (AC) = Adoration Chapel

FROM THE PASTOR

ON THIS SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, we are reminded in one brief and to-the-point sentence at the end of today's second reading what our life in Christ should be about: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." Folks, each and every one of us is called to imitate Christ and to set the example, like St. Paul, so that others may emulate us. St. Paul is one in a line of saints whose actions were a living commentary on the modern expression, "What would Jesus do?" In today's Gospel we see what Jesus did and what each of us are called, with St. Paul, to imitate. The leper - an outcast because of their disease – came up to Jesus, knelt down and begged Jesus to cure him. Lepers have a bacterial infection that eats away at their flesh and gives them a sickening odor. At the time of Jesus, leprosy was considered so contagious that those with it were guarantined for life apart from the rest of the community. They had no one with whom to associate with or to care for them - except other lepers. They were cut off from their family, from their jobs, from the synagogue and the temple. These poor people were cut off from all love and mercy. They were outcasts, ostracized from all things human. They had to wear ripped clothes and keep their hair messy so that others would be able to spot them more easily. Whenever they needed to travel to obtain something, they were mandated by Mosaic Law, as we hear in the first reading, to shout out "Unclean!" "Unclean!" They were forbidden to come within a certain distance of others. Anyone who touched a leper became, in Jewish mentality, unclean. That the man with leprosy in today's Gospel broke all convention at the time to come close to Jesus was already a sign of his desperation. And what was Jesus' response to this leper? Jesus stretched out his hand and did something unheard of - He actually touched the leper. One can almost hear the shrieks of onlookers. Then Jesus said the words that were the answer to the man's prolonged prayers: "Be made clean!" After the leprosy miraculously left him, Jesus gave him instructions to go see the priest and go through the rites of the Mosaic law for testimony of a cure of leprosy so that he, so long an outcast, could return to the human community. Folks, this is the Jesus we are called to imitate. The Lord turns to each of us today and says, "Come, follow me!" What Christ is calling us to do is to love the outcasts of our world, of our society, with the same love that He does. To "be doers of the word, not hearers only" (James 1:22). Today's Gospel coincides with the World Day of the Sick, February 11, which also is the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes (though not celebrated as such on the Lord's Day). The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is available after all Masses today. Today is also World Marriage Day and we have a special blessing for all husbands and wives.

LENT BEGINS THIS WEEK ON ASH WEDNESDAY (see Ash Wednesday Mass Schedule in this bulletin) and each of us will begin our own journey towards the memorial of the climax of our Lord's life. Lent is a time, repeated every year of our lives - a time to strengthen in ourselves, the grace that Baptism gave us, the grace that we need in order not to sin, and to remain faithful to our calling; the living of life as taught by Jesus Christ. We do this by imitating our Lord and Savior – by following Him always. We also pray - not by putting on a simple costume of prayer, but by withdrawing into our interior and personal selves. And there we are before God, and we recognize our utter dependence on His mercy and His blessing. We do this for ourselves, but also for the Church – for the Church is a family, led by the Holy Spirit to care for its members' needs. And we all need the prayers of others - for with their prayers, comes the sign of care which God holds as the best the sign of our love for one another, spilled over from the eternal love of His own Son for us. And during Lent, we fast and abstain. We observe the laws of the Church about fasting and abstinence, holding ourselves on those special days - Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and abstaining on all the Fridays of Lent. The rules for fasting and abstaining are included in this bulletin. Oddly this "giving up something for Lent" is criticized by some, who suggest that it is better to take up some new good work for Lent, than to give up something. I believe that it is harder for us to give up something that we enjoy, something we think we need, than it is for us to add something new to our already full plates. And the harder the sacrifice, the more meaningful. Think of the pain our Lord endured for our souls, and then consider making His pain just a part of your life during this season of Lent. Finally, when our Lord turned to the unfolding of His public life, His entire meaning became a process of pouring Himself out for us – in His words, in His actions, in His attitudes, and in the witness of the profound impact He made on those who followed Him and who became the Fathers and founders of our Church. This was almsgiving on a Divine scale. We cannot, for even the saints cannot, match the perfection of our Lord's giving. But that does not mean that we cannot try. And this means not just the regular Offertory giving which we make to our Parish Church, or to our accustomed and favorite charities. This means, during these 40 days, finding a way to give more - and to give not just of our surplus, but of what we would normally keep for ourselves. It may be the gift of money, it may be the gift of time in service to others, it may be attention to things we normally ignore because of our obsession with work, hobbies or sports. But to give until it hurts, even for the short span of 40 days, means more to our Lord than anything else we can do. And, as He promised, the Father in Heaven will see what we give, and will reward us accordingly. But if we do not give, the Father will see nothing, and we will get nothing. Blunt, but true. For our Faith is not a thing of after-the-fact compromises and overlooked opportunities - our Catholic Faith is a fact of God's justice. And as St. Paul reminds us: God is not mocked, for a person will reap only what he or she sows. Let us remember that Lent is not a diversion - it is a very serious time for we Catholics. And since Catholics are exceedingly faithful to the living of the Gospel, it is even more serious for us. So let us adopt these practices recommended to us by the Lord, and by His Church, and look for a better life, a stronger soul, and a closer relationship with God and with one another as a result of our Lenten works.

Join us for a 6:00 p.m. Mass each Wednesday evening during Lent, leading into our Weekly Holy Hour and Confessions. --Fr. Mike



History of Lent

by Fr. William Saunders

Lent is a special time of prayer, penance, sacrifice and good works in preparation of the celebration of Easter. In the desire to renew the liturgical practices of the Church, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican Council II stated, "The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent — the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and penance — should be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. It is by means of them that the Church prepares the faithful for the celebration of Easter, while they hear God's word more frequently and devote more time to prayer" (no. 109). The word Lent itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *lencten*, meaning "Spring," and *lenctentid*, which literally means not only "Springtide" but also was the word for "March," the month in which the majority of Lent falls.

Since the earliest times of the Church, there is evidence of some kind of Lenten preparation for Easter. For instance, St. Irenaeus (d. 203) wrote to Pope St. Victor I, commenting on the celebration of Easter and the differences between practices in the East and the West: "The dispute is not only about the day, but also about the actual character of the fast. Some think that they ought to fast for one day, some for two, others for still more; some make their 'day' last 40 hours on end. Such variation in the observance did not originate in our own day, but very much earlier, in the time of our forefathers" (Eusebius, History of the Church, V, 24). When Rufinus translated this passage from Greek into Latin, the punctuation made between "40" and "hours" made the meaning to appear to be "40 days, twenty-four hours a day." The importance of the passage, nevertheless, remains that since the time of "our forefathers" — always an expression for the apostles — a 40-day period of Lenten preparation existed. However, the actual practices and duration of Lent were still not homogenous throughout the Church.

Lent becomes more regularized after the legalization of Christianity in A.D. 313. The Council of Nicea (325), in its disciplinary canons, noted that two provincial synods should be held each year, "one before the 40 days of Lent." St. Athanasius (d. 373) in this "Festal Letters" implored his congregation to make a 40-day fast prior to the more intense fasting of Holy Week. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386) in his *Catechectical Lectures*, which are the paradigm for our current RCIA programs, had 18 pre-baptismal instructions given to the catechumens during Lent. St. Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) in his series of "Festal Letters" also noted the practices and duration of Lent, emphasizing the 40-day period of fasting. Finally, Pope St. Leo (d. 461) preached that the faithful must "fulfill with their fasts the Apostolic institution of the 40 days," again noting the apostolic origins of Lent. One can safely conclude that by the end of the fourth century, the 40-day period of Easter preparation known as Lent existed, and that prayer and fasting constituted its primary spiritual exercises.

Of course, the number "40" has always had special spiritual significance regarding preparation. On Mount Sinai, preparing to receive the Ten Commandments, "Moses stayed there with the Lord for 40 days and 40 nights, without eating any food or drinking any water" (Ex 34:28). Elijah walked "40 days and 40 nights" to the mountain of the Lord, Mount Horeb (another name for Sinai) (I Kgs 19:8). Most importantly, Jesus fasted and prayed for "40 days and 40 nights" in the desert before He began His public ministry (Mt 4:2).

Once the 40 days of Lent were established, the next development concerned how much fasting was to be done. In Jerusalem, for instance, people fasted for 40 days, Monday through Friday, but not on Saturday or Sunday, thereby making Lent last for eight weeks. In Rome and in the West, people fasted for six weeks, Monday through Saturday, thereby making Lent last for six weeks. Eventually, the practice prevailed of fasting for six days a week over the course of six weeks, and Ash Wednesday was instituted to bring the number of fast days before Easter to 40. The rules of fasting varied. First, some areas of the Church abstained from all forms of meat and animal products, while others made exceptions for food like fish. For example, Pope St. Gregory (d. 604), writing to St. Augustine of Canterbury, issued the following rule: "We abstain from flesh, meat, and from all things that come from flesh, as milk, cheese and eggs."

Second, the general rule was for a person to have one meal a day, in the evening or at 3 p.m. These Lenten fasting rules also evolved. Eventually, a smaller repast was allowed during the day to keep up one's strength from manual labor. Eating fish was allowed, and later eating meat was also allowed through the week except on Ash Wednesday and Friday. Dispensations were given for eating dairy products if a pious work was performed, and eventually this rule was relaxed totally. (However, the abstinence from even dairy products led to the practice of blessing Easter eggs and eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday.)

Over the years, modifications have been made to the Lenten observances, making our practices not only simple but also easy. Ash Wednesday still marks the beginning of Lent, which lasts for 40 days, not including Sundays. The present fasting and abstinence laws are very simple: On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, the faithful fast (having only one full meal a day and smaller snacks to keep up one's strength) and abstain from meat; on the other Fridays of Lent, the faithful abstain from meat. People are still encouraged "to give up something" for Lent as a sacrifice. (An interesting note is that technically on Sundays and solemnities like St. Joseph's Day (March 19) and the Annunciation (March 25), one is exempt and can partake of whatever one has been offered up for Lent.

Nevertheless, I was always taught, "If you gave something up for the Lord, tough it out. Don't act like a Pharisee looking for a loophole." Moreover, an emphasis must be placed on performing spiritual works, like attending the Stations of the Cross, attending Mass, making a weekly holy hour before the Blessed Sacrament, taking time for personal prayer and spiritual reading and most especially making a good confession and receiving sacramental absolution. Although the practices may have evolved over the centuries, the focus remains the same: to repent of sin, to renew our faith and to prepare to celebrate joyfully the mysteries of our salvation.

Origins of Ash Wednesday

The liturgical use of ashes originated in Old Testament times. Ashes symbolized mourning, mortality and penance. For instance, in the Book of Esther, Mordecai put on sackcloth and ashes when he heard of the decree of King Ahasuerus (or Xerxes, 485-464 BC) of Persia to kill all of the Jewish people in the Persian Empire (Est 4:1). Job (whose story was written between 7th and 5th centuries BC) repented in sackcloth and ashes (lob 42:6). Prophesying the Babylonian captivity of Jerusalem, Daniel (c. 550 BC) wrote, "I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes" (Daniel 9:3). In the 5th century BC, after Jonah's preaching of conversion and repentance, the town of Ninevah proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, and the king covered himself with sackcloth and ashes (Jonah 3:5-6). These Old Testament examples evidence both a recognized practice of using ashes and a common understanding of their symbolism.

Jesus Himself also made reference to ashes; Referring to towns that refused to repent of sin although they had witnessed the miracles and heard the good news, our Lord said, "If the miracles worked in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, they would have reformed sackcloth and ashes long ago" (Mt 11:21).

The early Church continued the usage of ashes for the same symbolic reasons. Eusebius (260-340), the famous early Church historian, recounted in his *History of the Church* how an apostate named Natalis came to Pope Zephyrinus clothed in sackcloth and ashes begging forgiveness. Also, for those who were required to do public penance, the priest sprinkled ashes on the head of the person leaving confession.

In the Middle Ages (at least by the time of the eighth century), those who were about to die were laid on the ground on top of sackcloth sprinkled with ashes. The priest would bless the dying person with holy water, saying, "Remember that thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return."

Eventually, the use of ashes was adapted to mark the beginning of Lent, the 40-day preparation period (not including Sundays) for Easter. The ritual for the "Day of Ashes" is found in the earliest editions of the *Gregorian Sacramentary* which dates at least to the 8th century. Since the Middles Ages at least, the Church has used ashes to mark the beginning of the penitential season of Lent, when we "Remember our mortality and mourn for our sins."

In our present liturgy for Ash Wednesday, we use ashes made from the burned palm branches distributed on Palm Sunday of the previous year. The priest blesses the ashes and imposes them on the foreheads of the faithful making the sign of the cross and saying, "Remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return," or "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel." As we begin this holy season of Lent in preparation for Easter, we must remember the significance of the ashes we have received: We mourn and do penance for our sins. We again convert our hearts to the Lord, who suffered, died. and rose for our salvation. We renew the promises made at our baptism, when we died to an old life and. rose to a new life with Christ. Finally, mindful that the kingdom of this world passes away, we stave to live the kingdom of God now and look forward to its fulfillment in heaven.

As we remember the significance of these ashes and strive to live it during this time of Lent, we must allow the Holy Spirit to move us to charity toward our neighbors. May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion, so that we can rediscover the gift of God's word, be purified of the sin that blinds us, and serve Christ present in our brothers and sisters in need.

This article is made available courtesy of the Catholic Exchange.



"What page, what passage of the inspired books of the Old and New Testaments is not the truest of guides for human life?" ~Saint Benedict, from the *Rule of Saint Benedict* (73:3)

The month of February is dedicated to the Holy Family.

"Lent is like a long 'retreat' during which we can turn back into ourselves and listen to the voice of God, in order to defeat the temptations of the Evil One. It is a period of spiritual 'combat' which we must experience alongside Jesus, not with pride and presumption, but using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the promises of our Baptism." +POPE BENEDICT XVI

Monday, February 12 ~ Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 8:11-13 The Pharisees came forward and began to argue with Jesus, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. He sighed from the depth of his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Amen, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." Then he left them, got into the boat again, and went off to the other shore.

Meditation: The people of Jesus' time expected that the coming of the Messiah would be accompanied by extraordinary signs and wonders. The religious leaders tested Jesus to see if he had a genuine sign from heaven to back his Messianic claims. False messiahs in the past had made extraordinary claims to attract their followers, such as claiming that they could cleave the Jordan River in two or cause the walls of Jerusalem to fall. Jesus knew the hearts of those who came to test him. They were more interested in seeing signs and supernatural phenomena than they were in hearing the word of God. Simeon had prophesied at Jesus' birth that he was "destined for the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that inner thoughts of many will be revealed" (ref. Luke 2:34-35). Jesus gave them no sign except himself and the ultimate proof of his divinity when he rose from the dead.

Prayer: Show gracious favor, O Lord, we pray, to the works of penance we have begun, that we may have strength to accomplish with sincerity the bodily observances we undertake. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: Never forget that the Lord reveals himself and makes his presence known to us in many ways – in his word and in the "breaking of the bread" in the Eucharist, in his church – the body of Christ, in his creation, and even in the everyday circumstances of our lives. If we seek the Lord, we will surely find him. And we can be confident that he will give us whatever we need to understand and carry out his will. Most of all, the Lord assures us of his daily presence and the promise that he will never leave us. Saint Theresa of Avila's prayer book contained a bookmark in which she wrote: "Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you; All things pass: God never changes. Patience achieves all it strives for. Whoever has God lacks nothing, God alone suffices." Think about that for a moment, then ask yourself: Is God enough for you?

Tuesday, February 13 ~ Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

Holy Gospel: Mark 8:14-21 The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, and they had only one loaf with them in the boat. Jesus enjoined them, "Watch out, guard against the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." They concluded among themselves that it was because they had no bread. When he became aware of this he said to them, "Why do you conclude that it is because you have no bread? Do you not yet understand or comprehend? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes and not see, ears and not hear? And do you not remember, when I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many wicker baskets full of fragments you picked up?" They answered him, "Twelve." "When I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many full baskets of fragments did you pick up?" They answered him, "Seven." He said to them, "Do you still not understand?"

Meditation: The apostles set off in their boat across the Sea of Galilee only to discover that they forgot to bring enough food for their journey. What were they to do miles away from land and any place where they could buy food and supplies? They were anxious of course, and this was right after Jesus had performed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes where the disciples fed more than four thousand people (ref. Mark 8:1-9). Jesus knew the trouble in his disciples' hearts even before they could speak. Jesus dealt with their anxiety by first warning them to not fear what can harm the body rather than what can destroy the very heart and soul of their being.

Prayer: Keep your family safe, O Lord, with unfailing care, that, relying solely on the hope of heavenly grace, they may be defended always by your protection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: One might wonder why Jesus told his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod? To the Jewish person leaven was a sign of evil. It was a piece of dough left-over from a previous baking. In due course it fermented and this fermented dough became leaven. Fermentation was associated with decomposing rot. Jesus warned his disciples to avoid the evil influence of the Pharisees and of Herod who sought their own counsels rather than the will of God. As the apostles continued to worry about their lack of bread, Jesus reminded them of his miraculous provision of bread in the feeding of the four thousand. He then upbraided them for their lack of trust in God. "Do you still not understand?" It's easy to get preoccupied with the problems and needs of the present moment and to forget the most important reality of all – God's abiding presence with us and his abundant provision for our lives as well. Thus when you pray, do you pray with joyful confidence, "Father, give us this day our daily bread?"

Wednesday, February 14 ~ The Beginning of the Season of Lent Ash Wednesday ~ A Day of Fast and Abstinence

Holy Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 Jesus said to his disciples: "Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you,

they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you. "When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."

Meditation: One might ask why Jesus singled out prayer, fasting, and almsgiving for his disciples. The Jews considered these three as the cardinal works of the religious life. These were seen as the key signs of a pious person, the three great pillars on which the good life was based. Jesus pointed to the heart of the matter. Why do you pray, fast, and give alms? To draw attention to yourself so that others may notice and think highly of you? Or to give glory to God? The Lord warns his disciples of self-seeking glory – the preoccupation with looking good and seeking



praise from others. True piety is something more than feeling good or looking holy. True piety is loving devotion to God. It is an attitude of awe, reverence, worship and obedience. It is a gift and working of the Holy Spirit that enables us to devote our lives to God with a holy desire to please him in all things (Isaiah 11:1-2). The forty days of Lent is the annual retreat of the people of God in imitation of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness. Forty is a significant number in the scriptures. Moses went to the mountain to seek the face of God for forty days in prayer and fasting. The people of Israel were in the wilderness for forty years in preparation for their entry into the promised land. Elijah fasted for forty days as he journeyed in the wilderness to the mountain of God. We are called to journey with the Lord in this special season of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and penitence as we prepare to celebrate the feast of Easter. The Lord gives us spiritual food and supernatural strength to seek his face and to prepare ourselves for spiritual combat and testing. We, too, must follow in the way of the cross in order to share in the victory of Christ's death and resurrection.

As we begin this holy season of testing and preparation, let's ask the Lord for a fresh outpouring of his Holy Spirit that we may grow in faith, hope, and love and embrace his will more fully in our lives.

Prayer: Grant, O Lord, that we may begin with holy fasting this campaign of Christian service, so that, as we take up battle against spiritual evils, we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: God wants to set our hearts ablaze with the fire of his Holy Spirit that we may share in his holiness and radiate the joy of the gospel to those around us. St. Augustine tells us that there are two kinds of people and two kinds of love: "One is holy, the other is selfish. One is subject to God; the other endeavors to equal Him." We are what we love. God wants to free our hearts from all that would keep us captive to selfishness and sin. "Rend your hearts and not your garments" says the prophet Joel (Joel 2:12). Use this Season of Lent to the fullest – embrace the laws of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Holy Catholic Church. Undergo a conversion of mind and heart. Conform your will to God's; don't ask God to conform his will to yours, as so many foolishly try to do. With the help of the Holy Spirit, become humble, transform your minds and hearts to be lead in God's way of truth and holiness.

Thursday, February 15 ~ The Thursday After Ash Wednesday

Holy Gospel: Luke 9:22-25 Jesus said to his disciples: "The Son of Man must suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised." Then he said to all, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world yet lose or forfeit himself?"

Meditation: Quite simply, the cross of Jesus Christ leads to freedom and victory over sin and death. We then need to ask ourselves: "What is the cross which Christ commands me to take up each day as his disciple?" When my will crosses with his will, then his will must be done. The way of the cross involves sacrifice, the sacrifice of laying down my life each and every day for Jesus' sake. What makes such sacrifice possible and "sweet" is the love of God poured out for us in the blood of Jesus Christ. Paul the Apostle reminds us that "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5). We can never outdo God in giving, no matter how abundant we try. He always gives us more than we can expect or imagine. Are you ready to lose all for Christ in order to gain all with Christ?

Prayer: Prompt our actions with your inspiration, we pray, O Lord, and further them with your constant help, that all we do may always begin from you and by you be brought to completion. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: We need to ask ourselves: "What will I give to God in exchange for freedom and eternal life?" In thinking about this question, are you ready to part with anything that might keep you from following him and his perfect plan for your life? Jesus poses these questions to challenge our assumptions about what is most profitable and worthwhile in life. In every decision of life we are making ourselves a certain kind of person. It is possible that some can gain all the things they set their heart on, only to wake up suddenly and discover that they missed the most important things of all. A true disciple is ready to give up all that he or she has in exchange for happiness and life with God. The life which God offers is abundant, everlasting life. And the joy which God places in our hearts no sadness or loss can diminish.

Friday, February 16 ~ The Friday After Ash Wednesday

Holy Gospel: Mark 9:14-15 The disciples of John approached Jesus and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast much, but your disciples do not fast?" Jesus answered them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast."

Meditation: What kind of fasting is pleasing to God? Fasting can be done for a variety of reasons – to gain freedom from some bad habit, addiction, or vice, to share in the suffering of those who go without, or to grow in our hunger for God and for the things of heaven. Basil the Great wrote: "Take heed that you do not make fasting to consist only in abstinence from meats. True fasting is to refrain from vice. Shred to pieces all your unjust contracts. Pardon your neighbors. Forgive them their trespasses." Do you hunger for more of God and for the abundant life he has to offer you?

Prayer: Show gracious favor, O Lord, we pray, to the works of penance we have begun, that we may have strength to accomplish with sincerity the bodily observances we undertake. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Contemplation: We must remember that hungering for God and fasting for his kingdom go hand in hand. When asked why he and his disciples did not fast Jesus used the vivid picture of a wedding celebration. In Jesus' time the newly wed celebrated their honeymoon at home for a whole week with all the guests! This was a time of great feasting and celebrating. Jesus points to himself as the bridegroom and his disciples as the bridegroom's friends. He alludes to the fact that God takes delight in his people as a groom delights in his bride (Isaiah 62:5). To be in God's presence is pure delight and happiness. But Jesus also reminds his followers that there is a time for fasting and for humbling oneself in preparation for the coming of God's kingdom and for the return of the Messianic King. The Lord's disciples must also bear the cross of affliction and purification. For the disciple there is both a time for rejoicing in the Lord's presence and celebrating his goodness and a time for seeking the Lord with humility, fasting, and mourning for sin. If we hunger for the Lord, he will not disappoint us. His grace draws us to his throne of mercy and favor. Do you seek the Lord with confident trust and allow his Holy Spirit to transform your life with his power and grace? If not, perhaps this is an area for you to work on during this Season of Lent

Scripture passages (NAB translation) courtesy of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; prayers are from *The Roman Missal*, Catholic Book Publishing, 2011; information about saints, solemnities, feasts and memorials courtesy of the Catholic Culture web site.

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AS WE BEGIN THE SEASON OF LENT ~ A PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL God, our heavenly Father, look upon me and hear my prayer during this Holy Season of Lent. By the good works You inspire, help me to discipline my body and to be renewed in spirit. Without You I can do nothing. By Your Spirit help me to know what is right and to be eager in doing Your will. Teach me to find new life through penance. *Keep me from sin. and help me live by Your commandment of love.* God of compassion and mercy, bring me back to You. Send Your Spirit to make me strong in faith and active in good works in serving others. May my acts of penance bring me Your forgiveness, open my heart to Your love, and prepare me for the coming feast of the Resurrection of Jesus. Lord, during this Lenten Season, nourish me with Your Word of life and make me one with You in thought, word and action. Fill my heart with Your love and keep me faithful to living the Gospel of Christ. Give me the grace to rise above my human weakness and faults. *Give me new life by Your Sacraments, especially the Eucharist during Mass.* Father, our source of all life, I reach out with joy to grasp Your hand; let me walk more readily in Your ways. Guide me in Your gentle mercy, for left to myself I struggle to do Your Will. Father of love, source of all blessings, help me to pass from my old life of sin to the new life of grace. Prepare me for the glory of Your Kingdom. I pray this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen. **PRAYER: FRANCISCAN FRIARS OF THE ATONEMENT**



A Little History on the Apparitions of Our Lady of Lourdes ~ February 11

By Linda O'Brien, FTI

"I cannot promise you happiness in this life; only in the next", said Our Lady to the little girl named Bernadette. The young girl lives out her life quietly, going to a convent and never seeking attention for herself. She gave all of herself to God and became a great saint. Her body is incorrupt and it looks so beautiful as if she is only sleeping. It is a marvel!

The Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in southern France is the most visited pilgrimage site in the world — principally because of the apparent healing properties of the waters of the spring that appeared during the apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary to a poor, fourteen-year-old girl,

Bernadette Soubiroux.

The first apparition occurred February 11, 1858. There were eighteen in all; the last took place July 16, of the same year. Bernadette often fell into an ecstasy during these apparitions, as was witnessed by the hundreds who attended the later visions, though no one except Bernadette ever saw or heard the apparition. The mysterious vision Bernadette saw in the hollow of the rock Massabielle, where she and friends had gone to gather firewood, was that of a young and beautiful lady. "Lovelier than I have ever seen" said the child. She described the Lady as clothed in white, with a blue ribbon sash and a Rosary handing from her right arm. Now and then the apparition spoke to Bernadette.

One day, the Lady told the girl to drink of a mysterious fountain within the grotto itself, the existence of which was unknown, and of which there was no sign. But Bernadette scratched at the ground, and a spring immediately bubbled up and soon gushed forth.

On another occasion the apparition bade Bernadette go and tell the priests she wished a chapel to be built on the spot and processions to be made to the grotto. At first the clergy were incredulous. The priest said he would not believe it unless the apparition gave Bernadette her name.

After another apparition, Bernadette reported that the Lady told her, "I am the Immaculate Conception". Though the girl was unfamiliar

with the term, the Pope had declared the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary in 1854. Four years after Bernadette's visions, in 1862, the bishop of the diocese declared the faithful "justified in believing the reality of the apparition" of Our Lady.

A basilica was built upon the rock of Massabielle by M. Peyramale, the parish priest. In 1873 the great "national" French pilgrimages were inaugurated. Three years later the basilica was consecrated and the statue solemnly crowned. In 1883 the foundation stone of another church was laid, as the first was no longer large enough. It was built at the foot of the basilica and was consecrated in 1901 and called the Church of the Rosary. Pope Leo XIII authorized a special office and a Mass, in commemoration of the apparition, and in 1907 Pius X extended the observance of this feast to the entire Church; it is now observed on February 11.

If you have never seen the movie "The Song of Bernadette" from the 1940s, I recommend you do so. It can be rented. It was made by a Jewish man who made a promise to Our Lady at Lourdes that if he would survive and escape the horrors of WWII Europe, he would tell the story of St. Bernadette and Our Lady of Lourdes. He did survive and he kept his promise and the Oscar winning movie was made. This is a video that you will never forget.

This article is made available courtesy of the Catholic Exchange





AROUND THE PARISH

Don't Forget! Pickup This Weekend!



ATTENTION, ALL BAKERS!

The Knights of Columbus are accepting baked goods for the dessert table for the Fish Fry. Please drop off baked goods at the Church any time after 3:30 p.m. on Fridays beginning February 16 through March 22. Thank you for your support and generosity!



EXPERIENCE PIETRA ...

A whole-person fitness class that stretches and strengthens the body while refreshing the soul with prayer and meditation. In one hour, you will feel calmer, stronger, and renewed! Join our **Pietra classes!** Saturdays 7:00-8:00 a.m. at

St. Michael Church (January 20-May 18). Contact Maria Elliott at **maria@viribuswellness.com** for more information or by using the QR code.

MEN'S FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP

Saturday, February 17th, there will not be a meeting for us. Please sign up for the Men's Conference next Saturday. The speakers are very inspiring, the food is excellent and the fellowship is uplifting from across the diocese.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

February 10, 2024, marks 78 years since the very first Mass was celebrated for our parish. Our parish archives tell us that on January 31, 1946, St. Michael The Archangel Parish was established by Bishop Ready with Father John P. Byrne being assigned as our founding pastor. On the following day of February 1, 1946, Father Byrne was told that the very first Mass was to be offered for the new parish on Sunday, February 10, 1946, giving a little over a week to find a location. As the deadline neared and no location was found, Monsignor Adrian Brandiehoff, rector of the Josephinum, offered Father Byrne the seminary chapel and Father Byrne accepted. When Father Byrne emerged from the sacristy for St. Michael's first Mass at 10:30 a.m., he found 128 parishioners assembled in the chapel. He preached to them about the urgent necessity of finding a permanent place for Sunday services. He couldn't have visualized then that 18 years hence, a beautiful new church big enough to accommodate nearly 3,000 persons would belong to the parish. You can find more about our parish history by going to our parish website https://www.saintmichael-cd.org/ navigating to the" About Us" tab, then scroll down to "Parish History" (direct link https://www.saintmichael-cd.org/aboutus/history/). If you have any questions about our parish history, please contact us at history@saintmichael-cd.org.

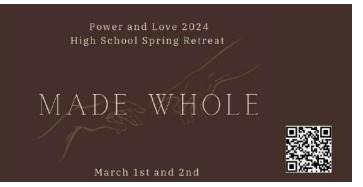
KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS LENTEN FISH FRY Supporting St. Michael Parish

FRIDAYS DURING LENT 5:00pm - 7:30pm DINE IN OR DRIVE THRU

FISH DINNER: \$13 MACARONI & CHEESE DINNER: \$10

ALL DINNERS INCLUDE: FRIES, ROLL, CHOICE OF APPLESAUCE OR COLESLAW

DON'T FORGET TO GET SOME CHOWDER AND DESSERT WHEN YOU ARE DINING IN!



LIVE WIRES FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

The Live Wires will meet Tues. February 13th at 11:30 a.m. in Marian Hall. Bring your favorite sack lunch – we'll provide drinks and desserts. Invite your friends to join us as well! We hope to see you there!

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Young adults of the parish are invited to join our Bible Study on Thursday evenings in the Lower Meeting Room from 6:30-7:30 p.m. All are welcome; invite a friend to join you! Questions? Email Jake Asuncion at jasuncion@saintmichael-cd.org.

SCHOOLS

ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL IS HIRING!

St. Michael School is hiring a Before Care Assistant for the 2023-2024 School Year to work the following shift: 6:45-7:45 a.m., Monday-Friday. Students arrive at 7:00 a.m., so the start time for the position could be discussed if applicant wishes to attend the 6:30 a.m. Mass. **Requirements:**

- Current satisfactory BCI & FBI background checks
- Have attended or be willing to attend a VIRTUS Protecting God's Children training
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills

For more information or to apply, please contact Sr. Mary Regina at principal@stmichaelworthington.org.



VALENTINES FOR VETERANS

During Catholic Schools Week, St. Michael Students practiced the virtue of patriotism by making valentines to send to our veterans as a expression of giving honor to God and country.

Apply Today! There is still time to register for the 2024-2025 school year! Scan the QR code for more information about admissions.







Want to learn more about St. Michael School? Visit stmichaelworthington.org 614.885.3149

AROUND THE DIOCESE

SEASONS OF HOPE

Are you mourning the loss of a loved one? Please join us for the winter/spring session of Seasons of Hope Bereavement Ministry. Sessions will be held on FIVE consecutive Sundays, from 2:00-4:00 p.m., beginning on Sunday, February 18, and running through Sunday, March 17. Sessions will meet at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, located at 414 E. North Broadway, Columbus. REGISTER NOW by contacting Rose Daiga at rose.daiga@gmail.com, or by calling Rose at 614-565-0795.

MISSION WARMTH FUNDRAISER

Chipotle, 1140 Polaris Parkway, Columbus, OH 43240. Monday, February 12, 2024, 5:00-9:00 p.m. Order online for pickup using Code HK4JM78 or tell the cashier you're there for the fundraiser before you pay.



