

**LENT AT ST JOSEPH PARISH MISHAWAKA  
THE YEAR OF GRACE 2018**

The Lenten Season begins on Ash Wednesday (**February 14**) and ends with the beginning of the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday (**March 29**) and has a twofold character: to prepare both Catechumens (those preparing for Baptism) and the Faithful (the baptized) to celebrate the **Paschal Mystery** (the work of salvation wrought by the death and resurrection of Jesus). **Catechumens**, with the Rite of Election, the Scrutinies, and Catechesis, prepare for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation at the Solemn Easter Vigil. The **Faithful**, by being more attentive to prayer and to the Word of God, prepare by penance for the renewal of their own baptismal promises at Easter. The three works of Lent are **prayer, fasting, and almsgiving**.

**Daily Masses (25-30 mins)  
M-Sat 7am  
Weds 5:30pm  
(with St. Joseph Novena)**

**PRAYER:** The center of the Church's entire liturgical year is the **Sacred Triduum**, one feast comprised of three days. The entire Lenten season is devoted to the preparation for this great celebration of the Paschal Mystery. You will note that Lent is marked by a starkness and simplicity: few if any decorations or flowers adorn the church, there is no Gloria at Mass, the Alleluia is omitted, and we will conclude Mass in silence as a way to emphasize the somber nature of this sacred season.

As we renew our commitment to the **stewardship of time as prayer**, we are invited to set some practical goals for **daily prayer**. Our commitment to daily prayer will bear tremendous fruit in our ability to enter more deeply into Sunday Mass. You will find a card with many suggestions to this end. If an intentional time of daily prayer is currently not part of your routine, I'd recommend starting small - five or ten minutes - and being faithful. Regularity and consistency here will naturally engender organic growth and increased vitality. You will likely want to find a place in your home that is conducive to prayer, perhaps a particular chair with some sacred art nearby, and which you only sit in to pray.

You may especially wish to consider: **daily Mass** (once or twice during the week), **Stations of the Cross**, which is a beautiful devotion well suited to Lent but also throughout the year, and especially on Fridays, the **Magnificat Daily Companion**, available to you because of our regular sacrificial giving, will help to profit from a reading of the daily Mass Gospel, the **Rosary**, a time-tested devotion which is also a great communal/family prayer, **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**, which is the worship of the Eucharist outside of Mass, an incredibly fruitful way to spend time in personal prayer as we gaze upon the Lord Jesus present in the Eucharist and he gazes upon us, and following the Tuesday Adoration (at 6:30pm) there will be brief presentations on the **7 Secrets of Confession** book to help us come to a better appreciation for the tremendous gift of the Sacrament of the mercy of Christ.

On the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent, the **Scrutinies** will be celebrated at the 11:15am Mass. These ancient rites are prayed over the Catechumens, asking for their liberation from the powers of sin and darkness so as to prepare them for Baptism at the Easter Vigil. For those who are already baptized but not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church, a special **Penitential Rite** will be celebrated on the Second Sunday of Lent at the 11:15am Mass.

**Church Open for Personal Prayer  
M-F 6am-7pm  
Sat 6am-after 4:30pm Mass  
Sun 6am-after 11:15am Mass**

**Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**  
**Tuesdays 5:30-6:30pm (Benediction)**  
**Thursdays 7:30am-Noon**

**FASTING:** Central to the Church's Lenten tradition is the ancient practice of fasting. There are many ways to approach this tradition, but one of the most spiritually fruitful would be to see in our voluntary choice to do without something we love the opportunity to allow the Lord to fill that space in our hearts.

There are only **two obligatory fast days** in the Church's calendar: Ash Wednesday (February 14) and Good Friday (March 30). **All Catholics age 18 to 59 are required to fast** - to eat only one full meal on these days, and may supplement this with one or two smaller meals (together not equaling the size of the full meal). **Abstinence from meat is obliged of all Catholics age 14 and older on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays of Lent.** Some form of penance is also required on every other Friday of the year, too. Some individuals, following the more ancient custom, abstain from meat throughout the entire season of Lent, as well. Within the tradition, when fasts were more severe, Sunday was a day on which sacrifices made during Lent could be relaxed  
**(read Isaiah 58).**

**Soup Supper**  
**Wednesday's during Lent**  
**6:00 PM Cafeteria**

**Knights of Columbus Fish Fry**  
**Fridays during Lent**  
**5-7PM**

**ALMSGIVING:** The third ancient pillar of Lenten renewal is almsgiving: the gift of support, monetary and otherwise, to the poor and those in need. Genuine almsgiving gets us out of ourselves and militates against our otherwise fallen tendency toward selfishness and self-centeredness. Our regular sacrificial giving to the parish supports the almsgiving of the parish (2% of our offertory income at present, and this number will be increased as time goes on). While our stewardship of sacrificial giving is seen first in relation to the parish, we are also invited to consider supporting some charitable organizations, which we are obliged by our share in the Eucharist (**Read Luke 16**). Some ideas here: the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Hannah's House, The Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl and the Women's Care Center.

Non-monetary support of the poor permits us a creative use of our time and talents. Perhaps we would like to visit nursing home residents or homebound parishioners or neighbors, or volunteering for the St. Vincent de Paul Society, or any number of things. We need only ask the Lord in prayer to help us to see how we may be better able to serve others - and then have the courage to do it when the opportunity presents itself!

**Stations of the Cross**  
**Fridays 2:30pm and 6pm**

**The Sacred Triduum**  
**Holy Thursday 7 PM**  
**Good Friday 1 PM**  
**Solemn Easter Vigil 9 PM**

