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## Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time February 26, 2017

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### Pastor's Column

*Rev. Michael Ratajczak  
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#### The Forty Days of Lent

This Wednesday is Ash Wednesday. We begin the Season of Lent. In these days, we are called to embrace the disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we focus upon the Passion of Jesus the Christ.

Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving we clear our minds and hearts a bit in order to make more room in our lives for the Paschal Mystery of Christ, his suffering, death, and resurrection.

We dare to ask ourselves “What meaning does the Passion of the Christ have for me?” and “How am I uniting my life to the Paschal Mystery of Christ?”

I encourage you to take seriously what our Parish offers you during this Season of Lent. Let your Lenten journey be not only private, but also communal.

Begin your walk with your Parish Family on the road of renewal and refreshment by attending Mass on Ash Wednesday and being signed with ashes. This external sign is a commitment of your desire and readiness for interior renewal. Take advantage of the Stations of the Cross that will be prayed on Friday evenings.

Attend Mass each Sunday as a family, ALL household members present together. Plan ahead for the Triduum—Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday...

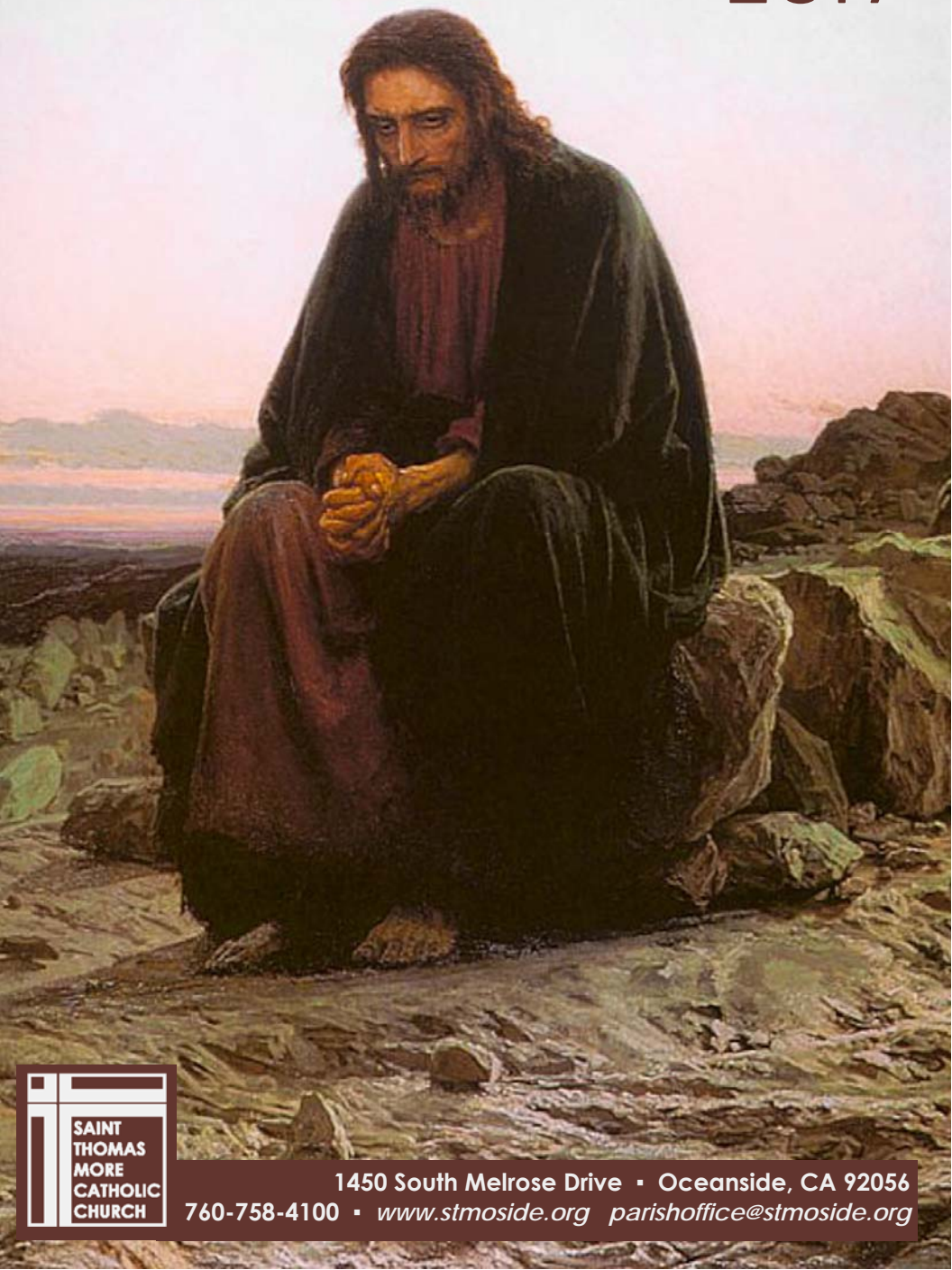
Mark your calendars for the days and times. Will it be necessary to rearrange some family schedules and work schedules in order to participate in Holy Week activities? Are you willing to make this a family priority?

Unite your crosses to the Cross of Christ. In that union you will find, not suffering and death, but new life, new hope, and new beginnings.

In these days, let us once again die to sin, to selfishness, to our own needs and concerns, and rise to new life on high with Jesus the Christ!

*Fr. Mike*

Lent † Triduum † Easter  
2017



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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT LENT AND LENTEN PRACTICES



FROM THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS (USCCB)

**Q. Why do we say that there are forty days of Lent? When you count all the days from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, there are 46.**



A. It might be more accurate to say that there is the “forty day fast within Lent.” Historically, Lent has varied from a week to three weeks to the present configuration of 46 days. The forty day fast, however, has been more stable. The Sundays of Lent are certainly part of the Time of Lent, but they are not prescribed days of fast and abstinence.

**Q. So does that mean that when we give something up for Lent, such as candy, we can have it on Sundays?**

A. Apart from the prescribed days of fast and abstinence on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and the days of abstinence every Friday of Lent, Catholics have traditionally chosen additional penitential practices for the whole Time of Lent. These practices are disciplinary in nature and often more effective if they are continuous, i.e., kept on Sundays as well. That being said, such practices are not regulated by the Church, but by individual conscience.

**Q. I understand that all the Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat, but I’m not sure what is classified as meat. Does meat include chicken and dairy products?**

A. Abstinence laws consider that meat comes only from animals such as chickens, cows, sheep, or pigs—all of which live on land. Birds are also considered meat. Abstinence does not include meat juices and liquid foods made from meat. Thus, such foods as chicken broth, consomme, soups cooked or flavored with meat, meat gravies or sauces, as well as seasonings or condiments made from animal fat are technically not forbidden. However, moral theologians have traditionally taught that we should abstain from all animal-derived products (except foods such as gelatin, butter, cheese and eggs, which do not have any meat taste). Fish are a different category of animal. Salt and freshwater species of fish, amphibians, reptiles (cold-blooded animals), and shellfish are permitted.



**Q. I've noticed that restaurants and grocery stores advertise specials on expensive types of fish and seafood on Fridays during Lent. Some of my Catholic friends take advantage of these deals, but somehow I don't feel right treating myself to the lobster special on Fridays during Lent.**

A. While fish, lobster, and other shellfish are not considered meat and can be consumed on days of abstinence, indulging in the lavish buffet at your favorite seafood place sort of misses the point. Abstaining from meat and other indulgences during Lent is a penitential practice. On the Fridays of Lent, we remember the sacrifice of Christ on Good Friday and unite ourselves with that sacrifice through abstinence and prayer.

**Q. I understand that Catholics ages 18 to 59 should fast on Ash Wednesday and on Good Friday, but what exactly are the rules for these fasts?**

A. Fasting on these days means we can have only one full, meatless meal. Some food can be taken at the other regular meal times if necessary, *but combined they should be less than a full meal*. Liquids are allowed at any time, but no solid food should be consumed between meals.

**Q. Are there exemptions other than for age from the requirement to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?**

A. Those that are excused from fast and abstinence outside the age limits include the physically or mentally ill including individuals suffering from chronic illnesses such as diabetes. Also excluded are pregnant or nursing women. In all cases, common sense should prevail, and ill persons should not further jeopardize their health by fasting.

**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT LENT  
IS AVAILABLE FROM THE USCCB:**

**Message for Lent 2017 from Pope Francis  
Lent Calendar**

**Rediscovering the Sacrament of Penance  
Lenten Videos**

**Saints for the Lenten Season**

**Six Ways to Evangelize during Lent**

**...and more!**

**VISIT [HTTP://TINYURL.COM/Z8OYRGF](http://tinyurl.com/z8oyrgf)**

St. Thomas More Catholic Church  
Lent † Triduum † Easter † 2017

February 2017

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christians have always observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection.

It became the custom of the church to prepare for Easter by a season of penitence, fasting, and prayer.

This season of forty days provided a time in which converts to the faith were in their final preparations for the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation into the Body of Christ.

It is also the time when persons who had committed serious sins and had been separated from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness and restored to the fellowship of the church.

In this way, the whole congregation is reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our baptismal faith.

As we begin this season of Lent, I invite you, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.

May these disciplines strengthen us individually and communally to be more faithful Disciples of the Lord Jesus.

In the next forty days, may we die with the Lord and, on Easter Sunday, rise with him to new life, new hope, and new beginnings!



Sincerely in Christ,

*F. Mike*

Rev. Michael Ratajczak  
Pastor

**Daily Mass at 8:15am Monday-Friday**

**Church and Blessed Sacrament Chapel  
open 7:00am-7:00pm seven days a week**

## March

Wed	<b>1</b>	<b>8:15am</b> <b>12:00pm</b> <b>7:00pm</b>	Mass with distribution of ashes	Ash Wednesday <i>(a day of fast and abstinence)</i>
		<b>5:30pm</b>		Soup Supper
Fri	<b>3</b>	<b>5:30pm</b> <b>7:00pm</b>		Knights of Columbus Lenten Dinner Stations of the Cross
Sat	<b>4</b>	<b>3:30pm</b> <b>5:00pm</b>	Mass	Individual Reconciliation First Sunday of Lent <i>Rite of Sending</i>
Sun	<b>5</b>	<b>8:30am</b> <b>10:30am</b>	Mass Mass	First Sunday of Lent
Mon	<b>6</b>	<b>8:30am</b>		Lenten Day of Recollection <i>Sponsored by Women's Guild and Spirited Seniors</i>
Fri	<b>10</b>	<b>5:30pm</b> <b>7:00pm</b>		Knights of Columbus Lenten Dinner Stations of the Cross
Sat	<b>11</b>	<b>3:30pm</b> <b>5:00pm</b>	Mass	Individual Reconciliation Second Sunday of Lent <i>Candidates' Penitential Rite</i>
Sun	<b>12</b>	<b>8:30am</b> <b>10:30am</b>	Mass Mass	Second Sunday of Lent
Fri	<b>17</b>	<b>5:30pm</b> <b>7:00pm</b>		Knights of Columbus St. Patrick's Day Dinner Stations of the Cross
Sat	<b>18</b>	<b>3:30pm</b> <b>5:00pm</b>	Mass	Individual Reconciliation Third Sunday of Lent <i>First Scrutiny/Presentation of the Creed</i>
Sun	<b>19</b>	<b>8:30am</b> <b>10:30am</b>	Mass Mass	Third Sunday of Lent
Mon	<b>20</b>	<b>7:00pm</b>		Lenten Communal Reconciliation Service <i>Check website for other services in the area</i>
Fri	<b>24</b>	<b>5:30pm</b> <b>7:00pm</b>		Knights of Columbus Lenten Dinner Stations of the Cross
Sat	<b>25</b>	<b>3:30pm</b> <b>5:00pm</b>	Mass	Individual Reconciliation Fourth Sunday of Lent
Sun	<b>26</b>	<b>8:30am</b> <b>10:30am</b>	Mass Mass	Fourth Sunday of Lent

March  
Fri 31

5:30pm  
7:00pm

Knights of Columbus Lenten Dinner  
Stations of the Cross

April  
Sat 1

3:30pm  
5:00pm Mass

Individual Reconciliation  
Fifth Sunday of Lent  
*Third Scrutiny /Presentation of the Lord's Prayer*

Sun 2  
8:30am Mass  
10:30am Mass

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Thu 6  
4:00pm Mass

Chrism Mass  
*Good Shepherd Church,  
8200 Gold Coast Drive, San Diego*

Fri 7  
5:30pm  
7:00pm

Knights of Columbus Lenten Dinner  
Stations of the Cross

Sat 8  
3:30pm  
5:00pm Mass

Individual Reconciliation  
Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord  
*with blessing and distribution of palms  
at all Masses*

Sun 9  
8:30am Mass  
10:30am Mass

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord  
*with blessing and distribution of palms  
at all Masses*

Thu 13  
7:00pm Mass

**Triduum—Holy Thursday**  
Mass of the Lord's Supper  
Eucharistic Exposition immediately following  
Mass until midnight

Fri 14  
8:15am  
3:00pm  
7:00pm

**Triduum—Good Friday**  
*(a day of fast and abstinence)*  
Morning Prayer  
Celebration of the Passion of the Lord  
Living Stations of the Cross  
*Presented by St. Thomas More Youth Ministries  
(Parish Center Upper Level)*

Sat 15  
8:15am  
10:00am  
11:00am  
8:00pm Mass

**Triduum—Holy Saturday**  
Morning Prayer  
Butter Lamb Project  
Blessing of Easter Food  
The Easter Vigil

Sun 16  
6:30am Mass  
8:30am Mass  
10:30am Mass

**Easter Sunday**  
*Renewal of Baptismal Promises will take place  
at all Masses*