

*The People of God called to form the Christian Community of*

# *St. Mary's Church*

**Very Rev. Dominic G. Ciriaco, V.F. Pastor**  
**Rev. Michael S. P. Trainor, Parochial Vicar**  
**Rev. Nicholas V. Bellotti, Parochial Vicar**  
**Rev. Patrick Donohue, In-Residence**  
**Rev. Mr. Duberley Salazar, Transitional Deacon**  
**Deacon John L. Sylvester, Permanent Deacon**  
**Mr. Joel Condon, Director of Music Ministry**  
**Mrs. Kathleen Sylvester, Pastoral Associate for Liturgy/RCIA**  
**Mr. William J. Mascitello, Pastoral Associate for Catechetics**  
**Mr. John Weiss, Business Administrator**  
**Ernesto Betancourt, Parish Seminarian**  
**Mrs. Barbara Barba, Pastoral Council Chairperson**  
**Mrs. Janet Kaine, Parish Trustee**  
**Mr. Michael Daly, Parish Trustee**

## *Mass Schedule*

**Saturday eve:** 5:30 pm  
**Sunday:** 7:45 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm  
**Holydays (except Saturday):**  
7:00 am, 8:45 am, & 7:30 pm  
**Weekdays:** 7:00 am & 8:45 am  
**Saturday:** 8:30 am  
**Holiday:** 9:00 am on Major Civil Holidays

## *Sacrament of Penance*

**Saturday:** 4:00 - 4:45 pm  
Private confessions at any time. Please call rectory.

## *Sacrament of Marriage*

Common policy of the Archdiocese of Newark asks that arrangements be made one year in advance. Engaged couples must call to make an appointment to speak to a priest.

## *Sacrament of Baptism*

Parents should register for the Baptism Preparation Program at the rectory...even before the baby is born!

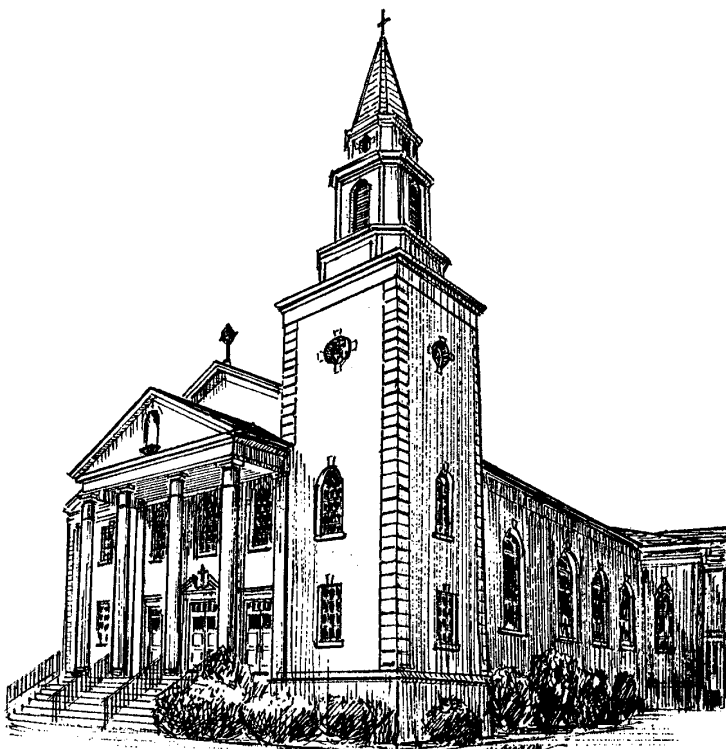
## *Religious Devotions*

**Miraculous Medal Novena:** Saturday following 8:30 am Mass.

## *Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament*

First Friday of the month, 9:00 am - 7:00 pm, in the

**First Sunday of Lent**  
**March 9, 2014**



**280 Washington Avenue, Dumont, N.J. 07628**

**Rectory:** 201-384-0557 **Fax:** 201-384-4986

**Parish e-mail:** [info@stmarysdumont.org](mailto:info@stmarysdumont.org)

**Parish Website:** [www.stmarysdumont.org](http://www.stmarysdumont.org)

**Religious Education Office:** 201-384-3062

**e-mail:** [religioused@stmarysdumont.org](mailto:religioused@stmarysdumont.org)

**Transfiguration Academy:** 201-384-3627

**10 Bradley Avenue, Bergenfield, NJ 07621**

**Co-Sponsored School of St. Mary's, St. John and Ascension**

## **Mission Statement**

*We the Roman Catholic community of St. Mary's, united in the Eucharist and under the guidance of St. Mary of the Assumption, strengthen our faith by praising God, proclaiming His word, sharing His love with all people and serving those in need.*

**St. Mary: Pray for Us**



**Saturday March 8 - Vigil**  
**St. John of God**  
 5:30PM Patrick O'Connor

**Sunday March 9 - First Sunday of Lent**  
 7:45AM Francisca Angelita Miguel  
 10:00AM Parishioners of St. Mary's  
 12 Noon Louis J. Garipoli

**Monday March 10 - Lenten Weekday**  
 7:00AM Dennis Harrington  
 8:45AM Gregory Boettger

**Tuesday March 11 - Lenten Weekday**  
 7:00AM Anthony DeRosa  
 8:45AM John Joyce

**Wednesday March 12 - Lenten Weekday**  
 7:00AM Michael Acuba  
 8:45AM Martha Rossi

**Thursday March 13 - Lenten Weekday**  
 7:00AM Florentina Nuqui  
 8:45AM Marie Murrell

**Friday March 14 - Lenten Weekday**  
 7:00AM Nena Asistin  
 8:45AM Edward Berger

**Saturday March 15 - Lenten Weekday**  
 8:30AM Leticia Nieva Santos  
 5:30PM Joseph Maisano

**Sunday March 16 - Second Sunday of Lent**  
 7:45AM Jack Kehoe  
 10:00AM Patrick Langford  
 12 Noon Parishioners of St. Mary's

### ***In Loving Memory***



The Bread and Wine offered at this week's Masses are given in memory of Theodore Criscuolo requested by Criscuolo family.

The Sanctuary Lamp will burn in praise of God and in memory of Jean Tasca requested by Virginia Ranagan and Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Ranagan.

We ask your prayers for our recently deceased Louise Catalli.

### **Bereavement Support Group for those Grieving the Death of a Loved One**

Tuesdays — March 11, 18, 25, April 1st and 8th. If you have lost a loved one to death, we invite you to join us for a series of sessions of information, mutual sharing and support in a spiritual, caring, and strictly confidential setting. The group is lead by a trained facilitator certified by the Family Life Office of the Archdiocese of Newark. All meetings are held in the parish office from 7:30pm - 8:30 pm. Call the parish office 201-384-0557 if you are interested in attending. **Pre-registration is required.**



### **Sunday – March 9**

8:30AM PACT Angels Session / ACRE 5th & 8th Grades LC/School  
 Second Collection - Peter's Pence

### **Monday – March 10**

After 8:45AM Mass Rosary LC  
 7:00PM PACT Angels Session/ACRE 8th Gr. UC/School

### **Tuesday – March 11**

After 8:45AM Mass Rosary LC  
 3:30PM PACT Angels Session/ACRE 5th Gr. UC/School  
 5:30PM Basketball SH  
 7:30PM Adult Choir Practice Library  
 7:30PM-8:30PM Bereavement Support Group MSRm

### **Wednesday - March 12**

After 8:45AM Mass Rosary LC  
 4:00PM Children's Choir Library  
 5:00PM Bells Choir UC  
 7:00PM Knitters and Crocheters FDVRm  
 7:00PM OLPH Novena LC  
 7:30PM-9:30PM Line Dancing SH

### **Thursday – March 13**

After 8:45AM Mass Rosary LC  
 6:00PM-9:00PM Sports Activity CFC-FFL (Mitch) SH  
 7:30PM Scriptures Study with Fr. Pat Library  
 7:30PM Yoga (Linda) SFC  
 All Day Altar & Rosary Baking of Soda Bread Cafeteria

### **Friday – March 14**

10:00AM St. John's Food Kitchen, Newark  
 7:00PM Basketball SH  
 7:30PM Stations of the Cross LC  
 All Day Altar & Rosary Baking of Soda Bread Cafeteria

### **Saturday – Mar. 15**

After 8:30AM Mass Rosary LC  
 10:00AM-12:00PM Faith Sharing Group (Lorena) FDVRm  
 After 5:30PM Mass Selling of Soda Bread UC  
 Food Collection  
 St. Patrick Set-up SH

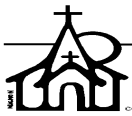
### **Sunday – Mar. 16**

7:30AM Feeding at Missionaries of Charity Soup Kitchen, Newark  
 10:00AM Mass St. Patrick. Social to follow SH  
 After All Masses Selling of Soda Bread SH  
 Food Collection  
 Penitential Right

### **Service at the Community Family Shelter Help**



The next dates that our parish is scheduled to support the Family Promise Shelter are **Wednesday, March 12** and **Thursday, March 13**. We are in need of people to cook a main dish or vegetable which we will bring to the shelter. We also need 2 people who will sleep overnight. The overnight people can leave at 7:00 the next morning after the families have left. Please call for more information or to volunteer: Betty at 201-384-3381 or Rose at 201-385-8520.



## Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

Lent has begun! This is a period of time in the Liturgical Calendar when we are given an opportunity to look within ourselves to see where we can improve in our spiritual lives and in our human relationships. We acknowledge our faults, ask for forgiveness and move on to deepening our relationship with Jesus Christ. Some ways we can do this is through more opportunities to pray and meditate. Read more from the scriptures or some spiritual readings. Helping the poor or less fortunate, being charitable and more caring are great outward signs to express and total transformation within ourselves. The ashes we received on Ash Wednesday may have faded and disappeared but we remember that when we received them they marked us with the sign of our faith, the cross, to enable us to make Lent a great time of renewal for us. Let us take that challenge and make this a truly holy season.

In the words of Margaret Anna Cusack, "The Nun of Kenmare", "Let us consider how we may console the Heart of Jesus fasting in the desert. Let us endeavor during this Lent to make up for the deficiencies of former years." Mother Cusack advises us to allow the example of Jesus to strengthen us. May this hold true for us this Lent.

Have a great week!

**May God be Praised,  
Fr. Dominic**

### March 16 - St. Patrick's Mass



On Sunday morning, March 16, we will honor St. Patrick at the 10:00AM Mass. Following the Mass, there will be a social in Szelest Hall. The Altar and Rosary Society will sell soda bread Saturday after the 5:30PM Mass at the back of the church and after all the Masses on Sunday in Szelest Hall or while supplies lasts. We invite our parishioners to join us for this annual honoring of St. Patrick.

### March 19 – St. Joseph's Day



On Wednesday, March 19, we will have a parish liturgy at 7:30 PM and will gather in the Spiritual Formation Center for a social afterwards, including St. Joseph's pastries. Please join us and rejoice in the care and the prayers of the husband of Mary and the guardian of Jesus, St. Joseph. **Please call the parish office if you'd like to join us.**

### The following 2014 offerings are still available for :

Bread & Wine - May 11 & 18; June 8; Aug. 24; Sept. 14;  
Oct. 5, 12, & 26; Nov. 16 & 23.

Sanctuary Lamp - May 4; July 6; Aug. 24; Oct. 12; Nov. 23.

### Lent 2014

#### Penance Opportunities

As part of the Archdiocesan initiative, **The Light is On For You** — Confessions will be held all the Mondays of Lent from 7:30—8:30 pm beginning March 10th.

**Individual Confessions** also available Saturdays from 4:00 pm – 4:45 pm.

#### Scripture Study with Fr. Pat

Please join us on Thursdays - March 13, 20, 27, and April 3rd and 10th at 7:30 pm in the Library of the school. Enter by the doors closest to Park Avenue.

#### Giving Tree

Our parish will collect items for St. Clare's Home for Children, which is a part of the AIDS Resource Foundation in Newark.

Please take a tag off the Lenten tree and return it with the item to church before the end of Lent. Tags are available this weekend, March 8-9.

#### Crafts for Cancer

On the Sundays of Lent our children from Liturgy of the Word with Children will collect craft items. These items will be donated to Tomorrow's Children and Hackensack Medical Center.



"In truth I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40)

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We as Christians are called to treat each other with love as Christ has taught us. There are many in our community who are unable to join us at mass each week, who are longing to receive the Eucharist. We are in need of Eucharistic ministers to bring the Lord to our homebound. We ask that if you can serve your brothers and sisters in this way that you contact Fr. Michael Trainor. Thank you and God Bless.

### Food Bank of New Jersey



On Saturday, March 22nd, St. Mary's will once again volunteer at the Community Food Bank in Hillside. We will car pool at St. Mary's, meeting at 7:30 am and returning by noon. Sign-ups in advance are required; contact Deacon John at [deaconjohn@stmarysdumont.org](mailto:deaconjohn@stmarysdumont.org). Due to the Food Bank's insurance regulations, no one under 12 is permitted in the warehouse.

### Social Justice Committee Meeting

The Social Justice Committee will meet Wednesday, March 26 at 7:30 p.m. in the Pope John XXIII Room next to the SFC. All are invited to attend. We will address such important issues as food insecurity, gun violence and our mission statement. Please join us for a prayerful, reflective meeting.

*If you have a relative serving in Afghanistan, please call the rectory so that we can add his/her name and offer a prayer for him/her.*

Peter Ramzi..John Ramzi..Mary Sforza..Larry Rubin  
Margaret Bitteti...Donald Trainor...Lyla McMahon  
Suzanne West...Bob Dondero...Emily Stevens...Frank F.  
Sr. Peggy McGaffney, SSND...Christopher Bishopp  
Laura Widman Riccardi...Rose Marie Dellner...Diana P.  
Marcus Flaherty...Hailey van Weathering...Diana P.  
Eileen Flaherty...Kristi Marie Carbonaro...Donna  
Bob Jackson...Jim & Debbie...Helen Smythe...  
Peggy Dunshee..Lidia Belulovich..Edelmira Muñoz  
Barbara Fawcett...Theresa Giacalone...Patricia Ercolano  
~ ~ ~ ~ ~ \* ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ \* ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ \*

Mar. 09 Sue Schettino                      Mar. 16 Mary Daly  
Mar. 23 Mary Loughlin                    Mar. 30 Diane Gerrity  
~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \*

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m. at the K of C Hall in Dumont. Light refreshments will be served.

**Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>** – Friday night “Fish Fry”. Join the Columbiette's from 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm. The price is \$15.00 per adult & \$6.00 for children 12 & under. Reservations required, call Nina @ 201.338.2617.

**Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>** – "*Get on the Bus*" to The Showboat Atlantic City Casino *including* a stop at the Renault Winery for lunch & a tour. The cost is \$50.00 pp with a \$25.00 Casino refund. The bus will depart the Knights of Columbus, 61 Armour Place, Dumont at 8:30 am, returning at 10:00 pm. For reservations call Lillian @ 201.342.5142.

**Sunday, April 6<sup>th</sup> – Annual Garden Tea Party & Spring Tricky Tray.** Join us for the fun from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm at the K of C hall in Dumont. Single and table reservations now being accepted. Call Joan @ 201-696-1159, email: labetti250@optonline.net or mail your reservation and payment to: Laura Labetti - 250 Dixon Ave., Dumont, NJ 07628. Hurry as this event sells out quickly.

*A Thought from  
Venerable Miriam Teresa:*



God did not create us that we might labor feverishly at those perishable things that go down into the grave with us, for vain is the knowledge of man. We exist, we live here, only that we may effectively study how we are to live hereafter. Anything else is folly, and folly is the wisdom of this world.

(G.P., p. 84)

~~~~~  
Please pray for her Canonization and visit our new  
painting of her located in the vestibule of our church.

## Prayer for Canonization

*Most Holy and Blessed Trinity, Whom Sister Miriam loved so ardently, grant that we, like her, may become ever more conscious of Your Divine Presence within our souls. We implore You to show signs that Your humble servant enjoys glory with You in Heaven, and to hasten the day when we may render her a public tribute of our veneration and love.*

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.*

**Catholic Men's Conference**

***Be not afraid!*** – A Catholic Men's Conference on Saturday, March 15, 2014, at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ. Prayerful, spirit-filled, life changing! The day begins at 8:00 AM and ending around 4:00 PM. Mass will be celebrated by Most Reverend Archbishop John J. Myers along with our local Bishops and Priests con-celebrating. A dynamic line-up of speakers is scheduled for this day!

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan, Fr. Larry Richards  
and Gregory Floyd

Ticket price is \$25 for adults, \$20 for students and senior citizens and priests & religious free including breakfast and lunch.

For registration please visit our website at [www.rcanmenscommission.org](http://www.rcanmenscommission.org) or contact [deaconjohn@stmarysdumont.org](mailto:deaconjohn@stmarysdumont.org).

## ***Knights of Columbus***

## Upcoming Meeting

The next regular meeting is on Mon., March 17th at 8PM.


## Irish Night

March 29<sup>th</sup> from 7-11PM. ***céad míle fáilte*** - bring your friends and family for a great time with live music from Frankie Curran and the Evergreens, corned beef & cabbage, bangers & mash, desert and beverages. The cost is \$30 per person and reservations are a must. You can email [kofc1345reservations@gmail.com](mailto:kofc1345reservations@gmail.com) or call Larry Rivera at 201-315-0456.



## ***PACT/Religious Education Program***

## ***PACT Parents***



Please check your e-mail for clickable links to the St. Mary's Lenten Calendar 2014 and a Family Lenten activity calendar. PACT families who changed e-mails or are not receiving our e-mails, please e-mail us at [religiously@stmarysdumont.org](mailto:religiously@stmarysdumont.org).

## ***First Communion Preparation***

Please keep our candidates for First Communion and their families in your prayers. Tuesday preparation sessions have begun. The *Morning With Jesus First Communion Retreat* will be Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> 8:45 a.m. – Noon.



## CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES

At the Confirmation Retreat closing mass at 5:30 p.m. on March 8th, candidates for Confirmation were presented to the community and promised to make preparation for Confirmation a priority in their lives.

Candidates - how are your Service Projects going? For opportunities at St. Mary's, check our Lenten Calendar, bulletin, and our e-mails. Contact the group or the person in charge of the event directly.

[illegible]

**Archbishop's Annual Appeal ---**  
**"When I called, you answered"**

Thank you to the many families who have already contributed the Archbishop's Annual Appeal! This is a perfect opportunity for us to reflect on God's generosity to us. This year, our parish goal is as follows:

Parish Goal 2014: \$55,611.00

To date, we have received over **\$24,010.00** in pledges. There are so many ways God is made visible in the world around us. Our Church of Newark, which serves Hudson, Essex, Union and Bergen counties, sees God in the hundreds of thousands of people it takes care of every year by teaching, sheltering and caring for all who come to it for help.

One of the many programs that the AAA continues to support and enhance is the Archdiocesan seminaries. There are three seminaries in the Archdiocese of Newark that educate and train our future priests. In several recent years, the Archdiocese of Newark has ordained more men to the priesthood than any diocese in the United States. Supporting the AAA helps to subsidize these seminaries and helps to ensure a bright future for our Catholic faith!

We can only offer assistance to these seminars because of **your** generosity to the Archbishop's Annual Appeal. Won't you please take a moment to fill out a pledge card? Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

### ***God's Plan for Giving:***

***"The measure of your free-will offering shall be in proportion to the blessing the Lord, your God, has bestowed on you."***

***(Deuteronomy 16:10)***

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| Collection March 1 - 2 | \$9,920.00 |
|------------------------|------------|

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| Same Weekend 2013 | \$9,948.00 |
|-------------------|------------|

***Treasure from our children's envelopes. \$6.00***

~~~~~

*Here are some of the good deeds that the children of St. Mary's did as a way of showing their love of God and of our parish. We hope that they will always know how important what they do for God and for us truly is. Even though they are still young, they can give us a wonderful example to follow.*

***"I helped mom bring in the groceries."***

***"I emptied the dishwasher when I didn't want to."***

***"I shared my crayons with my sister."***

***"I did the dishes." "I helped someone."***

~~~~~

### Stewardship Prayer

*Dear Lord,*

O Divine Giver of all gifts, grant us the daily graces we need to follow closely in the footsteps of Jesus in the way we live out our lives and make use of our gifts.

Daily, may we renew with You our small part of the world by allowing Your will to be accomplished in and through us.

Help us to trust in Your love for us and to grow in our fidelity and relationship with You.

We thank You for the trust You place in us as stewards of our personal gifts. May the Holy Spirit guide us in placing our time, talent and treasure at the service of each other so that together we may faithfully witness the Christian message and thus become your holy people. Amen.

### **St. Mary's Youth Group (JWalk) Schedule**

**Wednesday, March 12** - Meet at St. Mary's parking at 6:00pm. Presentation to 9th grade Confirmation Students at Ascension to inform them about J Walk.

**Sunday, March 16 - Meeting at 6:30pm.**

**Saturday, March 22** - Trip to Community Food Bank in Hillside. We will car pool at St. Mary's at 7:30 am.

~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \*

### ***Altar & Rosary Easter Candy Sale***



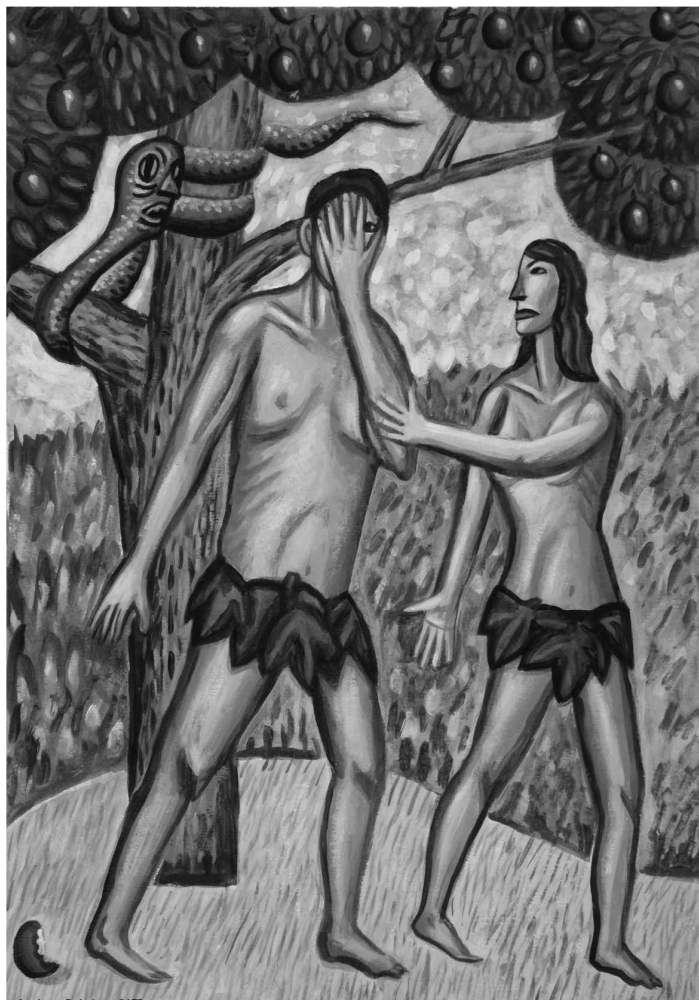
Easter Candy Sale is now going on! Brochures are at the doors of the church. All order forms can be dropped off at the rectory. The deadline is March 19th. Candies will be available for pick-up on April 12 - 13 after all masses at the library.

~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \* ~ \*

### Job Opportunity

Our Lady of the Angels Convent Franciscan Sisters,  
Tenafly, NJ is looking for a part-time dining room server  
and kitchen helper-20 hours per week. Contac Michael  
at 973-897-3813.

# FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



## Mercy and Preparation

Father of all creation,  
 even when the serpent tricked our  
 first parents,  
 when they disobeyed you and lost  
 your friendship,  
 even when we are tricked by the many  
 serpents of our time,  
 and commit sin before you and our brothers  
 and sisters,  
 you never abandon us.  
 You have sent us your Son, our Lord  
 Jesus Christ.  
 Through his sacrifice, you continue  
 to offer mercy,  
 so that all your people may be made  
 righteous.  
 In these Forty Days of prayer, fasting,  
 and almsgiving,  
 may we walk with our sisters and brothers  
 who are preparing to enter the baptismal  
 waters of Easter,  
 and earnestly prepare ourselves to renew  
 our own baptismal promises.  
 We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 your Son, who lives and reigns with you  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 one God for ever and ever. Amen.

**Sunday, March 9, 2014**  
**Wholehearted Faithfulness**



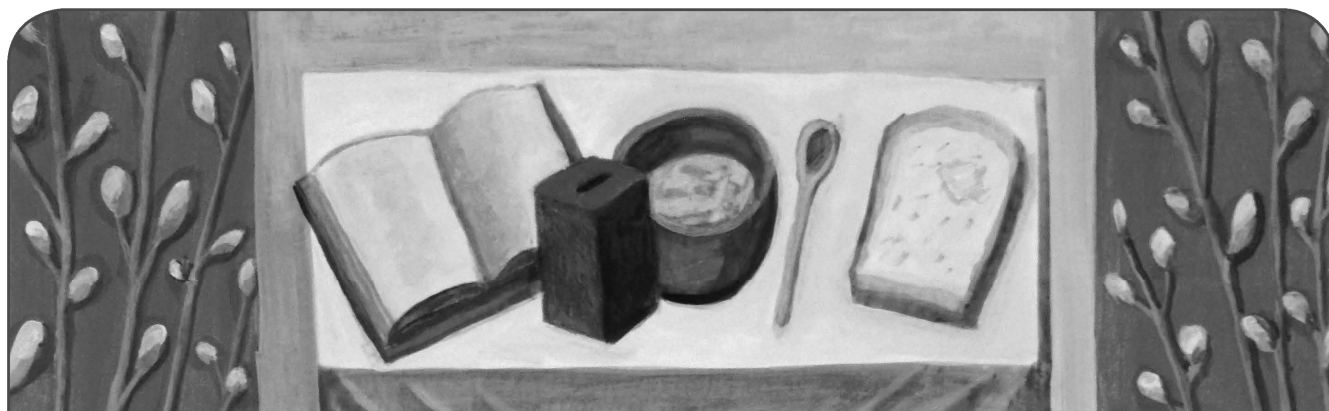
Today's Readings: Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7; Psalm 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17 (3a); Romans 5:12-19 or 5:12, 17-19; Matthew 4:1-11. In today's Gospel, we go into the desert to witness Jesus's temptations. We pray for those preparing for initiation, for struggles they may be encountering, and also we ponder our own temptations. In contrast to Adam and Eve, Jesus models an honest and wholehearted faithfulness to God alone; he challenges us to set aside the gods of money, power, prestige, and addictions of all kinds.

In today's readings, we hear the first mention of the number forty. Think of all the times you've heard that number in Scripture. Work with the number forty during this season: take forty minutes for prayer daily, take forty minutes a week to write a letter to someone who needs your

attention. Take forty minutes each week to pick up trash in your neighborhood. Use forty minutes each week to prepare a simple meal for a homebound person. Spend forty minutes with your family to read and discuss the Scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday Eucharist. Help children earn forty pennies, nickels, dimes, or quarters, which they place, day by day, in the Rice Bowl to offer at the Holy Thursday liturgy.

The readings help us find our way back to God as we endure our temptations. Christ is our teacher, and also our Savior who redeems us from sin and strengthens us in our struggle against evil. He feeds us at the table of plenty with the Eucharistic food that sustains us on the Lenten journey of forty days.





## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, March 10

#### Strive for Holiness

In today's readings, we find a familiar theme: love of neighbor and of self. Consider the challenge of today's Gospel: to offer food, drink, clothing, care, and comfort to the least of our sisters and brothers. We can take the easy way out and ignore the needs we see, but Jesus reminds us that when we do not care for the least ones, we do not care for him. How will you do this? How will you choose eternal life? Today's Readings: Leviticus 19:1–2, 11–18; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 15 (John 6:63b); Matthew 25:31–46.

### Tuesday, March 11

#### How We Are to Pray

One of the key disciplines of Lent is prayer, and, in today's Gospel, Jesus tells us how we are to pray—how to address his Father, who is also our Father. Don't let these words be so automatic that you fail to hear and really mean them. Do the words of this prayer fall like the gentle rain described in Isaiah, and fertilize your heart? What other prayers could you add to your daily conversation with our Lord? Today's Readings: Isaiah 55:10–11; Psalm 34:4–5, 6–7, 16–17, 18–19 (18b); Matthew 6:7–15.

### Wednesday, March 12

#### Create in Us Clean Hearts

In today's first reading, the prophet Jonah calls all the people of Nineveh, great and small, to show their sorrow for their sin by putting on sack cloth and ashes and by fasting. In the first reading on Ash Wednesday, a fast was announced to the entire Church with the sound of a trumpet. Like Jonah who became a sign to the Ninevites, Jesus, the Son of Man, is the sign of mercy and forgiveness. How will you open your heart and return to the Lord? Today's Readings: Jonah 3:1–10; Psalm 51:3–4, 12–13, 18–19 (19b); Luke 11:29–32.

### Thursday, March 13

#### The Law and the Prophets

Throughout the readings of the liturgical year, we often hear about keeping God's Commandments. Today's Gospel ends with one of those Commandments: "Do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets." The Law and the Prophets also urge us to trust in God completely. In today's first reading, Esther does just that, crying out to God for help. During these days of Lent, how are you learning to keep the Commandments and trust more fully in God? Today's Readings: Esther C:12, 14–16, 23–25; Psalm 138:1–2ab, 2cde–3, 7c–8 (3a); Matthew 7:7–12.

### Friday, March 14

#### Turn Away from Sin

Today's Gospel reading urges us to be reconciled with our brothers and sisters before bringing our gift to the altar. The Sign of Peace in the Sunday liturgy is one way we carry out this command ritually. Do you find yourself sharing the peace of Christ with the same people each week? Consider sitting in different places in church during Lent so that you can give and receive the Sign of Peace with others. Today's Readings: Ezekiel 18:21–28; Psalm 130:1–2, 3–4, 5–7a, 7bc–8 (3); Matthew 5:20–26.

### Saturday, March 15

#### Seeking Perfection

In today's Gospel, Jesus urges his disciples to go beyond the usual expectations. He calls us to strive with our whole hearts—to be perfect just as the "heavenly Father is perfect." That may sound impossible, but if we do only the average, we fall short of mature discipleship and have failed to truly love our neighbor. We grow into perfection gradually by experiencing it and practicing it through community and interaction with others. As Deuteronomy suggests, we pray to be people "holy to the Lord [our] God, as he promised." Today's Readings: Deuteronomy 26:16–19; Psalm 119:1–2, 4–5, 7–8 (1b); Matthew 5:43–48.



© Liturgy Training Publications. 1-800-933-1800. Written by Michael R. Prendergast. Illustrated by James B. Janknegt. Scripture quotations are from *The New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition*, copyright © 1993 and 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Permission to publish granted by the Archdiocese of Chicago, on October 24, 2013.

*Keeping the Seasons*  
Reproducibles for Lent-Triduum-Easter 2014