

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

Severna Park, Maryland



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As the season of Lent begins, we join with Catholics around the world in entering this special and blessed time of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These three pillars of Lent, spoken of by Jesus in the Ash Wednesday Gospel reading, are powerful and time-tested Biblical practices that help us grow in love of God and neighbor. They are not just disciplines imposed upon us, but three beautiful ways we allow the Lord to turn our hearts outward to him, our God, and to our neighbor. They are designed to help us grow in love. The end goal of this growth is that our hearts might be well prepared to participate in the mystery of God's love revealed in the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ.

I hope you will join us in these days of Lent, not only in prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, but also in the many other beautiful devotions that mark this season. In this Lenten booklet you'll find our schedule for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Stations of the Cross, Eucharistic Adoration, and other opportunities we have to make the most of Lent.

I pray that for each of you these days of Lent will be a time of great blessing. Even though Lent can be a difficult season, in terms of the things we give up and some of the added penances we may take on, it is ultimately a season of tremendous hope and joy as we prepare to share deeply in the mystery of God's love revealed in the Lord's Passion, Death, and Resurrection. May you be filled with that hope and joy in these coming forty days!

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Erik



LENT 2021

PRAYER

Daily Mass

"In the Eucharist is all the power that created the universe and all the love that redeemed it," William Cardinal O'Connell. Join us at 8:30a.m. for daily Mass and receive the Lord's power and love in your life to help you meet the challenges and trials of each day. The Mass readings are specially chosen to help draw us more deeply into Lent. Please join us!



Eucharistic Adoration

At Mass the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Jesus. We feed on this gift at Mass, but we also adore his Real Presence in Eucharistic Adoration. Adoration takes place at St. John every Friday morning after Mass and continues throughout the day and night until Saturday morning Mass. Come and spend some quiet time in the presence of the



Lord – it is a great time of peace, healing and spiritual refreshment.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

We all fall short in loving God and neighbor. Rather than getting used to it, or suffering through the shame or guilt, what if there was a way to start over? What if there was a way to be strengthened so that you could break out of your patterns of sin and live differently? God offers us his mercy to give us that new start.

See page 3 for the many opportunities we have to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Lent on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Remember, no matter how long it has been the priest is ready to help you! Come and meet Christ in the Sacrament of his mercy!



Stations of the Cross

Join us every Friday of Lent at 12p.m. and 7p.m. in the Church as we pray the Stations of the Cross. Early in the life of the Church it became common for pilgrims to walk in the footsteps of Jesus in Jerusalem, remembering his Passion and Death. Later, Stations of the Cross were added to local churches as an alternative. The Stations commemorate Jesus' journey to Calvary

where he died. Originally prayed outdoors, the Stations of the Cross gradually moved inside churches where they became a familiar feature. Join us for this beautiful Lenten devotion.

Lenten Evening of Worship

Join us Friday, Feb. 19, following Stations of the Cross for our monthly Evening of Worship beginning at 7:45p.m. In the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, we have the opportunity to draw near to Jesus in prayer, praise and worship. All are welcome!



FASTING

Fasting is the voluntary giving up of food, drink, and other material things that expresses our desire to bring a healthy balance back to our relationship with God, ourselves and others. Poor choices in daily life can lead us to become slaves (addicted) to certain material things such as food, drink, television, etc. In fasting, we admit that we are not as free as we would like to be. In fasting, we exercise the gift of our free will (aided by God's grace) to say 'no' to certain things (which are not necessarily bad in themselves) in order to allow us to say 'yes' to the Lord and to others.

The Benefits of Fasting

- Fasting awakens the heart to the intimate presence of God in one's soul.
- Fasting encourages more serious reflection about the priorities in our lives.
- Fasting strengthens our sense of dependence upon God.
- Fasting sharpens our sensitivity to the spiritual dimension of life.
- Fasting strengthens our ability to say 'yes' to God and 'no' to sin.
- Fasting develops greater appreciation for the gifts of God, especially food and drink.
- Fasting purifies us, spiritually as well as physically.

Ways to Fast

The season of Lent already comes with some "built-in" fasting: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fasting and abstinence, while each Friday of Lent we abstain from eating meat. Remember, though, that meatless Fridays don't mean we choose lobster instead. Meatless meals on the Fridays of Lent should be simple, sacrificial, and lead us to reach out in generosity to those who are less fortunate through some act of charity.

The classic form of fasting involves giving up of food or drink. As children we may have given up candy during Lent – this classic approach can be as valuable for adults as for children. Any time we exercise our free will in a deliberate way over and above our cravings and desires we gain control over our lives – the same control that is needed to say "yes" to God and "no" to sin.

We can also fast from an entire meal (lunch on the Fridays of Lent for example). The money normally spent on that meal could be placed in the Poor Box at church.

We can also fast from television, music, or our devices. While not always bad in themselves, these forms of entertainment can so occupy our lives that we have trouble hearing God. In place of television or the phone, we can spend time with those we love or in quiet prayer with God (reading from Scripture, looking at the Sunday Mass readings, etc.) or in service to others.

Remembering that fasting is a form of penance and self-denial, there are many other ways that we can show God our sorrow for our sins: being generous with others, visiting the sick and lonely, feeding the poor, studying Scripture, praying the Stations of the Cross or the Rosary, practicing self-control, and many others.

40 Days for Life – A Special Call to Prayer and Fasting for an End to Abortion

Are you looking for a special Lenten sacrifice? Join parishioners from our church and other local churches this Lent, in peaceful prayer vigil in front of Planned Parenthood, 929 West St., Annapolis, starting Saturday, Feb. 20. Prayer can also take place at home or in church. St. John will be responsible for the Saturday hours between 7a.m. – 7p.m. For more information on how you can participate please contact Alice Harris at amharris79@gmail.com or 410-544-2895. Please sign up at http://bit.ly/sje_40days.

Lenten Norms for Fasting and Abstinence Fasting:

Catholics aged 18—59 are to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. 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. Individuals who are pregnant, nursing, or ill are excused from these norms.

Abstinence from Meat:

Catholics aged 14 and older are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays during the season of Lent.

ALMSGIVING

Almsgiving is not only an offering of money to those in need but an attitude of generosity and a willingness to share in the burdens of others. Almsgiving is closely tied to fasting; whatever we save (money or time) should be offered to the needy.

Here are some ways you can give alms this Lent:

St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry

Each month, the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry (located in the Parish Center) distributes between 250 - 350 bags of groceries to our neighbors in need. Volunteers sort donations, pack bags, and assist with monthly food deliveries from the Anne Arundel County Food Bank. Check the weekly bulletin for a list of our most needed items. If you are interested in volunteering 1 - 2 hours per month, please contact Kathy Wallace at rjwkkw@comcast.net.

Lenten Poor Box Collections

Help support those in need by contributing to our Poor Box during Lent. As the parish receives requests for assistance our St. Vincent de Paul Society is ready to help. Thank you for helping meet the needs of our brothers and sisters!

Casseroles for Our Daily Bread

Catholic Charities' Our Daily Bread is Maryland's largest hot meal program, serving more than 250,000 meals to the hungry of Baltimore City each year. Casserole pans and recipes can be picked up in the Gathering Space and are due back to St. John on Sunday, March 29 between 7:15-11:15a.m. Please contact Mike Walsh at 410-703-3132 for more information.

CRS Rice Bowls

Our Faith Formation students have participated in this Lenten tradition for many years. Sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, Operation Rice Bowl is a daily reminder of the struggles and needs of God's people around the globe. Throughout Lent, families make sacrifices by contributing a portion of allowances, dessert or treat money, etc., into the rice bowl.

This Lent we are not able to give out the Rice Bowl collection boxes, nor collect cash donations due to COVID. Please go directly to the [Catholic Relief Services website](#) or our website <http://bit.ly/ricebowl2021> to make a donation. Through our sacrifices, we have the power to make the world a better place for everyone.

Special Events in Lent

Stations of the Cross—Fridays, 12p.m. and 7p.m. in the Church.

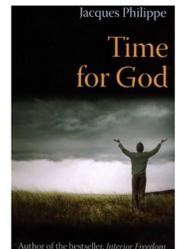
Sacrament of Reconciliation: Confessions are heard Wednesdays 6 - 7p.m., Fridays 4:30 - 6p.m. and Saturdays 3:30 - 5p.m.

Eucharistic Adoration—Friday at 9a.m. through Saturday at 8a.m. Sign up at stjohnsp/adore or in front of the Oratory.

Lenten Evening of Worship—Feb. 19, 7:45p.m. (following the Stations of the Cross). Come experience the power, beauty, and healing of Eucharist Adoration.

Time for God book and prayer discussion and Q&A with Fr. Erik. **Thursday evenings during Lent**. 7p.m. in the church and online.

As we focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving this Lent, you are invited to join us for an opportunity to grow deeper in your life of prayer.



Read Fr. Jacques Philippe's contemporary classic on prayer entitled *Time For God*.

Alongside Fr. Jacques' book, we will be offering a simple *Prayer Companion* to help you put what you read into practice in your own daily prayer.

Discussion and Q&A with Fr. Erik. Thursdays at 7p.m. starting Feb. 18. In church and via livestream.

Lenten Fish Fry—March 26

Join us for homemade crab soup, hand-breaded cod, macaroni & cheese, coleslaw and dessert! Carry out only, 5—7p.m. Proceeds will benefit evangelization efforts. Stay tuned for more information.



HOLY WEEK

Holy Thursday

On this evening we remember and enter into what Jesus did with his disciples the night before he died: He gave them the new commandment of love ("Love one another as I have loved you." John 13:34), symbolized in his washing of the disciple's feet, he instituted the Eucharist ("Do this in memory of me." Luke 22:19) and prayed for strength in the garden of Gethsemane ("Let your will be done, not mine." Luke 22:42). The Church celebrates these same events, washing the feet of parishioners, celebrating the Eucharist and then ending the evening in prayerful vigil before Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Good Friday

Today is one of the most solemn days in the Church's year when we recall the death of Jesus on the cross. This is the only day of the year the Church does not celebrate the Mass. Instead, the ritual is in three parts: the Liturgy of the Word (when we read the account of his passion and death), veneration of the cross, and Communion (consecrated on Holy Thursday evening). This service does not stand alone; it is a continuation of what began on Holy Thursday. The veneration of the cross is a practice unique to Good Friday. It is our opportunity to humble ourselves before the awesome saving action of Christ.

Easter Vigil

This is the holiest night of the Church's year as we recall Christ's Resurrection from the dead. Beginning in darkness with the light of candles, we enter into the celebration of his Resurrection singing the Gloria and Alleluia for the first time since the beginning of Lent. It is on this night that we welcome men and women into the new life of Christ and His Church by celebrating the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist for those becoming Catholic.

Please visit our website stjohnsp.org, Facebook or the bulletin for a full Holy Week Mass and service schedule as that information becomes available.

The Sacred Easter Triduum (Latin for "three days") is the 72-hour period at the end of Holy Week marking the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus.

Easter Triduum

The three days are counted as the Hebrews counted their days, from dusk to dusk. Therefore, the three days of the Easter Triduum are from dusk on Holy Thursday to dusk on Good Friday (day one), dusk on Good Friday to dusk on Holy Saturday (day two), and dusk on Holy Saturday to dusk on Easter Sunday (day three). Each of those days celebrates and commemorates the final days of Jesus as he offered himself for our salvation.

We look at the Easter Triduum as one single celebration that lasts for three days. We cannot separate the death of Jesus from his resurrection. Please join us for these special celebrations!