



## Third Sunday of Lent March 19, 2017

# St. Peter's Church

47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901

Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322

Religious Education Office: 570-724-9789

Website: [www.stpeterswellsboro.org](http://www.stpeterswellsboro.org) ~ Email: [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

### Rectory Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:00–2:00pm

### Parish Staff

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – [Dbechtel100@yahoo.com](mailto:Dbechtel100@yahoo.com)

Secretary: Connie Spang – [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – [stpadm@ptd.net](mailto:stpadm@ptd.net)

Directors of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier & Melissa Mann – [stpreled@ptd.net](mailto:stpreled@ptd.net)

Maintenance Staff: Connie Spang, Francis Kennedy

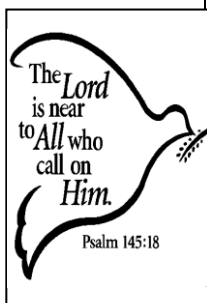
### Schedule of Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm ~ Sunday: 8:30am & 11:00am

### Reconciliation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11:45am-12:00noon;

Saturday 4:15 – 4:45pm; By appointment by calling the Rectory.



### Prayer for Lent

God of infinite love, I thank you for this reminder of your love and your call that we be more patient, gentle and compassionate with others. Here in the middle of Lent, I turn to you to beg for your help. Please soften my heart. Help me to let go of judging others. I ask you this, in Jesus' name.

### Emergency Contact

In the event of an emergency, please call the rectory at 570-724-3371. If no answer, please call 570-329-5762. This is a pager. You will be instructed to enter your phone number and Fr. Bechtel will return your call.

### Mission Statement

We, the parishioners of St. Peter's Church, are called to holiness by God as present day disciples of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are united in service to God to share our faith with one another and our community. May our participation in the Holy Sacraments, our ministries and our devotion to Mary bring glory to God and His Kingdom.

### Pregnancy Support

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310  
Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS  
Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

### Welcome to St. Peter's Church!

If you are visiting Tioga County this weekend, welcome and thank you for worshipping with us! If you are searching for a Spiritual home, we welcome you to join us and invite you to become part of our church family. Please complete this form and return it to the parish office or drop it in the offertory basket.

### Request for Parishioner Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Parish Contact Listing

Women's Bible Study – Sue Singer 570-724-2360  
St. John Neumann's Prayer Group – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085  
Contemplative Spirituality Group – Kate Black 570-724-3047  
Cards & Games – Patty Kramer 570-948-9023  
Knights of Columbus – George Gamble 570-724-5216  
Social Concerns – Karen Plumley 570-439-0175  
Parish Rummage Sale – Mary Lasko 570-439-7706  
Mary Beth Sampson 570-724-2953  
Church Linens & Decorations – Sue Singer 570-724-2360  
Buildings & Grounds – Rick Joachim 570-439-2591  
Cemetery Committee – Howard Rutledge 570-724-4529  
Fundraising Dinners – Tara Gordon 570-439-0006  
Paul Urner 570-723-9970  
Music Ministry – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085,  
Marilyn deGuzman 570-376-5427  
Samaritan House – Daria Guelig 570-724-3030  
Youth Group – Maureen Poirier/ Melissa Mann 570-724-9789  
Eucharistic Adoration – Mary Cleveland 570-724-5286  
Finance Council – Priscilla Walrath 570-724-2056  
Parish Council – Rectory 570-724-3371  
Worship Committee – Rectory 570- 724-3371  
Sunday Nursing Home Communion – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470  
Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047  
Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371  
ChristLife – Norb Josten 570-724-9095  
Prayer Shaw Ministry – Jan Bernethy 307-267-0677

### Religious Education and Formation

Religious Education classes are held for Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12<sup>th</sup> begins at 9:30am and concludes at 10:40am. To register, please contact the Religious Education Office at 570-724-9789 or the Rectory at 570-724-3371.

# Third Sunday of Lent

March 19, 2017

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
<b>Monday 3/20</b> <i>2 Sm 7:4-5, 12-14,16; Rom 4:13,16-18,22; Mt 1:16,18-21,24</i>	No Mass	
<b>Tuesday 3/21</b> <i>Dn 3:25,34-43; Mt 18:21-35</i>	7:30am	In Memory of Clifford Parsells (Mary Ann Parsells)
<b>Wednesday 3/22</b> <i>Dt 4:1, 5-9; Mt 5:1-19</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions For All Souls in Purgatory (Ostapowicz Family)
<b>Thursday 3/23</b> <i>Jer 7:23-28; Lk 11:14-23</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Ed Nonnenmacher (Wayne & Sue Singer)
<b>Friday 3/24</b> <i>Hos 14:2-10; Mk 12:28-34</i>	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Lana Bennett (Kreisler Family)
<b>Saturday 3/25</b> <i>Is 7:10-14, 8-10; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38</i>	4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions In Memory of Christopher Arena (Family)
<b>Sunday 3/26</b> <i>1 Sm 16:1,6-7,10-13; Eph 5:8-14; Jn 9:1-41</i>	8:30am 11:00am	In Memory of Mary Ruth Mann (Grab Family) In Honor of Eileen Evert (Ostapowicz Family)

This week's Sanctuary Candle is offered in Honor of  
Dinner Volunteers (Paul Urner)

## The Week Ahead

### SUNDAY, March 19, 2017

Religious Ed. – Pre-School:8:30-9:30am; K-12<sup>th</sup>:9:30-10:40am

### MONDAY, March 20, 2017

Confessions – 5:30-7:00pm

### TUESDAY, March 21, 2017

Eucharistic Adoration – 8:00am-7:00pm

Evening Prayer/Benediction – 6:45pm

Staff Meeting – 8:30am, Rectory

Women's Bible Study – 9:00am

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

### WEDNESDAY, March 22, 2017

Cemetery Meeting – 9:00am, Rectory

### THURSDAY, March 23, 2017

Cards & Games – 12:00pm, Parish Center

R.C.I.A. – 6:00pm, Parish Center

St. John Neumann Prayer Group – 7:00pm, Parish Center

### SUNDAY, March 24, 2017

Religious Ed. – Pre-School:8:30-9:30am; K-12<sup>th</sup>:9:30-10:40am

## FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

This month's food pantry items are: *Pork & Beans and Canned Fruit (15oz)*. Please place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church.

## GOODIES FOR OUR TROOPS

This month's Goodies for our Troops items are: *Eye Drops, Foot Aids (foam insoles, cream, powder), Homemade Fudge, and Personal Notes (cards, letters, drawings from children.)* Please place your donations in the box at the entrance of the church.

## Ministers of the Altar Schedule

### Weekend of March 25<sup>th</sup> /26<sup>th</sup>

#### **5:00pm**

Servers: L.Singer, Z.Singer, M.Mann

Lectors: T.Sampson, L.Sampson

E. Min.: K.Wilcox, B.Butler, A.Singer

#### **8:30am**

Servers: N.Ingerick, M.Ingerick, K.Tellgren

Lectors: R.Kramer, P.Kramer

E. Min.: K.Tellgren, C.Delong, T.Gamble

#### **11:00am**

Servers: K.Kramer, B.Burge, L.Burge

Lectors: M.Stirnaman, P.Walrath

E. Min.: C.Lannak, L.Stager, D.Stager

## Sacramental Information

**Baptisms** - Parents anticipating the birth of their first child are asked to attend baptismal instructions classes before the birth of their child, if possible. Please contact the Rectory to register. Note: Baptisms cannot be scheduled until all the necessary paperwork is completed.

**Confirmation** - Confirmation is administered every year to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in our Parish Religious Education program. Children wishing to receive Confirmation must be enrolled and participating in the program for two years before they are eligible to receive the sacrament.

**Marriages**- In order to complete the necessary paperwork, couples are asked to contact the Rectory at least one full year in advance of the proposed marriage date.

**Anointing of the Sick** - Please contact the Rectory whenever a member of your family has become sick or hospitalized.

**Monthly Visitations** - Any parishioner who is homebound and wishes to receive the Eucharist on a monthly basis is asked to contact the Rectory to schedule a visit.

**Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults (RCIA)** - The RCIA prepares interested adults for reception into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the needs of each person and prepares them for full initiation into the faith. Please contact the rectory to register for the classes or for more information.



## Liturgical Reflection

### Third Sunday of Lent

#### FIRST READING: Exodus 17:3-7

Today's passage from Exodus continues the Old Testament account of Israel's journey from slavery to freedom in the Promised Land. The Israelites are grumbling against Moses because they are without water, and fear dying in the desert. Moses calls out to God for help. God answers Moses telling him to strike a rock and water will flow from it. "I will be there in front of you," promises God. God is faithful to his promise and the Israelites are saved. The reading ends with a question: "Is the Lord in our midst or not?" The answer to this question is given in the Gospel. God always goes before us in our lives, struggles, and journeys. God waits for us – ready to meet us and show us his power, love, and care.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 95

This liturgical hymn praises the God of the covenant. The psalmist issues a fivefold invitation to praise, "Come let us sing...Let us acclaim...let us come...let us bow down...let us kneel." The image of God echoes the First Reading; God is the "Rock of our salvation." Here one imagines a great rock, one that speaks of strength and security, something one could depend on to be in place forever. Such is the role of the Lord in the life of the people.

#### SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-2,5-8

The Second Reading reinforces the conviction that Christ died for us sinners. Now he waits for us again, resurrected in glory, to provide us with new life. Paul explains this important teaching – we are saved by our faith, rather than by our obedience to the Law. Paul came to believe that no human effort, including any and every attempt to observe the Law of Moses, could bring about a state of uprightness before God. Human justification could be accomplished only by means of an unearned gift of God. Paul stresses that "while we were still helpless," unable to do anything at all to secure our own justification, Christ gave his very life for us as a gift of love. One could, perhaps, imagine dying for a truly good person; but only divine imagination could conceive of dying for those still immersed in sin.

#### GOSPEL: John 4:5-42



This is the first of the three great stories of John that take us toward the end of Lent. Today's reading presents one dramatic encounter with Jesus and abounds with Old Testament references, layers of meaning, and unfolding insight into Jesus' true identity of God's self-revealing Word made flesh. John

further indicates an implied call in every encounter with Jesus: whoever engages with him and so comes to believe is thereby commissioned to bring others to Jesus, so he can reveal himself to them, also. A woman of Samaria would seem a most unlikely candidate for an encounter with Jesus, because Samaritans and Jews avoided each other. John presents her as the first missionary, the only person to whom Jesus directly identifies himself as the Messiah, and the one who first proclaims him to non-Jews. Jesus becomes the source of new life for the woman and she becomes an evangelist, bearing the news that she has found the Messiah.

## Parish Activities and Information

### SCRUTINIES

The Scrutinies are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all, a spiritual purpose. They are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. The Scrutinies complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ, and to carry out their decision to love God above all. They are celebrated on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent. Today we pray for *Rebecca Mahosky* as she receives the First Scrutiny, in preparation for initiation into the Catholic faith. Also keep in your prayers our candidate, *Chad Owlett*, who is continuing his preparation for the reception of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

### HOMELESS SHELTER NEED



Lent is a great season to look for opportunities to practice the Corporal Works of Mercy! These include sheltering the homeless.

We are assigned to staff the Tioga County Homeless Initiative's shelter from Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> – Saturday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are needed to cover 2 or 4 hour shifts between 5:00 – 9:00pm each evening. If you are interested in volunteering or want more information, please call Tara Gordon at 570-439-0006 or David Gordon at 570-439-0005.

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be held every Friday during Lent at 7:00pm in the church. Children's Stations of the Cross (open to all parishioners) will also be held at 3:30pm. Students are invited to the parish center after school for a light snack before stations begin. The students will be chaperoned following the conclusion of stations (4:00pm), until parents are able to arrive. All parishioners are encouraged to attend Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season.



### WEDNESDAY LENTEN SERVICES

The Wellsboro Ministerium will be offering Wednesday Lenten Services. All services will be held at the First Presbyterian Church from 12:00-12:30pm, with a light lunch to follow. The theme for this year is *Repentance and Conversion*.

### ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Continuing our journey, "Sharing Christ", the 3<sup>rd</sup> series in the ChristLife New Evangelization program, will be offered on six consecutive Wednesday evenings, from May 3<sup>rd</sup>-June 7<sup>th</sup>, with a concluding full-day retreat on Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>. All who have participated in either the 2015/16 pilot or 2016/17 "Discovering Christ" and "Following Christ" series, are encouraged to join! Space is limited so please confirm your intent by calling Norb Josten at 570-724-9095. Registration closes Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>.

## EASTER FLOWER MEMORIAL



Each Easter, the flowers in the church during the Easter season memorialize deceased loved ones. If you would like to contribute to this year's Easter flowers in memory of a loved one please use the envelope found in your monthly packet and place it in the collection basket. A list of those we remember will be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

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## EASTER MASS INTENTIONS

Parishioners are reminded that there are special Easter Mass Intentions envelopes in your monthly packets to remember both living and deceased family members and friends. The envelopes will be placed on the altar during all of the Easter Masses to remember the donor's intentions. Please place your Easter Mass Intentions envelopes in the collection basket.

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## SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

This year's annual Spring clothing, books and household sale schedule is as follows:

April 2 – 12:00pm - 3:00pm – Donations accepted – set up

April 3 – 8:00am - 5:00pm – Donations accepted – set up

April 4 – 8:00am - 5:00pm – Sale

April 5 – 8:00am - 3:00pm – Sale

April 6 – 8:00am - 3:00pm – Take what you want for donation

PLEASE NO DONATION OF TV'S - NO EARLY SALES!

**BAKE SALE** - We will have a bake sale during the Rummage Sale. Please consider donating to the bake sale!

**Bake Sale donations accepted April 2<sup>nd</sup> & April 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!** - We are in need of volunteers for the sale. Can you give an hour, half a day or a full day? Great way to meet new people! Call Mary Lasko 570-439-7706 or MaryBeth Sampson 570-724-2953 for more information.

## Religious Education and Youth Group News

### MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP LUAU



All 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are invited to join the fun at the Middle School Youth Group Luau. The event will be held on Fri., April 28<sup>th</sup>

from 3:15-5:15pm in the Parish Center. Come after school and enjoy fun games and crafts, snacks, and fellowship!

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### SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS

Vacation Bible School will be held July 16-19, 2017. More information will be provided as the date gets closer.

## Stewardship

Sunday Collection for March 12<sup>th</sup>: \$ 5,847.45

Weekly Goal to Meet Expenses: \$ 5,990.00

Difference: (\$ 142.55)

Year-to-Date Budget Variance: \$ 224.66

*We are grateful to all those who financially sacrifice every week to support our parish and its ministries!*

## Diocese of Scranton News

### CATHOLIC MEN'S CONFERENCE MAY 6TH

The 2017 Third Annual Catholic Men's Conference "Be A Man: Mary's Call to BATTLE" will take place on May 6<sup>th</sup> at King's College, Wilkes-Barre. Experience a prayerful, spirit-filled, life-changing day featuring keynote presentations by Fr. Andrew Apostoli, C.F.R., EWTN host, a founding member of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, and one of the world's foremost experts on the apparitions at Fatima, along with well-known writer, speaker, Catholic film maker, and pilgrimage leader to Biblical Lands, Steve Ray. Our third speaker will be inspirational speaker Matt Fradd, Catholic apologist and author, as well as executive director of The Porn Effect. The Most Reverend Bishop Joseph Bambera will celebrate the closing Mass. Eucharistic Adoration 6:00am, Registration/Continental Breakfast 7:00am, with main Conference and Mass from 8:00am to 2:45pm. Cost: \$35, \$30 early bird, \$15 for students. Register online at: [www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org) or by. **St. Peter's will provide transportation through Benedicts Bus Company and will pay half of the registration fee for those interested in attending.** Registration forms can be found on the hand out table on the side of the church.

## Pro Life News

### PRIESTS FOR LIFE

The Gospel passage of Jesus' offer of the waters of new life to the Samaritan woman, along with the other readings of today, point out three things.

1. Jesus offers his gift of life with no regard to the false barriers that society sets up between people.

2. This gift of life comes through the Death and Resurrection of Christ. The rock in the first reading represents Christ. The rock was struck, just as Christ was struck and crucified, and water flowed from his side. The second reading also emphasizes his Passion, death, and resurrection as the source of this new life, "poured into our hearts" like the water poured out of the rock.

3. To accept the gift, repentance is required.

All of this illumines our pro-life commitment, because the offer of eternal life necessarily presupposes the offer of natural life – again, without the kind of false boundaries society now sets up between born and unborn. Moreover, since Christ gives life, to stand with Christ means to stand with life, and therefore to stand against whatever destroys it. One simply cannot be a "pro-choice Christian." Finally, accepting Christ necessarily means repentance, which is concrete and "historical" in our lives. It includes a specific rejection of abortion. Any form of participation in abortion or of support for abortion is incompatible with the acceptance of Christ and the life of the baptized.

*"The road from love to hate is easy.  
The one from hate to love is more difficult,  
but brings peace." Pope Francis*

## That's The Way It Is!



During Lent we focus on the Passion of Christ. This is not because Catholics like suffering and death. No one likes suffering and death. We focus on the cross because it is through the cross that we gain life. It is through suffering and death that we are glorified. Glorification only comes through the cross. If we want to be glorified with Christ, we must be crucified with Christ. The way that we are crucified with Christ is by taking up and accepting whatever crosses we are given in this life--willingly. But there is more...

When Jesus was in the garden he made this prayer to God the Father: "If it is possible let this cup pass away from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." This prayer has often been misinterpreted to mean that Jesus is asking the Father to take the cross away from him—but if this is not possible—Jesus understands and is willing to follow the Father's plan.

Not only is that not what Jesus is asking, Jesus is actually asking the opposite of what it has been misinterpreted to mean! When Jesus utters that prayer he is asking the Father to allow him to enter into his passion as deeply and as intimately as possible. Far from asking the Father to take the cross from him, he is asking the Father to let him experience the cross and the passion to the fullest extent possible. Jesus is concerned that his humanity will not allow him to do so. He is concerned that he will collapse before being able to experience the passion as fully and deeply as possible. He is, therefore, asking the Father to strengthen him in his humanity to allow this. That is his desire—but he accepts the Father's will—that is—if it is not part of the Father's will to allow this, he will accept and follow that. The Father answers his prayer in part by sending an angel to---strengthen him.

Part of the misunderstanding is due to the fact that we do not understand the reference to "let this cup pass away from me" and how it relates to the Passover. When the Jewish people celebrated the Passover, they would drink from several cups. When it was your turn to drink, you had to drink as deeply from the cup as you could. The cup could not pass from you until you drank. If you finished the contents in the cup, it would be refilled and pass from you.

The important thing to note here is that the cup could not pass until the person drank—and drank as deeply as they could. When Jesus asked the Father to "let this cup pass" the prayer must be understood within this context. Jesus knew the cup cannot pass until he drinks. Thus, praying "Let this cup Pass away from me" presupposes that Jesus is going to drink from the cup. He wants it to pass—that is—he is afraid it will not pass away because he is afraid he will die before he is able to completely drink from the cup. Jesus, in short, is afraid his humanity will not be able to bear the full horror of the passion. Jesus, then is obviously asking the Father to strengthen him—almost miraculously

so that his humanity will be able to bear the full horror of the passion. When we consider what Jesus went through: scourging at the pillar, crowning with thorns, being forced to carry the cross, it makes sense that Jesus would be concerned that his humanity would not be able to bear this fully.

Consider also that the real suffering and the real pain of the passion was not even physical. I haven't even started talking yet about the fact that Jesus took upon himself our sins. That—was the real pain of the cross. I cannot emphasize that point enough. In other words—Jesus humanity not only has to bear the almost impossible feat of making it to Calvary and hanging for three hours after all the physical trauma that came before, he is also doing all of this while entering completely and fully into the complete and abject horror of sin.

Jesus, then in praying "Let this cup pass away from me, yet not as I will but as you will" is asking the Father to allow him to drink as fully and as completely as he can from the cup of God's Wrath. He is asking the Father to preserve him so that he makes it to Calvary and is able to accomplish the mission. Far from running from the cross, this prayer of Jesus is a true embrace of the passion. In short, Jesus does not just want to give 100%, Jesus wants to give 110%. He wants to give more than his humanity will allow—and that is why he uttered that beautiful prayer. Jesus is basically saying "Father, I want to offer more than my humanity will allow. Please make it so that I can do so despite the limitations of my humanity. Yet not as I will but as you will."

What does this mean for us? Indeed! What does this mean for us!? I think it places the crosses God has asked us to carry in a whole different light!

That's the way it is!

The Reverend David W. Bechtel

### March – Month of St. Joseph

The month of March is dedicated to St. Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the foster father of the Lord. St. Joseph was the favorite saint of St. Teresa of Avila, and of many popes, including St. Pius 10 and St. John 23, who wrote:

*"O glorious Joseph! Who concealed your incomparable and regal dignity of custodian of Jesus and of the Virgin Mary under the humble appearance of a craftsman and provide for them with your work, protect with loving power your sons and daughters, especially entrusted to you. You know their anxieties and sufferings, because you yourself experienced them at the side of Jesus and of His Mother. Do not allow them, oppressed by so many worries, to forget the purpose for which they were created by God."*

Joseph is the patron saint of fathers, of workers, and of the universal Church. St. Joseph, pray for us!

*"Nothing, how little so ever it be, if it is suffered for God's sake, can pass without merit in the sight of God."*



# News from the Vatican



## EVEN THE MOST HOLY PEOPLE SIN 7 TIMES A DAY

“Each one of us, every day, does something ugly.” The Bible, in fact, says that even “the most holy people sin seven times a day.” Pope Francis acknowledged this, while inviting the faithful to work on converting with deeds and not words. Drawing his inspiration from the day’s reading of the Prophet Isaiah, Francis stressed, we see how the prophet exhorts us to avoid evil and do good. The problem, the Pope said, lies in not getting into the habit of “living in ugly things” and not avoiding those things that “poison the soul,” that make it small. But we have to work on doing well. “It’s not easy to do good: we must learn it, always. And He teaches us. But, learn. Like children. Along the path of life, of the Christian life, one learns every day. You have to learn every day to do something, to be better than the day before. Avoiding evil and learning to do good: this is the rule of conversion.”

“Being converted doesn’t come from a fairy who converts us with a magic wand. No! It’s a journey. It’s a journey of avoiding and of learning. Courage, he said, is needed to learn how to avoid evil. “He, the Lord, names three concrete things, but there are many: seek justice, relieve the oppressed, give orphans justice, defend the cause of the widow... but concrete things. You learn to do good with concrete things, not with words. With deeds...” “For this reason Jesus, in the Gospel we have heard, rebukes this ruling class of the people of Israel, because ‘they talk and don’t act,’ they don’t know concreteness. And if there is no concreteness, there can be no conversion.”

Pope Francis emphasized how God helps us: “Walking together with us to help us, to explain things to us, to take us by the hand.” The Lord is able “to do this miracle” – that is, “to change us” – not overnight, but on a journey. “An invitation to conversion, avoid evil, learn to do good... ‘Come, arise, come to me, let us reason together, and let us go forward.’ But [you might say] I have so many sins...’ ‘But don’t worry’ [God responds]. ‘If your sins should be like scarlet, they will become white as snow.’” This, Francis stressed, is the path of Lenten conversion. “Simple. It is the Father who speaks, it is the Father who loves us, who really loves us. And who accompanies us on this path of conversion. Only He asks us to be humble. Jesus says to the rulers: ‘He who exalts himself will be humble; and he who humbles himself will be exalted’.”

Pope Francis concluded, “avoiding evil, learning to do good, getting up and going with Him. And then, he said, “our sins will all be forgiven.”

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## BE WITNESSES OF GOD’S LOVE

“Dear Brothers and Sisters: In our continuing catechesis on Christian hope, today we consider the joy that hope brings to our daily exercise of charity. We know how difficult it is to love as our Lord commands us, and how often our love can be tainted by self-interest. It is important to remember that love – charity – is a grace, the fruit of our saving encounter with God’s own love. Saint Paul reminds us that the Lord’s grace forgives our sins, heals our hearts and enables us to become channels of his own unconditional love. Our efforts to love our brothers and sisters with a pure and disinterested love are really our response to the love we have been shown in Christ. Conscious of our human weakness, let us ask our Lord daily to renew the gift of his love within us and to enable us to be witnesses of that love to others, especially those in greatest need. In this way, we will fulfill the Apostle’s command to “rejoice in hope” (Rom 12:12), as we strive to grow in the life of charity and to draw others to the merciful love of the Father.” *Pope Francis*

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## POPE FRANCIS’ MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION

*Pope’s Prayer Intention* - Support for Persecuted Christians: That persecuted Christians may be supported by the prayers and material help of the whole Church.

*Urgent Intention* - For the Pope: “I ask, please, for your prayers for me and my collaborators, who will be on retreat.” *Pope Francis*

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## Pope Francis’ Message for Lent

Dear friends, Lent is the favorable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbor. The Lord, who overcame the deceptions of the Tempter during the forty days in the desert, shows us the path we must take. 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. I encourage all the faithful to express this spiritual renewal also by sharing in the Lenten Campaigns promoted by many Church organizations in different parts of the world, and thus to favor the culture of encounter in our one human family. Let us pray for one another so that, by sharing in the victory of Christ, we may open our doors to the weak and poor. Then we will be able to experience and share to the full the joy of Easter.

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## Looking for something to give up for Lent?

Give up resentment and become more forgiving.~Give up hatred and return good for evil.~Give up complaining and be more grateful.

Give up pessimism and become more hopeful.~Give up worry and become more trusting.~Give up anger and become more patient.

Give up pettiness and become more noble.~Give up gloom and become more joyful.~Give up doubt and turn to God.

# Lenten Information

## About Lent

### Q. How is Lent Observed?

**A.** Lent was first practiced in the fourth century as a period of self-examination and self-denial to prepare for Easter. While Catholics have observed strict fasting rules over the centuries, nowadays only Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and all Fridays during Lent are considered fasting days. The Lenten season is also seen as a time to give up something pleasurable – which could be anything from chocolate to habits like swearing or procrastinating.

### Q: Why are Sundays excluded from the reckoning of the forty days?

**A:** Because Sunday is the day on which Christ arose, making it an inappropriate day to fast and mourn our sins. On Sunday we must celebrate Christ's resurrection for our salvation. It is Friday on which we commemorate his death for our sins. The Sundays of the year are days of celebration and the Fridays of the year are days of penance.

### Q: Why are Fridays during Lent days of abstinence?

**A:** This is because Jesus died for our sins on Friday, making it an appropriate day of mourning our sins by denying ourselves something we enjoy. During the rest of the year Catholics in this country are permitted to use a different act of penance on Friday in place of abstinence, though all Fridays are days of penance on which we are required to do something expressing sorrow for our sins, just as Sundays are holy days on which we are required to worship and celebrate God's great gift of salvation.

### Q: Are acts of repentance appropriate on other days during Lent?

**A:** Yes. Thus the *Code of Canon Law* states: "All Fridays through the year and the time of Lent are penitential days and time throughout the universal Church" (CIC 1250).

### Q. When does Lent end?

**A.** Lent officially ends on Holy Thursday. That is when the "Triduum", great three Days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday occur. Easter is not only a day but an Octave (eight day) celebration leading to a Season of the Church, Easter Season, which ends on Pentecost.

## THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU

Every Monday evening during Lent, each parish throughout the Diocese of Scranton will have their lights on" from 5:30–7:00pm for confession so Catholics can come to or return to this incredible source of God's grace, mercy and healing. **Due to Fr. Bechtel responsibility for St. Thomas Parish, the schedule for St. Peter's will be March 6<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and April 3<sup>rd</sup>.**



**Lenten suggestion**  
Read one of the Gospels from beginning to end.

## Rediscovering The Faith



Do you know someone who wants to come home to the Catholic Church, but is struggling with their faith? Maybe you or someone you know has experienced one of these thoughts:

*I grew up Catholic, but for some reason I just sort of stopped going to Church...*

*After my marriage ended, I felt uncomfortable around my family, friends and parish...*

*I just don't understand why the Church teaches what it does! Some teachings seem so outdated...*

If you or someone you know has experienced one of these situations or thoughts you are not alone. The Church wants you to know that you are a child of God, called by name, precious in his eyes and loved by him (Is. 43:1,4). The Church also wants you to know that you are missed. When one member of the Body of Christ suffers, the entire Body of the Church suffers. Resources to help you rediscover the faith and answer questions about the Church and Church teachings can be found at these websites, [www.usscb.org](http://www.usscb.org) and [catholicscomehome.org](http://catholicscomehome.org). We invite you to explore these sites or contact the rectory to talk and learn more about coming home.

## Lenten Reminders

**Days of Fast and Abstinence** – Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence. All Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence. All Catholics, 18-59 years of age, are bound by Church law to fast, which means only one large meal and two smaller meals may be eaten. Catholics 14 years of age and older are required to abstain, which means no meat may be eaten.

**Lenten Reflection Material** - A selection of Lenten materials for your spiritual enrichment has been placed on the table at the back of the church.

**Operation Rice Bowl** - Operation Rice Bowl is the official Lenten program of Catholic Relief Services. You are asked to eat one sacrificial meal each week and to give the money you saved to the Rice Bowl program. An envelope can be found in your monthly offering packet; boxes can be found on the table in the back of the church.

**Easter Duty** – All parishioners are reminded of their obligation to fulfill their Easter Duty, which consists of receiving Holy Communion at least once between Ash Wednesday and Pentecost Sunday as well as going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation to confess any mortal sins.

**Traditional Pillars of the Church** – We are provided with 3 personal challenges associated with our individual observance of Lent:

- Almsgiving – generously giving to those in need
- Fasting – practicing self-discipline and self-denial
- Prayer – reading, hearing, & reflecting on the Word of God

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## A Gift in Your Will

We hope you'll consider including a gift to St. Peter's Church in your will or living trust. Called a charitable bequest, just a few sentences in your will or trust are all that is needed. Share this sample bequest language for St. Peter's Church with your estate planning attorney:

"I, [name], of [city, state, zip], give, devise and bequeath to St. Peter's Church, Wellsboro [written amount or percentage of the estate or description of property] for its unrestricted use and purpose."

## Parish Prayer List



PRAYERS  
Needed For...

Nettie Mays, Nan Bowser, Trish Knowlton, Judy Nagel, Sue Evert, Valerie Tobin, Michael Farrington, Debbie Adleman, Darlene Brennan, Shirley Mekos Broughton, Michelle Lawrence, Ann Porter, Tucker Gromosiak, Joyce Bowe, Donna Brennan, Peggy Zona, Natasha Rymarczuk, Bob Erway, Mary Mekos, Mary Cramner, Maci Lynn Perry, Martha Desch, Leon Herb, Deb Finestone, Nick Cavagnaro, Antoinette Davis, Kay Evans, Anna Marie Mimplitsch, Sean Rice, Jonathan Hardman, Edwin Rosa, Carol Johns, Joan Kilmer, Stephen Hurd, Stephanie Hemighauf, Suzie Alexander, Larry Sasani, Wendy Doan-Newcomb, Syler Sullivan, Adrienne Gilbert, Rita Grinnan, Bob Murphy, Sylvia Smith, Robbie Butler, Susan Cleveland, Dominic Bianco, Tom Mohr, Carol Weatherby, Carol Shine, Teresa Pavlock, Jerry Pierce, Joann Black, Gabriel, Melissa & Daniel Espinoza, Lori Lopaz, Patricia Quattrone, Larry Jackson, Katie Seip, Lisa Jones, Grace Bickham, Floyd Williammee, Renee Kennedy, Gay Furlong, Elsa DiBernardo, Fran Rose, Christine Palmer, June Sherman, Kathy Smith, Beverly Heck, Tim Bogaczyk, Beth Valdez, Virginia Shaefer, Charles Barrett, Joe Engel, Darleen Kohler, Victoria Salerno, Wanda Trynovich, Tim Cunningham, Tony Pranses, Bob Snyder, Don Brooks, Kathy Macensky, Paul Beuter, Jerry Eckert, Michael Liebner, Cole Salerno, Mark Kilmer, Margaret Barnett, Bob Brostrom, Richard Nowak, Frank Dziengowski, Jr., Stephen Horvatch, Callie Cavanaugh, Eileen Evert, Fr. Paul Mullen, Jane Johnson, David Quimby, Gus Vargas, Helene Carpenter, Barb Sobotik, and Michele Bush.



Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord and  
Let the Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them.  
Richard Dunekl, Dennis Owlett,  
Quillmer 'Sonny' Christman

Lord, this we know, no matter how difficult life may be at this time, we know you will not stop loving us and will always hold us in the palm of your hand. We are reaching to you, Lord, to hold us, comfort us, and heal us. Lord, this we know, you are faithful in your love for us today and forever. You are with us, and we are with you. Amen.