

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, February 17

5:00 p.m. +**Charles J. Mallon and Rose Howe**
By Barbara Mallon

Sunday, February 18

8:00 a.m. **Blessings for the Rasimowicz Family**
By Mary Rupell

10:30 a.m. + **Donald J. Cook**
By Rose and Lance Smith

Monday, February 19

8:45 a.m. +**Joe Cassidy**
By Andy and Bernadette Ryan

Tuesday, February 20

8:45 a.m. +**Margaret (no last name given)**
By Andy and Bernadette Ryan

Ash Wednesday, February 21

8:45 a.m. +**Thomas, Elizabeth and Louis DeBari**
By Sam and Marietta Tridente

Thursday, February 22 NO MASS

Friday, February 23

8:45 a.m. **In Honor of the Madonna of Health**
By Angela Gross

Saturday, February 24

5:00 p.m. +**Antonietta and Sabino Antinolfi**
By Daughter

Sunday, February 25

8:00 a.m. + **Debbie Kling**
By Joan Mandel

10:30 a.m. +**Concetta and Sabastiano Gallo**
By The Gallo Family+

Why is Baptism so important in our Lenten understanding? Lent as a 40-day season developed in the fourth century from three merging sources. The first was the ancient paschal fast that began as a two-day observance before Easter but was gradually lengthened to 40 days. The second was the catechumenate as a process of preparation for Baptism, including an intense period of preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation to be celebrated at Easter. The third was the Order of Penitents, which was modeled on the catechumenate and sought a second conversion for those who had fallen back into serious sin after Baptism. As the catechumens (candidates for Baptism) entered their final period of preparation for Baptism, the penitents and the rest of the community accompanied them on their journey and prepared to renew their baptismal vows at Easter. Lent, then, is radically baptismal.

What is the significances of the 40 weekdays before Easter?

The 40 days of Lent, which precedes Easter is based on two Biblical accounts: the 40 years of wilderness wandering by the Israelites and our Lord's 40 days in the wilderness at which point He was tempted by Satan.

Each year the Church observes Lent where we, like Israel and our Lord, are tested. We participate in abstinence, times of fasting, confession and acts of mercy to strengthen our faith and devotional disciplines. The goal of every Christian is to leave Lent a stronger and more vital person of faith than when we entered.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "The seasons and days of penance in the course of the liturgical year (Lent, and each Friday in memory of the death of the Lord) are intense moments of the Church's penitential practice. These times are particularly appropriate for spiritual exercises, penitential liturgies and pilgrimages as signs of penance, voluntary self-denial such as fasting and almsgiving, and fraternal sharing (charitable and missionary works)." (CCC 1438)



The key to understanding the meaning of Lent is simple: **Baptism**. Preparation for Baptism and for renewing baptismal commitment lies at the heart of the season. Since the

Second Vatican Council, the Church has reemphasized the baptismal character of Lent, especially through the restoration of the Catechumenate and its Lenten rituals. Our challenge today is to renew our understanding of this important season of the Church year and to see how we can integrate our personal practices into this renewed perspective.

Instructions from Bishop Checchio

Lenten Obligations

So that the Church of Metuchen may be spiritually one in a common observance of Lent, the following days of fast and abstinence are to be observed by all Catholics of the Diocese who enjoy the blessings of good health:

1. The days of fast and abstinence are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

2. All other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.

3. From the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday until the celebration of the Easter Vigil on the evening of Holy Saturday, the Easter fast should be

observed so that, with uplifted and welcoming hearts, we may be ready to celebrate the joys of the Resurrection.

This ancient tradition, intimately connected with the *Rites of Holy Week* and the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*, is encouraged, especially in those places baptizing catechumens at the Easter Vigil.

The obligation to fast applies only to Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59. To fast in the Catholic tradition means to limit oneself to one full meal during the day so as to experience hunger.

The obligation of abstinence affects all Catholics who have reached the age of 14. Abstinence in the Catholic tradition means to abstain from meat.

The obligation of fast and abstinence, as a whole, is a serious obligation. While failure to observe any penitential day in itself may not be considered serious, the failure to observe any penitential days at all, or a substantial number of them without good cause, would be considered a grave matter. Those unable to abstain for a valid reason on any given Friday of Lent are asked to perform some other penitential act, or to abstain on another day.

FYI Presidents' Day: February 19

No Religious Education Classes

Parish and Religious Education Offices closed



**REQUESTS
FOR
PRAYER**

Stephen, Bridget M.,
Savannah Paine, Bobby Gross,
Keira Hedges, Peter, Zachary,
Logan Peter Saks, Anna Saks,
Lauren Lane, Jay Mildrum, Philip
Kinney, Peter S., Mary Supple,
Mary Rupell, Susan Reynolds,
Robert Dicheck, Christian, Tara, Zoe, Teagan,
Eric Harding, Kathy & Bob Y., Irma Marquart,
Dolores Staiano, Gerard Schnaars, Glenda L., The
Rasimowicz Family

Every Tuesday @ 6:30 pm: Bible Study

Every Friday during Lent: 7 p.m.: Stations of the Cross

February Calendar

2/19: No Religious Education & Parish and Religious Education Offices closed

2/23: 7 pm: Grades 1 thru 4: Stations of the Cross

Lenten Retreat: March 17 to 21

2018 Bishop's Annual Appeal

Lighting a Fire in the Heart of Our World

By now you have received a letter from Bishop Checchio inviting your participation in the 2018 Bishop's Annual Appeal. The diocesan ministries supported by the Appeal directly impact many of the parishioners here in Port Murray. Your gift provides formation opportunities for our catechists, youth and young adults. Among other important ministries, your sacrificial gift supports our renewed efforts in Evangelization & Communication.

If you have yet to make your pledge to this year's Bishop's Annual Appeal, you will have the opportunity to do so next weekend, February 24/25, which has been designated as ***Bishop's Annual Appeal In-Pew Weekend***. Please prayerfully consider a gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal to help our parish reach its goal. If we can exceed our goal, 50% of the amount collected over goal will be returned to us in the form of a parish rebate. Just as important as our financial goal is our goal of reaching **100% participation**. Every gift, no matter the size, is important and greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Our Weekly Offering

Sunday collection needed to meet

weekly expenses: \$3,637.

February 11: \$2,320 (-\$1,317)

February 4: \$2,570 (-\$1,067)

January: \$9,045 (-\$5,503)