



LENT

Saint Michael the Archangel Catholic Church
2018
Lake Jackson, Texas

Regular Lenten Services

Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil:	5:30 pm
Sunday	8:00 am
	9:30 am
	11:00 am

Weekday Masses

Tuesday	5:30 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am
Thursday	5:30 pm
Friday	6:00 am (Special for Lent)
	8:30 am

Rosary

Mondays	7:00 pm
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Stations of the Cross

Fridays	7:00 pm
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Regularly Scheduled Confessions

Tuesdays	5:00 - 5:30 pm
Saturdays	4:00 - 5:00 pm

Adoration Chapel

Every Day	9:00 am to 10:00 pm
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Knights of Columbus Lenten Fish Fry

Fridays	5:00—7:00 pm
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Special Lenten Services

Ash Wednesday - February 14

Mass with Ashes	8:30 am, 7:00 pm
Liturgy of Word w/ Ashes	6:30 am, 12:00 noon & 5:30 pm

Parish Reconciliation Service

Monday, March 19	7:00 pm
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Youth Stations of the Cross

Good Friday, March 30	7:00 pm
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Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion - March 25

Palms Distributed All Masses

Solemn Procession: Sat. 5:30 pm & Sun. 11:00 am

Holy Thursday—March 29

Mass of the Lord's Supper	7:00 pm
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Adoration at Altar of Repose until Midnight

Good Friday—March 30

Celebration of Our Lord's Passion	3:00 pm
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Stations of the Cross	7:00 pm
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Holy Saturday—March 31

Easter Vigil	8:30 pm
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Easter Sunday—April 1

Masses:	8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am—Church 9:30 am, 11:00 am—Hall
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Spiritual Opportunities in Lent

Here are some of the opportunities we can include in our plan to make Lent the powerful spiritual journey that it can be for us:

LIVING THE EUCHARIST—Our Lenten program this year is entitled *Living the Eucharist*. This small faith-sharing group process is designed to bring us all closer to the amazing gift that is the Mass. To find out more, go to our Living the Eucharist web page at www.smlj.org/liveuch

ASH WEDNESDAY—Plan to join the faith community in the official beginning of Lent at one of our Ash Wednesday liturgies. By coming forward to be marked by ashes we commit that this Lent will be a season of repentance and ongoing conversion.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS—Each Friday evening, we pray the Stations of the Cross. This moving devotion helps us to experience the saving passion and death of Our Lord.

DAILY MASS—Daily Mass continues to be a source of strength and grace during Lent, with the addition of a special early Friday morning 6:00 a.m. Mass for those whose schedules make attending regular times difficult.

RECONCILIATION—In addition to the regular bi-weekly confession opportunities, the parish Lenten Reconciliation Service on Monday, March 19, provides another opportunity for sacramental Penance.

PRAYER—There are many opportunities to add to our prayer lives during Lent. Some of these include spending an hour with Jesus in the adoration chapel or praying the rosary in community on Monday evenings.

FASTING—As a gift of self-denial and to help us to relate to those who are much less fortunate than we are, we commit to the Lenten guidelines on fasting and abstaining from meat.

GIVING—Plan to do extra works of charity, giving our monetary resources and our time and talent. Help in a ministry serving the faith community and those in need in the world around us.

INSPIRING OTHERS—We all know a relative, friend, neighbor, or co-worker who may be needing to re-connect with God. Lent is a wonderful time to encourage them to come back to church where they will be welcomed with open arms by our faith community.

Lent Leads to the Triduum

Our entire Lenten journey is a preparation for the celebration of the Triduum, which stands for “Three Days.” The Triduum, from Holy Thursday evening through Easter Sunday, is the high point of the entire church year, the most exciting time for Catholic Christians.

On Holy Thursday at the celebration of the Last Supper of the Lord, we receive Jesus’ teaching of service and humility through the washing of feet. The assembly has the opportunity to wash the feet of family and friends and to have their own feet washed. Later, we partake in the Eucharist, which Jesus instituted as his eternal gift to us, and commands us to “Do this in memory of me.” We are invited to stay late to keep vigil with Jesus before he goes into captivity.

On Good Friday, we travel with him through his passion and his death, this selfless act of horrible suffering and beautiful love. We celebrate the ritual action of venerating the sacred cross, as a way of honoring the instrument of Jesus’ death and our redemption.

On Holy Saturday evening, at the Easter Vigil, we wait in quiet anticipation of recalling the resurrection and shout “Alleluia” at the fulfillment of Christ’s promise. We will initiate into the Catholic faith several new converts through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist as this highest of all Masses of the year.

Then on Easter Sunday we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, with the new life it brings to all of us. We renew our own baptisms as a reminder that we belong to Christ.

The celebrations are very powerful and experiencing them should be a priority for all of us. All of the faithful should make every effort to be present through these celebrations, which are the most beautiful and powerful of the year.



ASH WEDNESDAY



In This Time

O God of mercy, who is slow to anger and rich in kindness, grant us, as we begin our Lenten journey, contrite hearts that long for reconciliation and steadfast spirits that proclaim your love.

In this acceptable time, soften our calloused hearts, watch over us, and keep us from all sin.

In this season of repentance, help us turn toward the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, and away from selfish ambition.

In this period of renewal, open our ears to hear your voice, which calls us out of darkness, so that with clean hearts we can forever proclaim your praise.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Wednesday, February 14, 2018

Sin is Tricky

Today's Readings: Joel 2:12 –18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5 – 6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17 (3a); 2 Corinthians 5:20 — 6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18.

The Lenten season calls us to slow down and consider the areas in our life that need healing and transformation. This retreat-like time is an intense period for prayer and cleaning the “garbage” from our hearts. With the elect, those who are preparing for the sacraments of initiation, we take this time to discern what is sinful in our lives and name the good that God is working within us. Sin is tricky and tends to grab hold of us and become habit. Sin begins to blind us from God’s love.

In this season, we must examine each area of our life to uncover the darkness of sin. Take heed of the prophet Joel’s words. He calls us to repent and return to the Lord. Repentance leads to conversion, which requires discipline, perseverance, and practice. The three disciplines of the Lenten season—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving—help us open ourselves to God’s goodness and strengthen us for a mission united to Christ. During these forty days, allow these disciplines to become habits that replace sin, move you to reflect on your life in Christ, and immerse you in the Paschal Mystery.

In the Gospel, Jesus instructs us not to publicly flaunt how we pray, fast, or give alms. As you meditate on the words of the psalm, think about what you might give up (fast), how you might pray, and where or to what you might give alms as a way of deeply entering the season of Lent and purifying your heart.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



Washed Clean

Compassionate God,
whose promise of love spans all generations, rouse our hearts to
hear your Word and teach us to act according to your will.
Give us courage to turn away from temptation and strengthen our
desire to follow you.
May we, who were washed clean of sin and saved from death in
the waters of Baptism, be renewed by your Holy Spirit during
these forty days.
With the elect, guide our hearts to repentance so that, sustained by
the Living Bread, we may forever give witness to your love and
mercy.
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, February 18, 2018

Conflict

Today's Readings: Genesis 9:8–15; Psalm 25:4–5, 6–7, 8–9; 1 Peter 3:18–22; Mark 1:12–15.

Today's readings place us in the midst of conflict. In the First Reading, we hear of God's covenant with Noah after the flood destroyed the earth. The Second Reading highlights a spiritual struggle between right and wrong. Finally, the Gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert.

No matter our experience of conflict, it usually brings discomfort. These readings show that God reaches out to us with love and mercy in the midst of chaos. God saves us from chaos and orders us toward a deep love. After the flood, God sent the rainbow as a sign of his promise not to devastate the earth again. The reading from Peter reminds us that Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice and in him, through the waters of Baptism, the chaos of our lives is eliminated. Finally, in the Gospel, the Spirit drives Jesus into the desert to be tested. His wrestling in the desert prepares him for ministry and he emerges from the desolation proclaiming the "good news of God."

What is the chaos in your life? As the psalmist pleads, we too ask for the Lord's compassion. God never forgets his children. This week ask for God's help in resolving a hurting relationship.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT



Transformed Hearts

God of unimaginable blessings, who tested Abraham's faith, help us to surrender all that is self-seeking.

Filled with compassion, you revealed your love for us in the Paschal Mystery of your beloved Son, Jesus.

Grant us, during this Lenten journey, transformed hearts that shine with the light of your glory; enlighten your people so we may be attentive to the sound of your voice.

Keep us ever mindful of your presence and of the countless gifts you have bestowed upon us so that on that final day, we may be called your beloved children.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday, February 25, 2018

Listen

Today's Readings: Genesis 22:1–2, 9a, 10–13; 15–18; Psalm 116:10, 15, 16–17, 18–9; Romans 8:31b–34; Mark 9:2–10.

Each time you hear the First Reading you may wonder how God could ask Abraham to sacrifice his son. The passage, though, highlights Abraham's unwavering devotion to God. As our father in faith, Abraham teaches us to listen carefully to God. He also teaches us to remain faithful to the covenant. We know from the reading that God promised to bless Abraham and his descendants for generations because of this witness of faith. Can you think of a time God asked you to sacrifice something dear to you? How did you respond?

In examining the Gospel, God's promise becomes more evident. We are the heirs to this great promise. At the Transfiguration, God reveals his beloved Son to Peter, James, and John. They have known Jesus, but now they have seen him in his full glory. This moment prefigured all that will come about in the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus. Once and for all, God revealed in Jesus the depth of his love. God's sacrifice of his Son shows how much God loves us. God has kept his promise and now we, the heirs of this great mystery, are invited to share it with all people.

In these early days of Lent, take time to sit quietly and listen to God. In a journal, write or draw what you hear and rest in the dazzling presence of God whose love knows no end.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



Law of Love

Holy God, you established a covenant with your people Israel and gave them the law to direct their hearts.

Keep us ever mindful of the law of love revealed in your Son, Jesus, who liberates us from sin and directs our hearts.

Give us strength to follow Christ and wisdom to discern his presence.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, and banish from us all that keeps us from you.

Grant us ears to hear your life-giving words, which are like honey from the comb, so that, as temples of their Holy Spirit, we may proclaim your majesty to all nations.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday, March 4, 2018

Temples

Today's Readings: Exodus 20:1–17; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11; 1 Corinthians 1:22–25; John 2:13–25.

Today's Gospel is filled with much emotion and action. Imagine yourself either as a merchant or one of the bystanders who observe these events unfold. Jesus, using a whip, drives the merchants from his Father's house. After sitting with this experience, what insight do you gain? Who is Jesus?

The temple is a main theme this week. Jesus makes a bold claim that he will destroy the temple and raise it in three days. Of course, we know the ending of the story, but those in the moment must have been confused. Jesus' actions and words invite us to contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation. To encounter Jesus is an encounter with the living God. Jesus' radical proclamation in this passage was likely missed by those present. Through Jesus' death and Resurrection, a new covenant is created. No longer, as in the passage from Exodus, will our relationship to God be measured only by how the Commandments are kept. In Christ, the new temple, the sacrament of God's presence, our relationship is measured by how well our lives are patterned after Jesus.

In Baptism, we died with Christ and we rose to new life. In Baptism, we became temples of the Holy Spirit, which means our bodies are to be honored and others are to be respected as sacred vessels who announce God's love. What must you die to in your life in order to be raised up? As a prayer mantra this week, use today's Psalm refrain "If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



Raise Us Up

O God, you are rich in mercy and full of compassion.
From generation to generation, you poured forth your abundant
love upon your people.
Liberate us from the darkness of sin and raise us up with Christ,
so that, renewed by the Cross, we may be strengthened for minis-
try.
Watch over us when we go astray and keep us close to the heart
of your Son.
Give us prophetic voices that joyfully announce your mercy and
love to all those who are exiled by sin so that all may find a place
at the heavenly banquet.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday, March 11, 2018

Mercy

Today's Readings: 2 Chronicles 36:14–16, 19–23; Psalm 137:1–2, 3, 4–5, 6; Ephesians 2:4–10; John 3:14–21. .

The readings today tell of the merciful love of God. Carey Landry emphasizes this aspect of God in the song “God is Rich in Mercy” in which he wrote, “God is rich in mercy, full of compassion.” Today’s Gospel points out that God’s love for us is so profound that he offered his only Son on the Cross so that we might have eternal life. When we consider our ancestors in the faith, we learn they wrestled to follow the Commandments and remain faithful to God just as we do today.

In the Book of Chronicles, the Israelites were taken into captivity as punishment for their infidelity, but even here, God’s mercy prevails when King Cyrus, inspired by the Lord, freed the people. Sin causes us to turn away from God, but instead of punishment, God gives us the gift of his Son who has redeemed us; he has brought us out of the darkness into his light. No matter the circumstances in which we find ourselves, God is present and mercy overflows.

In this season of mercy, it is important to name those sins that keep us from God and seek forgiveness. It is also important to show mercy to others, especially those whom we may have harmed in any way. As you ponder God’s mercy, consider celebrating the Sacrament of Penance this week.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



Pure Hearts

Good and loving God, you have written your law within our hearts.

In these final Lenten days, examine our hearts and purge them of all that keeps us from you.

Grant us, who were baptized into Christ Jesus, the strength of the Holy Spirit to release our selfish desires and through this dying to self, rise to new life.

Grow within our hearts a deep desire to live in union with you and aid our journey as we follow your will.

Give us pure hearts that remain obedient to your promises so that, filled with the grace of your covenant, we may imitate your Son and proclaim your goodness throughout the earth.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday, March 18, 2018

Covenant

Today's Readings: Jeremiah 31:31–34; Psalm 51:3–4, 12–13, 14–15; Hebrews 5:7–9; John 12:20–33 .

During the past few weeks, the theme of the Scriptures focused on God's covenant. In the reading from Jeremiah, God's covenant takes center stage once again. Jeremiah tells the people that God will make a new covenant with them and it will not be the covenant of their fathers. We learn that this covenant will be written on hearts and that all will know the Lord. It is clear that God deeply loves his people. No matter how many times before they have disobeyed the Law and turned away from God's love, God continues to reach out to them in love.

This new covenant is revealed in Christ, and in Baptism, the new law, the law of love, was written in our hearts. Yet, we still submit to sin and often turn away from God. Psalm 51 is a helpful prayer when our hearts have gone astray. The deep emotion of the petitioner can be sensed as this text is sung. When have you needed to seek God's mercy? We know that God will not abandon us; God wishes to share abundantly his mercy. The law that God has placed within us demands that we die to self and learn to follow the Lord. As the Second Reading states, Jesus learned obedience from his suffering on the Cross. His death brought about a new creation. The suffering we undergo as part of dying to self will strengthen us and lead us to produce much fruit. For prayer this week, meditate upon your favorite hymn about God's love or mercy.

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



Worthy Vessels

Eternal and glorious God, you sent your Son, Jesus, to redeem us. Bring your Holy Spirit upon each of us and like the anointing at Bethany, may your Spirit anoint us with your love and make us worthy vessels ready to pour out your gift of mercy.

Give us generous hearts so that, transformed by Jesus' Passion and renewed in his Resurrection, our lives may become signs of your generosity, love, and peace.

Grant us, O Lord, the courage to embrace the cross, which calls us to put aside our desires and witness to the victory over sin and death.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday, March 25, 2018

Triumph and Suffering

Today's Readings: Mark 11:1–10 or John 12:12–16; Isaiah 50:4–7; Psalm 22:8–9, 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; Philippians 2:6–11; Mark 14:1–15:47.

As we begin the holiest week of the liturgical year, the liturgy is filled with emotion. During the past five weeks, the Church has taken time to ponder God's mercy. At the same time, each of us has confronted our sin to prepare our hearts for the fullness of life promised by the Paschal Mystery of Christ. At the procession the Gospel is filled with excitement as Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem. Is this a foreshadowing of the triumph of the Resurrection? Imagine the crowds that might have gathered and spread their cloaks as Jesus entered the city.

At Mass, after the Preface, we still sing "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" At every liturgy, Christ, who reigns in glory, is present and nourishes us so we should sing Hosanna.

As the liturgy progresses, the mood changes and we hear the passage of the Suffering Servant and the anguish in Psalm 22, which both prepare us to hear the story of the Passion. When have you prayed the words of Psalm 22? When all of these readings are proclaimed together, we learn that Christ is the servant who suffered and died for our sins. Even though the Passion narrative is filled with sorrow, Mark's Gospel account presents us with a strong confirmation that Jesus is the Messiah. As we draw closer to Easter, take time to pray with the Passion, praying for all who suffer that they may rise with Christ.



CRIDUM