

What Is Lent?

Ash Wednesday was a few days ago, starting the Lenten countdown toward Holy Week and Easter. But maybe some of us are not completely clear as to why these weeks of preparation are there in the first place.

One opinion is that Lent is a time to deprive yourself. You give up candy or smoking or desserts or heavy meals or ... well, choose your favorite and then give it up. These are part of Lenten practice.

Lenten deprivation gave birth to Mardi Gras (literally meaning “Fat Tuesday”). In contrast to the toughness of Lent. Mardi Gras, at least in non-covid-19 years, had you eat all the fat you could, parade around in costume, go wild. The public usually does not recall that Mardi Gras has something to do with what is to them a quaint old practice, Lent. But that sharpens the question: what have they or we forgotten about Lent and its practices?

Lent prepares us to witness the reality of our savior.

Well, what if we described Lent as a “Retreat”?

A Retreat, in Catholic and other religions, is a space of days taken out to pray and to be with the Lord. Often one goes to a retreat house to do these. In St. Louis, for instance, there is a beautiful place called “White House”—different from the one for the president—which has a stunning view of the Mississippi River. For many decades Jesuits have preached retreats there every weekend and sometimes during the week. Sizeable groups of men or women stay for two or three days to meditate, listen to talks, and refresh their spiritual lives.

I am not saying that you should disappear to the nearest retreat house for the five weeks of Lent. But what about letting each Lenten day partake of certain retreat practices? For instance, what about setting aside a little time each day to let your insides settle down for a while, to create a space within you to welcome God. Maybe set up a special place in your home or someplace else just to pray. How about a picture or crucifix or maybe a candle? Or just 10 minutes of silence?

And why not use some time to read in advance the gospel from the upcoming Sunday Mass? Sit down, read it slowly, and let the scene described take place within the your heart and mind. This week you could ask Jesus how it felt to have the Spirit drive him into the desert, as described in this week’s Gospel.

The point?

Let the Lord’s loving deeds be your motivation for “giving up” anything during Lent. Make a gift of gratitude to God—rather than just refraining from something or other. How does any of this prepare you for Holy Week and Easter? By doing exactly what Jesus does when he makes of himself a gift consisting of suffering and death. He is returning a gift of love to the Father. Lent prepares us to witness this reality of our savior.

John Foley, SJ

First Sunday of Lent

February 21, 2021

St. Stephens Indian Mission

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Sr. Teresa Frawley, OSF.....Past. Asst./Director of Religious Education

Sacrament of Reconciliation & Sacrament of the Sick

You may call the office to schedule an appointment for confession. If there is no answer please leave your name and phone number and Father Jim will return your call. Please do not schedule an appointment if you are sick, please wait until you are well to protect yourself and the priest. Priest and penitent will be required to wear a mask and maintain a safe six foot distance during confession.

The Sacrament of the sick is available for those who are in need, terminal and to those who have an upcoming surgery. Please call the office if you or a loved one is in need of this sacrament.

.....
Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house
of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our
faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you
Welcome!
.....

The purpose of St. Stephen’s Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.

Readings February 22nd through February 28th:

Mon: 1 Pt 5:1-4, Ps 23:1-6; Mt 16:13-19
Tue: Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-7, 16-19; Mt 6:7-15
Wed: Jon 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Lk 11:29-32
Thur: Est C;12, 14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-3, 7c-8; Mt 7:7-12
Fri: Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-8; Mt 5:20-26
Sat: Dt 26:16-19; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 5:43-48
Sun: Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18; Ps 116:10, 15-19; Rom 8:31b-34; Mk 9:2-10

Parish Collection

Last week's mail in collection \$310

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Corinthians 9:7

THANK YOU to all who have continued to make financial contributions to St. Stephens Indian Mission through these most trying times! God Bless!

Mass Intentions this week

2/21: Sunday	For the people
Sunday	Linda McDonald
2/24: Wednesday 5pm	Linda McDonald
2/25: Thursday 7:15am	Linda McDonald
2/26: Friday 5pm	Angie
2/28: Sunday	+Danny Ortiz
Sunday	For the people

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Praise Him now and always!

As we continue to celebrate Mass at St. Stephens, we are limited to 10 people in attendance as we follow the Wind River Intertribal Council's resolution. If you would like to be added to the rotating list of parishioners for Mass please call the office or email the parish office. Please also email the parish office (melissa.brown@saintstephensmission.com) to make sure your contact information is on file with the Parish as this is our primary way to contact you when things change or if we have an event you might be interested in. Thank you!

Please remember that Bishop Steven's general dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation will remain in effect for the duration of Mass attendance restrictions. Mass is available for viewing on K2 Television at 9am and/or you may watch via livestream on St. Margaret's or Holy Rosary's FB pages.

Face masks are required at Mass. Please use hand sanitizer, refrain from exchanging handshakes during the Sign of Peace and maintain at least six feet apart from parishioners (except if you are in the same household) including processing to receive the Eucharist. If you are not feeling well and are scheduled to attend Mass please stay home and call the office so we can switch you with another parishioner until you feel well. Please keep our church family safe. We appreciate your cooperation as we move forward, safely, together.

Please pray for the family of the deceased:

+Father Tom Sheridan

Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Having Mass offered for an anniversary, marriage, special occasion, or in memory of someone is a special gift. Cards are available at the office.

Diocesan guideline is \$10.00 for Mass.



Need Something Inspiring for Lent 2021?

Ready to learn about the Temple God gave you and allow it to thrive?

Fr. Thomas Kadera and Dr. of Physical Therapy Whitney Fitzpatrick have teamed up for the third year to help you learn to spiritually and physically thrive this Lenten season. They are providing this content virtually at BodyAsATemple.thinkific.com (link also on Facebook page and at: <http://www.stpatricks-wheatland.com>).

We have broken the body into 7 weekly topics to help you better understand and thrive in your temple. Fr. Thomas Kadera will be coaching us on spiritual meditation and discernment.

The course is \$30 (\$15 for the church and \$15 towards Whitney's PT business). So everyone is able to participate, we will offer discounts for those in need. First 25 to register will be included in the live portion of class held on Thursday nights starting 2/18/21 at 6:30 pm MST. Courses will be no longer than 1.5 hrs. Prepare to move, stretch, and grow your mindset, and deepen your spirituality. Course material and videos of the class will be accessible through BodyAsATemple.thinkific.com. We look forward to helping you thrive!