

# Breath of Life

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## WHAT IS LENT?

The Answers for the Season



We may know that Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, and we might think about “giving up” something like chocolate or coffee until Easter, but what is this season really all about?

Lent is the period of 40 days leading up to Holy Week and Easter during which Christians dedicate themselves with greater intensity to deepening their relationship with God, shedding habits of sin, and developing new habits for growing in holiness. It is a time for reflection and conversion of heart, recommitting to our faith as we “repent and believe in the Gospel” (Mk 1:15). Jesus spent 40 days in the desert praying, fasting, and enduring temptations (Lk 4:1-13, Mt 4:1-11), and Lent is our opportunity to join Him there through our own practices of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and works of love and charity.



**PRAYER:** For those who find they “don’t have time for prayer” or whose prayer life has become stale and repetitive, Lent is a good time to re-prioritize and go deeper. This can mean spending more time in personal prayer – praying with Scripture, practices like praying the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament – and engaging more regularly in corporate prayer – attending Mass, Stations of the Cross, prayer groups, and other church services. Popular speaker Fr. Larry Richards offers some provocative thoughts on putting relationship with God and prayer at the center of our lives:

“Too many try to fit God and prayer into their lives instead of building their lives around God. Now that does not mean that someone has to spend hours in prayer every day, but it does mean that they start with prayer and a listening obedient heart, and God will show them what to do next. He knows all about how busy we are, and He still says put Him first.”\*



<i>Lent</i> IS A TIME TO <b>GROW</b> CLOSER TO JESUS	
<b>Daily</b>	Holy Mass, 10:30am Chapel
<b>Every Wednesday</b>	Spirituality Group, 1:30-2pm D-Lounge
<b>Every Thursday</b>	Hymns & Prayers, 3:30-4:15pm D-Lounge
<b>2.26.20 Ash Wednesday</b>	Holy Mass 10:30am Ashes distributed during and following Mass in the Chapel
<b>2.28.20 Stations of the Cross</b>	3:30pm Chapel <b>*every Friday during Lent*</b>
<b>3.6.20 First Friday</b>	Adoration & Benediction ~4pm following Stations of the Cross
<b>3.15.20 Lenten Devotions &amp; Benediction</b>	3pm Chapel
<b>3.29.20 Lenten Devotions &amp; Benediction</b>	3pm Chapel
<b>4.1.20 Communal Reconciliation Service in preparation for Easter</b>	1:30pm Chapel
<b>4.3.20 Holy Mass with Sacrament of the Sick</b>	10:30am Adoration & Benediction ~4pm following Stations of the Cross
<b>4.5.20 Palm Sunday</b>	Holy Mass 10:30am Lenten Devotions & Benediction 3pm Chapel
<b>4.7.20 Holy Mass 4pm</b>	<b>*No morning Mass*</b>
<b>4.9.20 Holy Thursday</b>	Holy Mass 4pm
<b>4.10.20 Good Friday</b>	Stations of the Cross 10:30am Chapel Passion Service 3pm Chapel
<b>4.11.20 Holy Saturday</b>	No Mass
<b>4.12.20 Easter Sunday</b>	Holy Mass 10:30am Adoration & Benediction 3pm

## FASTING & ALMSGIVING = *Works of Love*

*“Fasting makes sense if it...benefits someone else, if it helps us cultivate the style of the good Samaritan, who bent down to his brother in need and took care of him.”*

–Pope Francis

We don’t fast just for the sake of fasting; it’s a spiritual practice, not a diet. We “give up” so that we can give – give charitably to others and give ourselves more freely to God. Fasting reminds us of our own need and dependence on God and also helps us to recognize and respond with greater tenderness to the needs of others by freeing us to share our time, talents, and resources more generously.

Fr. Larry Richards suggests a way of prioritizing to help us cultivate this spirit of generosity and service:

**“I am Third’ is a way to make sure that we get our priorities right. God is first. Others are second. I need to be third. This was the way that Jesus lived and thus it must be the way we live. He said: ‘I did not come to be served but to serve’ (Mark 10:45).”\***

*What can you do to put God and others before yourself? How will your Lenten practices help you do this?*



\* (Knights of Columbus Book Club Chat with Fr. Larry Richards, 30 March 2010, <https://kofc.org/us/chat/FindChatInfo.action?broadcastChatId=1064>.)



## *Spirituality & Supper – Lenten Reflection & Refreshment*

- Opportunities for staff and guests to share prayer and a meal, pause for reflection, and accompany one another on our Lenten journey.
- **2 sessions: Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> 4pm-6pm**
- All are welcome regardless of faith background, dinner will be provided – *just bring yourself and an open heart!*
- Watch for flyers with more details! Contact Olivia with any questions: x337



### HOLY WEEK

**Palm Sunday** – “When they drew near to Jerusalem... Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. Those preceding Jesus as well as those following kept crying out: ‘Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’” (Mk 11:1, 7-9)

### **Holy Thursday** –

“Fully aware that the Father had put everything into his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God, Jesus rose from supper and... poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and dry them with the towel around his waist... ‘Do you realize what I have done for you? You call me ‘teacher’ and ‘master,’ and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.’” (John 13:3-15)



“While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.’” (Mt 26: 26-28)



### **Good Friday** –

“When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him ...Then Jesus said, ‘Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.’” (Lk 23:33-34)



*Alleluia! He Is Risen!*

Easter is the most important Christian feast, the reason for our faith and hope. Our faith is rooted in the mystery of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, and He assures us, “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). This abundant life Jesus desires for us is lived with joy and hope, trusting that our lives and future are in God’s hands. It is holding firmly the conviction that life is always worth living, that God desires relationship with us and will welcome us back when we go astray, empowering us by His grace to overcome death and fear in our daily lives. This is what Easter promises; this is God’s will for our lives. *May this Resurrection joy be yours!*



We pray that you will be filled with hope and joy this Easter, and that Jesus’ promise remain in your hearts:

*“Behold, I am with you always.” (Mt 28:20)*

***Happy Easter!***

*The Spiritual Care Team –  
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Check out our website:  
[www.matulaitisnh.org](http://www.matulaitisnh.org)



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