

18 February 2024
I Sunday of Lent (Both Calendars)

Sunday Mass: Anticipated Sat. 4PM/Sun. 8AM Ancient Rite Latin Mass
Sunday 9:30 AM (Live-streamed) & 11 AM
Confessions: Wed. & Fri. 6:30-6:55 PM/Sat. 7:30-7:55 AM
Sat. 2:30-3:30 PM & 6:30-7:30 PM

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

Mon. 19 Feb. St. Conrad of Piacenza (1351) Hermit, invoked for hernias
8 AM Ancient Rite Latin Mass
For: Special Intention

Tue. 20 Feb. Sts. Francisco & Jacinta Marto, Seers of Fatima
8 AM For: Magdalena Pia Maciag (Birthday)
Req: Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Maciag
Holy Rosary for the Preborn & Newborn

Wed. 21 Feb. St. Peter Damian, Bishop, Doctor of the Church
7 PM For: Charles A Rose+
Req: Mr. & Mrs. David Rose, Sr.

Thu. 22 Feb. Feast of the Chair of St. Peter
8 AM For: Lucy Maciag (L.)
Req: Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Maciag

Fri. 23 Feb. St. Polycarp, Bishop, Martyr, invoked against earaches
8 AM For: Cynthia Newman+
Req: William Newman

Sat. 24 Feb. St. Matthias, Apostle, Martyr (replaced Judas)
8 AM For: Special Intention
4 PM For: The Parishioners of OLGCC

Sun. 25 Feb. II Sunday of Lent
8 AM For: Timothy & Colette Maciag (L.)
Req: Mr. & Mrs. Steven Anderson
9:30 AM For: David Richards+
Req. Wife, Marie
11 AM For: Roberta Baker+ (8th Ann.)
Req: Her Family

NO RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION THIS TUE. 20 FEB.

Schools are observing their Mid-winter break, and some families are away on vacation. Classes will resume next Tue. 27 Feb.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS, BENEDICTION AND HOLY COMMUNION EVERY FRIDAY OF LENT AT 7 PM.

Confessions are heard from 6:30 - 6:55 PM prior to Stations.

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS FOR 2023

If you would like a statement of your donations to the church for the past year, please note "Statement please" on your envelope, or email the Rectory (frcastronovo@gmail.com). We will get your statement out promptly.

LENTEN AFTERNOON OF RECOLLECTION: SUN. 10 MAR.

Fr. Maximillian Dean is a remarkable priest who has composed some truly beautiful pieces of music to honor Our Lord and His holy Mother. He will preach at all the Masses on the weekend of 9-10 March (you can thank God now that you will not have to listen to me that weekend!). During the afternoon of recollection, which will begin at 3 PM, Father will sing and play some of his compositions as part of his meditation. I hope you will mark this date on your calendars, and plan to use this opportunity to enter holy Lent more intensely.

SOME LENTEN CONSIDERATIONS

If you count the days of Lent from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday, you will find that there are 47 days. But don't we always say that Lent is 40 days? That is because every Sunday is a "little Easter" and not a day of fast or penance. So, do you "break your promise" not to eat candy or drink beer or use social media on Sunday? That really is up to you: there are no "rules" or church regulations on the subject.

Did you know that the Fridays of Lent are devoted, by tradition, to a different aspect of the Passion of Our Lord? Here they are:

First Friday of Lent: the Crown of Thorns

Second Friday of Lent: The Lance and the Nails

Third Friday of Lent: The Holy Shroud (of Turin)

Fourth Friday of Lent: The Five Wounds

Fifth Friday of Lent: The Precious Blood

Sixth Friday of Lent: The Sorrowful Mother of God

Spiritual or internal Fasting consists in fasting "from all evil"-sin.

St. John Chrysostom taught that "the value of fasting consists not so much

in abstinence from food but rather in withdrawal from sinful practices."

St. Basil the Great explains: "Turning away from all wickedness means keeping our tongue in check, restraining our anger, suppressing evil desires, and avoiding all gossip, lying and swearing. To abstain from these things-herein lies the value of the true fast!"

The Judgement of God in History

What applies to men also applies to nations. God is not absent from history: He is always present with His immensity, there is not a point or moment of created time in which He does not manifest His divine mercy

and justice over all peoples. All the misfortunes that strike the nations over the course of their history have a significance. Their causes sometimes elude us, but it is certain that the origin of every evil permitted by God lies in the sin of man. St. Prosper of Aquitaine, a student of St. Augustine, says that “often the causes of the divine operation remain hidden and only the effects are seen.” One thing is certain, whatever the

secondary causes may be, God is always the first cause: everything depends on Him. At this point, we should ask ourselves in what way God judges and punishes the behavior of various peoples and nations in history. The response of Sacred Scripture, of theologians and Saints is univocal: *Tria sunt flagella quibus Dominus castigat*: (There are three ways God chastises): war, plague and famine. With these three scourges,

St. Bernardine of Siena explains, God punishes the three principal vices of men: pride, luxury and avarice. Pride: when the soul rebels against God (Rev.12:7-9); avarice when created things rebel against man (Ps. 96:3); and luxury when the body rebels against the soul (Gen.6:5-7). War is the punishment for the pride of the peoples, epidemics are the punishment for their luxury, and famine is the punishment for their avarice.

“It is time for the Lord to act, for they have dispelled Your law, (Ps 118:26). In this expression of the psalmist, St. Bernardine distinguishes

three moments. *Tempus*: the time the mercy of God gives to people to change their ways...The time of waiting may be long, but it has a limit. If during this time there is no repentance, punishment is logical and necessary.

In the second moment, God prepares the punishment for impenitent sinners. The punishment is, however, an act of the Father's mercy. He does not wish the death of sinners, but their eternal life.

The third moment is when the offense is complete: It is the hour of taking up the sickle and reaping the harvest, as the angel says in the Book of Revelation: “Use your sickle and reap the harvest, for the time to reap has come, for the earth's harvest is fully ripe,” (Rev. 14:15).

What are the signs that the harvest is ripe? St. Bernardine lists seven:

- That many horrendous sins are committed, like in Sodom and Gomorrah
- That the sin is committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent
- That this happens in a public and shameless manner
- That it happens with all the affection of the heart of sinners
- That the sins are committed with attention and diligence
- That all of this is done in a continuous and persevering way.

But today, one hundred and seven years after the apparitions of Fatima, has the world ceased offending God? Is the divine law any less transgressed, the Gospel less abandoned? Do we not see the sins that cry

to heaven for vengeance such as abortion and sodomy justified, exalted and protected by the laws of nations? Should not this all be judged by God? (Prof. Roberto de Mattei, at Rome Life Forum, 21 May 2020).