

Planning for a Fruitful Lent

Apart from making the most of the opportunities for Mass, the Sacraments, and devotions in the parish, we can also...

1. **Have a plan** – The fastest way to make the most of Lent is to have a plan. Be specific. “I’m going to pray more,” isn’t good enough. Once you’ve determined exactly what you are going to do, stick to it every single day. One word of advice: Make it do-able. Often, we are overly ambitious and commit to way too much. When we fail in our lenten goals, we grow discouraged and can give up completely. This is a victory for the devil. Make your commitments modest, practical and manageable, and your Lent will be the better for it.
2. **Read a good book** – The saints are constantly exhorting us to read good spiritual books, and there is no better time to begin this practice than during Lent. Reading Sacred Scripture or the writings of the saints is a great place to start.
3. **Examine yourself** – Lent is an excellent time to take an inventory of the state of your soul. What are your predominant faults? Do you have any hidden idols in your life? What is keeping you from following the will of God with all your heart? Use a thorough examination of conscience to help you assess your spiritual health. Remember, Lent is not ultimately about giving up sweets or other things we enjoy, it is first and foremost about repentance, which means giving up sin and returning to God, our loving Father. While taking inventory of your sins may be painful, it is a healthy pain that restores the soul.
4. **Confess your sins** – After examining your conscience, the logical next step is to go to confession. Normally, it can be hard to find a parish with confession readily available, but the good news is, many parishes have increased confession times during Lent, so it’s a great time to go. Before receiving the sacrament of penance, though, remember the five requirements for a good confession: 1) Examination of conscience 2) True contrition for having offended God 3) Firm resolution to sin no more 4) Clear confession (don’t hold any sins back) 5) Penance for the sins you have committed.
5. **Pray** – Let’s face it, we can all pray more, and Lent is a great time to plan and implement a daily prayer rule that can guide you the rest of the year. During this season, however, we should especially focus on prayers of repentance and contrition for our sins - for example, look up the seven penitential psalms.
6. **Fast** – Lent is a very good time to refocus our efforts and renew our commitment. We should especially focus on fasting from things related to our predominant sins. Are you addicted to Instagram or Facebook? Fast from them. Maybe you’re binge watching shows on Netflix. Give it up. On the other hand, maybe you’re addicted to criticizing others. Make a special effort to fast from negative speech. The point is, while fasting from certain foods is an excellent ascetical practice, we do not have to limit our lenten fasting to things we eat. Remember the words of Jesus: “If your eye offends you, pluck it out.” Nothing should stand between us and the heavenly kingdom, and we should be intentional about cutting off those things that are causing us to sin.
7. **Give alms** – During Lent, we especially remember the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. This is the greatest act of generosity in history, for Jesus died not just for his friends, but for his enemies. “God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). The generosity of God in Christ should impel us to be generous and merciful to others, especially those poor and in need. This Lent, find a way to give, whether it is supporting a religious order or helping at a homeless shelter, or something similar. Remember the promise of Jesus, “And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.”

Lots of practical things have been going on in St. James’ this week: the replacement of the boiler, flushing of radiators, installation of new controllers and thermostats, work on the flat roof above the sacristy (ongoing), and a compulsory survey of the property for asbestos. My sincere thanks to Bob Corrieri who has been dealing with workmen etc. on behalf of the parish and making sure everything goes smoothly!

A Daily Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Parish Newsletter for Our Lady of Lourdes’, Perth & St. James’, Kinross



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For the weekend of February 26th, 2023

1st Sunday of Lent - Year A

Lenten Opportunities...

I’ve changed the timetable a little in both parishes to give a variety of opportunities to add the practice of some devotions to our spiritual life during the season of Lent. On Tuesday in both parishes there is the chance to pray the **Stations of the Cross** before Mass, on Wednesday in both parishes we’ll have the **holy Rosary** before all Masses, on Thursday in Our Lady’s and on Friday in St. James’ there’ll be **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** in the morning before Mass from 8.45 - 9.45a.m. (a time for quiet prayer before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament), even if you can’t make the whole hour you can pop in for a short visit of whatever length of time you can manage. There is, of course, also ample **opportunity for Confession**: three opportunities each week in both parishes (and I will always hear Confessions on request too, if I’m about). Please make the most of what is being offered to help nourish and nurture your relationship with the Lord and to grow spiritually during this holy season of Lent. On alternate Sundays there will also be **Stations of the Cross** at 3.00p.m., beginning with **Our Lady of Lourdes on Sunday 26th February**, then **St. James’ on Sunday 5th March**, and so on... On a slightly less penitential note, I’m also suggesting that we have a cup of tea/coffee and a bit of fellowship on Tuesday morning after Mass in the church hall in Our Lady’s (and begin to make it a good habit), just as we do already on Wednesday mornings in St. James’. All are welcome to come and join us.

Stations of the Cross, this Sunday, at 3.00p.m. in Our Lady of Lourdes

Could you be one of Our Lady’s Primary School mystery readers? Read a story to a class, any school day from 2.40-3.00p.m. Pick a story, or, we can provide one. The purpose? To encourage pupils to read for pleasure and to show them that others enjoy doing so. Speak to Carolann MacLeod or Kylie Jones or any other member of Our Lady’s staff or call 01738 477570 or e-mail Our Lady at: ourladys@pkc.gov.uk

Our Lady’s Literacy Leaders are becoming “Book Fairies” and are hiding books in our community. Beginning with children’s books, they will hide two books on World Book Day (2nd March). Keep your eyes peeled for them and let us know if you find them and enjoy them. Don’t forget to re-hide the books so as to pass on the love of reading! Keep your eyes on the school Twitter @Our LadysPerth for details of their progress. Thank you for your support!

Please remember in your prayers...

We remember in our prayers all who have died recently and all whose anniversaries occur around this time, commending them to the merciful love of God, especially: Kathleen Old, Bill Pearson, Martin Elliot, Gerard Maher, Kevin Reilly... Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen. Please also remember in your prayers those who are unwell at the moment, that the Good Lord will place His healing hand upon them and give strength to those who care for them. We pray especially for: Tony O’Donnell, Lynne Stewart, Bishop Stephen Robson.

Times of Holy Mass & Confessions etc.



Monday 27th February

No public Mass

Tuesday 28th February

Tuesday of 1st Week in Lent (V)

Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish:

Stations of the Cross 9.30a.m.

Holy Mass 10.00a.m.

Confessions after Holy Mass

Tea/Coffee in the church hall after Holy Mass - all are welcome.

St. James' Parish:

Stations of the Cross 6.30p.m.

Holy Mass 7.00p.m.

Women of the Torah in the church hall 7.30-8.30p.m.

Wednesday 1st March

Wednesday of 1st Week in Lent (V)

St. James' Parish:

Holy Rosary 9.30a.m.

Holy Mass 10.00a.m.

Confessions after Holy Mass

Tea/Coffee in the church hall after Holy Mass - all are welcome, & church cleaning (volunteers most welcome)

Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish:

Holy Rosary 6.30p.m.

Holy Mass 7.00p.m.

Confessions after Holy Mass

Thursday 2nd March

Thursday of 1st Week in Lent (V)

Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish:

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 8.45 - 9.45a.m.

Holy Mass 10.00a.m.

R.C.I.A in the church hall from 7.00-8.00p.m.

Friday 3rd March

Friday of the 1st Week in Lent (V)

St. James' Parish:

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 8.45 - 9.45a.m.

Holy Mass 10.00a.m.

Confessions after Holy Mass

Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish:

Fabric & Fundraising Meeting 6.30 - 7.30p.m.

(all welcome) to discuss works to be carried out, prioritisation and ongoing fundraising to support maintenance works.

Saturday 4th March

(Vigil of the 2nd Sunday in Lent, Year - A) (V)

Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish:

Confessions 4.00 - 4.45p.m.

Vigil Mass 5.00p.m.

St. James' Parish:

Vigil Mass 7.00p.m.

Confessions after Holy Mass

Sunday 5th March

2nd Sunday in Lent, Year - A (V)

St. James' Parish:

Holy Mass 9.00a.m.

Stations of the Cross 3.00p.m.

Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish:

Holy Mass 11.00a.m.



This Sunday's readings from the Sacred Scriptures: 1st Sunday of Lent, Year - A.

A reading from the Book of Genesis 2:7-9,3:1-7

The Creation, and the sin of our first parents.

Psalm 50(51)

Response: Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned.

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans 5:12,17-19

However great the number of sins committed, grace was even greater.

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!

Man does not live on bread alone,

but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 4:1-11

The temptation in the wilderness.

Recent Parish Collections:

Our Lady of Lourdes', Perth:	(11&12/02/23)	Plate:£535.00	Direct to Bank:£91.15	Total: £626.15
	(18&19/02/23)	Plate:£646.00	Direct to Bank:£91.15	Total: £737.15
	(Ecclesiastical Students Collection		Total:£207.50)	
St. James', Kinross:	(11&12/02/23)	Plate:£269.98	Direct to Bank:£600.00	Total: £869.98
	(18&19/02/23)	Plate: £419.22	Direct to Bank: £600.00	Total: £1,019.22
	(Ecclesiastical Students Collection		Total:£170.73)	

As always, many thanks for your generosity and for your financial support of the parishes - we depend entirely upon your giving to maintain the parishes, so all of your contributions and donations are greatly appreciated - Fr. Martin