

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, North Platte, NE

2013 Lenten Schedule

Lent Mass/Confession/Stations Schedule

Sundays: (as usual, Sat 5:00pm; Sun 10:00am)
 Weekdays: check the Bulletin for Mass schedule
 Fridays: 6:00pm Stations of Cross
 Saturdays: 4:00pm-4:55pm Confessions
 Sundays: 9:00am-9:55am Confessions

Lenten Regulations

Abstinence ... means eating no meat nor any soup or gravy made from meat. Abstinence obliges all Catholics over the age of 14. Days of abstinence are: Ash Wednesday and all of the Fridays of Lent.

Fasting ... means eating only one full meal with two smaller meals, which together do not equal the full meal. No snacks or eating between meals. The law of fasting obliges all Catholics between the ages of 18 & 59. Days of fasting are: Ash Wednesday / Good Friday.

Sickness, hard manual labor, pregnancy, etc. automatically excuse one from these obligations. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that these are serious obligations. In cases of doubt or question, the matter should be discussed with the priest who hears a person's confession.

Some Reflections on Lent

"Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return!" These words were first spoken to Adam & Eve in Paradise, the first sad Ash Wednesday upon this earth. As we receive the cross of ashes on our forehead this Lent, let it be for us a call & a reminder of our need for dedication to mortification and self-denial. The Church calls us to submerge ourselves in the purifying stream of Lenten penance. Through our Lenten works of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, may we turn our attention to the Lord, & away from temptation, sin, & ourselves.

To do this we need the grace of God. I pray that every one of us will see these forty days of Lent as an opportunity for spiritual renewal and growth. God offers us many graces, so that we might each day take up our cross, die to ourselves, and live for Christ. Follow the laws of Fast and Abstinence. As part of your spiritual exercises you might give up snacks, sweets, television viewing, entertainment, or other legitimate pleasures, and share the money that is saved with others through your contributions to the Rice Bowl, the local food pantry, the Matt Talbot Kitchen, or the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Lent is a season of interior, spiritual renewal. Through the graces of the holy season of Lent, the mystical Body of Christ will be filled with new life in all its members and will free itself from every germ of death. Then at the Easter Vigil and on Easter Sunday, we will truly rise with Christ to a new and more abundant spiritual life, because we have died to ourselves with Christ through our self-denial during the season of Lent.

Make plans now to come to as many of the Holy Week Liturgies as you are able. Experience the loving forgiveness of the Lord in a regular devout celebration of the Sacrament of Penance, not only for the forgiveness of sins, but as a means of growth in holiness. Extra times for confession are scheduled. Make a good Lent!

Year of Faith Eucharistic Holy Hours in the Indianola Deanery (February & March)

McCook, St. Patrick Church Sundays, 7:00pm – 8:00pm	North Platte, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church Wednesdays, 7:00pm – 8:00pm	Cambridge, St. John the Baptist Church Thursdays, 7:00pm – 8:00pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament • 20-25 minutes (Scripture reading, followed by a presentation on a Document of Vatican II) • 25 minutes of quiet prayer • Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament 		
February 17	February 20	February 21
Gaudium et Spes ("Joy and Hope") Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World Fr. Bob Barnhill		
February 24	February 27	February 28
Lumen Gentium ("Light of the Nations") Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Fr. Andrew Heaslip		
March 3	March 6	March 7
Sacrosanctum Concilium ("The Sacred Council") The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Fr. Harlan Waskowiak		
March 10	March 13	March 14
Dei Verbum ("The Word of God") Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation Fr. Tom McGuire		
March 17	March 20	March 21
Apostolicam Actuositatem ("The Laity") (Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity) Fr. Mark Seiker		

Take an Hour of Adoration During Lent

During Lent, and always, you are encouraged to spend some extra time with our Eucharistic Lord ... either by taking an hour of Adoration each week, or maybe even each day ... or by joining in the prayer of the Mass during the week.

Spending time with Jesus is one of the best ways to deepen your spiritual life, and grow closer to God. Come and rest with the Lord for an hour each week. If you take time to pray, you find you have more time!

Operation Rice Bowl

On Ash Wednesday, our parish will begin Operation Rice Bowl. Sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, the six week Lenten program combines **Prayer, Fasting, Education, and Almsgiving**. Proceeds benefit the poor, both in our diocese and in the developing world. Please join this meaningful Lenten observance. Rice "Bowls" and information are available on a table in the entryway.

Magnificat Lenten Companions ... are available in the Church entryway for free. Please pick one up to help you in your spiritual growth during Lent.

A Reflection on Lent

From The Church's Year of Grace (Vol. II) by Dr. Pius Parsch (p.68-71)

“At the very outset we must take positive steps to acquire the spirit of Lent. Through the vestibule of Pre-Lent we enter the sanctuary of the sacred Easter season. What is the purpose of this portion of the Church year? What can it give us? It gives divine life, and in divine life we have the essence and the end of all Christian piety. Objectively, this life was won by Christ through a hard fight in His bitter passion; subjectively, it is now bestowed in baptism, and renewed in second baptism or penance. In briefest outline this gives the high purposes of Lent.

a) Christ's passion! Already during the Christmas octave and in the Sundays after Epiphany the Church introduced the passion motif; in Pre-Lent it received greater stress and now it becomes the major theme. Christ, the divine Warrior, enters into conflict with the Prince of darkness. During the first half of Lent the interior aspect of the conflict is accentuated, while during the second the motif of physical suffering comes into the foreground and reaches its climax in Holy Week.

Recall that in the Christmas cycle we were not merely interested spectators of the mighty struggle between light and darkness; then as now the mystery is re-enacted in each person's heart: in your soul Christ is wrestling with the devil; or better, by the very fact that you are a member of the mystical Christ you are involved in this fight. At Easter we want to be ready to sing Alleluia with our Leader, but the victory can only be gained by death and crucifixion to the natural man. Therefore we must re-live our Savior's passion in Lent; as catechumens we must die with Christ; as penitents we must die with Christ; as disciples we must die with Christ in order to rise with Him as new men on Easter. Christ's passion, accordingly, is not merely the highest motive for a spiritual renewal; rather it must be, in the sense of St. Paul; re-lived by us. We must share His sufferings and death.

b) Baptism. Lent is springtime in the ecclesiastical year. From the planted and dying kernels of divine wheat a wonderful harvest will come, souls ripe for baptism. Lent is the ideal season to prepare for baptism.

In the ancient Church baptism was ordinarily administered to adults. After preliminary preparation that often extended over a period of years, select catechumens were numbered among those who desired baptism and then, as postulants, given special instruction as they participated almost daily in the first part of the Mass. Furthermore, they undertook definite penitential exercises and were the object of repeated ecclesiastical exorcisms. The older Masses of Lent come from this time and frequently were designed with special reference to those preparing for baptism. This fact easily explains the confident and at times joyous tone of the Masses; the baptism motif often loses itself in the jubilant motif of Easter. Preparation for baptism had indeed a serious side, for example, the death of the "old" man; it likewise had joyful aspects, e.g., the maternal pride of the Church, internal transfiguration, the coming Easter celebration.

For understanding the liturgy of the season this is of great importance; not the sober and serious mood of penance but a joyful anticipation of baptism is the spirit proper to the older strata of Lenten texts.

c) Lent is also the period for a second baptism, the painful baptism of penance. It is the time *par excellence*

for interior purification. In the early centuries sinners were obliged to do public penance during Lent; in a solemn penitential service they received the mourners' garb on Ash Wednesday and thereupon were excluded from community services until Holy Thursday. By way of exception they were allowed to attend the Mass of the catechumens. This third and most recent motif in the Masses of Lent (especially on Thursday) gradually found its way into the liturgy after the catechuminate had ceased to exist. Century by century greater stress was placed on penance with the result that present day Christians who most often approach Christian life from the viewpoint of overcoming sin, regard Lent simply as a time for special penitential practices.

Let us then feel ourselves as true penitents, on Ash Wednesday let us receive the cross of ashes as a dedication to mortification and self-denial; let us try to submerge ourselves in the purifying stream of Lenten penance.

Whatever our status, whether it be catechumen, penitent, or faithful member of the Church, we must never forget that the main task of the liturgy is not to impart instruction but to bestow divine life. Certainly the Masses of Lent give us advice on spiritual renewal (after the manner of retreat conferences); but the purpose of missal readings is less instruction than a demonstration of the power of grace. This is why the ancient Roman liturgy loved to portray the effect of the sacred mysteries in the Lessons at Mass, choosing scenes from the Old and New Testament which typified the action of grace. The readings, indeed the whole variable text of the Mass, were regarded as parables on the graces of redemption coming to the members of the Church from Christ's death on the Cross.

These graces are granted principally in baptism (penance) and in the holy Eucharist, the two great wellsprings of salvation. The first makes a beginning, the second brings growth and perfection; but both have essentially the same effect. On this account not only the catechumen and the penitent, but also the believer, can observe Lent fruitfully in essentially the same manner. Lent brings the graces of redemption to all; some receive incipient, germinal grace, others the grace of growth or perfecting grace.

A typical example is the Gospel about the healing of the man who had been sick for thirty-eight years. Here baptism, penance, and the Eucharist are represented in symbolic form. The catechumen is healed in the water of baptism, the penitent in the laver of penance, and the believer in the blood of Christ. Christ performs this miracle now during Lent on a higher level of reality by baptism, penance, and the Eucharist. Thus the symbolic character of miracles in the Old and New Testaments is of great liturgical importance.

Lent, then, is the time of salvation *par excellence* not only for catechumens and penitents, but for the faithful as well. The catechumens attain their goal in baptism on Holy Saturday, the penitents theirs in the reconciliation of Holy Thursday. Lent is designed to aid them in preparing. And through daily Mass the faithful have the divine life within them enriched and perfected. By Holy Thursday they should be free from all sin and cleansed of guilt so as to appear in the full maturity and perfection of grace on Holy Saturday.”