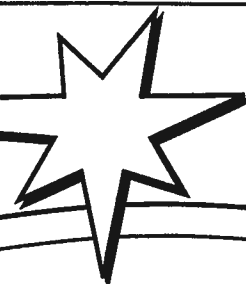


Partners in FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

February 2013

Our Lady of Lourdes Church
Theresa S. Bowen, DRE



Thoughtful Moments

February's saint

This month's Year of Faith saint is **St. Rose Philippine Duchesne**. Born in France she joined the Visitation nuns at age 19. She was very sad when convents were closed during the French Revolution but rejoiced when it ended and she could join the Society of the Sacred Heart. She came to the Louisiana Territory as a missionary in 1818 and opened the first free school for girls west of the Mississippi river, and the first Catholic school for Native Americans.



Your family recipe

A family is like a batch of cookies. It won't come out right without the necessary raw ingredients plus generous additions of faith, hope, and love, and just the right amount of "baking" in the family oven with time and attention.

What to give up?

Help children make age-appropriate choices of what to give up for Lent so that they stick with their fast for the entire season.



New habits for Lent

Junk food, video games, toys, and favorite television programs can make us happy for a while but the feeling doesn't last. During Lent, we are reminded to stop going after temporary happiness and choose lasting happiness that comes from God.

A good way to teach children this idea is to use colors - one for each day of the week to represent a Lenten habit. Write the habit on the assigned colored paper and post it in a prominent spot in your home.

Monday - Pink for an increase in love in our hearts. We start the week by showing extra kindness to anyone we meet that day.

Tuesday - Green for God's gift of creation. To honor all that God has

given us we do chores without being asked.

Wednesday - Yellow to share God's light. We spend time reading the Bible, a book on saints, or other spiritual reading.

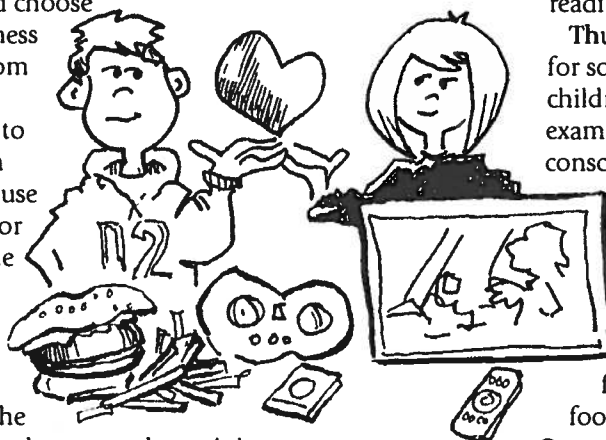
Thursday - Purple for sorrow. Help children perform an examination of conscience.

Friday - Red for sacrifice. In addition to abstaining from meat, give up a favorite activity, food, toy or game.

Our sacrifice honors

Jesus' great sacrifice on the Cross.

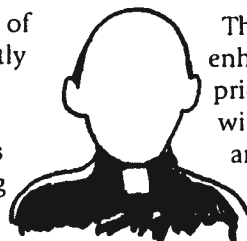
Saturday - White for the joy of forgiveness. We celebrate God's unending forgiveness by forgiving anyone who has hurt us and asking for forgiveness from anyone we may have hurt. Attend Confession as a family.



Why Do Catholics Do That?

Why aren't Catholic priests permitted to marry?

Celibacy, "the renunciation of marriage implicitly or explicitly made, for the more perfect observance of chastity" (*Catholic Encyclopedia*), allows a priest to focus on his calling without the practical burdens of family life.

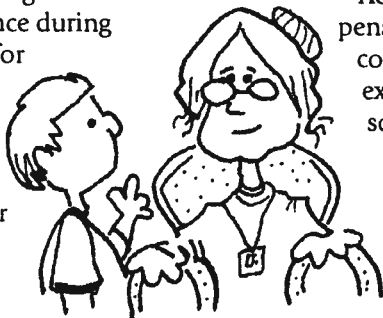


The goal of a celibate life is enhancement of love; a way for priests to "consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to 'the affairs of the Lord' (1 Corinthians 7:32), they give themselves entirely to God and to men" (CCC 1579).

Make suffering count

It can be hard to teach the value of suffering to children but even minor suffering as penance during Lent can be helpful. Try these suggestions for introducing penitential habits to children:

Self-denial. Giving up something we enjoy helps us to say "no" to our selfish desires. Suggest skipping a favorite TV show, foregoing an hour of video games, or passing up dessert. Then suggest that the resulting discomfort can be offered to God as an apology for things done wrong.



Acts of kindness. Our sin affects others, so doing penance that helps other people is a good way to compensate. Shoveling a neighbor's walk, doing an extra chore, or showing kindness to someone at school can all be offered to God as penance, too.

"Do I have to?" When you ask your child to do something he doesn't have to do and may not enjoy, remind him that it can be offered as penance, too. Visiting elderly relatives or playing patiently with younger siblings help atone for wrongs.

Scripture LESSON

Luke 9:28-36, Transfiguration of the Lord

The Transfiguration of the Lord is one of the most spectacular events in the Gospel. Jesus took Peter, John and James up a mountain to pray. Jesus became a radiant figure and began to talk with Elijah and Moses. The three discussed Jesus' coming journey to Jerusalem and what awaited him there - his death and Resurrection. A cloud came over them and a voice said, "This is my chosen Son, listen to him."

This Gospel shows that Jesus was a man of prayer. He often went off by himself to pray. In fact, some think this



was Jesus allowing his disciples a glimpse into his prayer. It was at such a high level that he could converse with prophets and hear God's voice. Praying is not only for times of trouble or danger. Prayer is something for us to learn and to do regularly. By listening we learn to hear God's voice in us.

What can a parent do?

Reinforce the importance of prayer to children by joining them in prayer at bedtime and any other occasion that arises.

Feasts & Celebrations

February 11 – Our Lady of Lourdes (1858). A heavenly "lady" appeared to St. Bernadette Soubirous, a poor girl from a village in France. Soon a spring with miraculous, healing waters emerged from a nearby cave. The "lady" revealed herself as the "Immaculate Conception," the Blessed Virgin Mary. People still visit Lourdes today.

February 13 – Ash Wednesday. The first day of Lent. Ashes from the burnt palms of the previous Passion Sunday are blessed and placed on the forehead as a sign of penance.

February 21 – St. Peter Damian (1072). Childhood deprivation may

have created a desire for an austere life. St. Peter Damian became a disciplined monk but was called to service as a bishop for many years and served as advisor to seven popes. He retired to monastic life and died in the care of his brother monks.

February 22 – St. Peter's Chair. Marking St.

Peter's establishment of the Holy See, today we thank God for his Church and pray for its preservation.



Parent TALK

Kara came home from Catholic school upset, "Mom, the kids at school said we are allowed to eat meat on Fridays after



Lent. I said they were wrong." "Well, yes and no," I answered. "Fridays are penitential days throughout the year," I said. "We give up meat during Lent but during the year the Church says

we can choose our own penance. We still abstain from meat." Kara was surprised. "Okay, I'll tell them I was wrong."

The next day Kara reported, "Some kids said that they give up desserts or television on Fridays. But other kids didn't even know they had to give up anything."

I told Kara that when the U.S. Bishops decided we could choose our own penance to honor Jesus' Crucifixion, some people mistakenly thought the guideline was lifted. Friday is still a day of penance, it's just up to us what we do. (For details: www.infaithpublishing.com.)

Our Mission

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Lent Family Calendar

= a day of fasting and abstinence from meat
 = a day of abstinence from meat

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>"Lent is the liturgical season of forty days which begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the celebration of the Paschal Mystery (Easter Triduum). Lent is the primary penitential season in the Church's liturgical year, reflecting the forty days Jesus spent in the desert fasting and praying" (<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>).</p>	<p>18 Contact Catholic Relief Services (877-HELP-CRS, www.catholicrelief.org) to see how you can help any of their ongoing projects.</p>	<p>19 Invent a new family prayer you can say together each day.</p>	<p>13 Take your family to an Ash Wednesday liturgy and wear the cross of ashes all day.</p>	<p>14 Tape a drawing of a vase on the fridge and label it, "Lent." Each day draw a flower in the vase and watch Lent blossom.</p>	<p>15 Share a meatless family meal. Discuss your Lenten offerings to be sure all are doable and sacrificial.</p>	<p>16 Choose a family Lenten offering, such as giving up desserts, attending daily Mass, or praying a family Rosary regularly.</p>
<p>17 After Mass today, explain the Gospel and the homily in terms your children can understand.</p>	<p>25 Collect stuffed animals or soft pillows in good condition and bring them to a local nursing home. Older folks love soft things to hug.</p>	<p>26 Ask each person to share a game, toy, or treat with someone else in your home.</p>	<p>20 Take stock of how your Lenten fasts are going, and refresh your commitment to them.</p>	<p>21 Before eating your family meal together, ask each person to say a spontaneous prayer.</p>	<p>22 Pray for the people in the world who can't afford to have meat as a regular part of their diets.</p>	<p>23 Turn off the television, unplug the computers, and take the phone off the hook for a half hour to pray a family Rosary.</p>
<p>24 Before Mass today, pick a saint represented in one of the statues in your church and find out more about him or her during Lent.</p>	<p>4 Ask each family member to write a letter to Jesus thanking him for his sacrifice on the Cross.</p>	<p>5 Make cookies and bring them to a nearby nursing home.</p>	<p>6 Encourage each family member to perform an examination of conscience.</p>	<p>7 Place a crucifix or picture of Jesus in a central place to keep the focus on him.</p>	<p>8 Whenever someone does a good deed, put a jelly bean in a jar. Share the jelly beans at Easter!</p>	<p>9 Ask each person to make a sacrificial offering, such as doing an extra chore without being asked.</p>
<p>3 Light a candle in church today for someone who passed away or who needs special help.</p>	<p>11 Pick a friend or neighbor and perform an anonymous good deed for him or her.</p>	<p>12 Encourage all family members to refrain from bickering today.</p>	<p>13 Say a short prayer before each cross or crucifix in your home.</p>	<p>14 Make up a box for a needy family or homeless shelter. Put canned goods, clothing, toiletries, and gently used toys in it.</p>	<p>15 Serve pretzels as a reminder that Catholics used to fast from milk, butter, eggs, cheese, cream, and meat.</p>	<p>16 Make simple crosses out of construction paper. Write on them, "He died for me," and post them around your home.</p>
<p>10 Laetare Sunday Have a special meal at home or a restaurant to celebrate the halfway point through Lent.</p>	<p>18 Pray for victims of violence and war in the world.</p>	<p>19 Send a card to someone who might need cheering today.</p>	<p>20 Give up a favorite toy or treat just for today.</p>	<p>21 Visit someone who is sick and can't leave home.</p>	<p>22 Place any final donations in the box you set up. Make a family trip to deliver it to its destination.</p>	<p>23 Go to Confession or attend a Reconciliation Service. Then go out afterwards to celebrate forgiveness.</p>
<p>17 After Mass light a candle and recite the Apostle's Creed as an affirmation of faith.</p>	<p>25 Take a walk outside and look for signs of new life.</p>	<p>26 Forgive someone who hurt you today.</p>	<p>27 Get up 15 minutes earlier than usual today and pray as a family.</p>	<p>28 Wash and dry each other's feet in commemoration of Jesus washing the feet of his Apostles.</p>	<p>29 Pray the Stations of the Cross today, and meditate on each one.</p>	<p>30 Dress a doll in a white garment and talk about the Baptismal vows we renew each year.</p>
<p>24 Have a Palm Sunday procession around the house and take turns playing Jesus</p>						

2013 Lenten Observances

1. Ash Wednesday, February 13 and Good Friday, March 29 are days of abstinence from meat and fasting.
2. The Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat (canon 1250 – 1253).
3. The observance of abstinence from meat applies to all Catholics 14 years of age and older (canon 1252).
4. The observance of fasting applies to all Catholics 18 years of age and older, but not yet 59 (canon 1252).
 - A Catholic tradition of fasting is one main meal per day, along with two small meals which do not equal the main meal.
5. Traditionally, Fridays of the year outside the Lenten season remain days of penance where each individual may substitute for the traditional abstinence from meat some other form of penance which might include acts of self-denial, temperance, acts of religion (e.g.: attending daily mass, praying the rosary), charity and/or Christian witness (canon 1250).

Those who are sick, pregnant (or nursing), or whose health would adversely be affected by fasting or abstinence should not consider themselves bound by these observances.

The following are some recommendations for voluntary self-denial or personal penance:

- Daily prayer (add some additional time).
- Prayers for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life.
- Personal service to the aged or the sick.
- Fasting at least once a week as a way of identifying with the poor and starving of the world.
- Prayer for the Catechumens and Candidates who will be celebrating the Easter Sacraments this year.
- Prayer for peace in our hearts and in the world.



Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership

The Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership is committed to developing and supporting pastoral leaders, men and women of all races and backgrounds, for the African American Christian community within the context of the universal Christian mission of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Institute cultivates understanding and appreciation of African Americans' contributions to the entirety of Christian faith, life, and witness in North America.

The Sankofa Institute provides opportunities for the intellectual, professional, and inspirational development of leadership within the African American community, offered through classes, lectures, symposia, worship, leadership workshops, internships, and practical field education, as well as social outreach and cultural celebrations. Leaders who enter the Institute as an avenue for completing a degree program at Oblate School of Theology (OST) will find integrated into the curriculum critical methodological approaches from the African American Christian tradition as well as theological reflection and social witness experiences that flow from that tradition. The curriculum for degree students (Masters and Doctoral levels) is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary enterprise consistent with the pastoral orientation of OST's practical and reflective engagement with the multi-cultural, global reality of church and society.

The interdisciplinary categories specific to the Sankofa Institute include:

- Black Church History
- Black Biblical Studies
- Black Theology
- Sociology of Black Religion
- Contemporary Issues in the Black Church
- African American Christian Social Ethics
- African American Christian Education
- Black Church Worship and Nurture



S. Addie Lorraine Walker, SSND, PhD, Director
Oblate School of Theology
285 Oblate Drive San Antonio, TX 78216
210 341-1366, ext. 221 awalker@ost.edu