

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
First Sunday of Lent
February 26, 2023



*Then the devil left him and, behold,
angels came and ministered to him.*

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

Weekend Masses: Saturday: 4:00pm - Sunday: 7:30am & 4:00pm

Holy day Mass Schedule: afternoon prior at 4:00pm

Holy day proper at 12 noon and 4:00pm

Confessions: First Saturday of every month at 3:30pm

Department Telephone: 508.363.6246

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MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday, February 25 *Vigil of the 1st Sunday of Lent*

4:00pm +Carol Merrill

Sunday, February 26 *First Sunday of Lent*

7:30am For the intentions of Ed & Sandy Duggan and their family

4:00pm For the intentions of Alana Francis

Monday, February 27 *Saint Gregory of Narek, abbot & doctor*²

12:00nn For Jim Murphy and his family

Tuesday, February 28

12:00nn Asking God for healing for Jim & Peggy Killeen and their family

Wednesday, March 1

12:00nn +In gratitude to God for the life of Michael Cariglia

Thursday, March 2

12:00nn Asking God for healing for Bob & Brenda Clark and their family

Friday, March 3 *Saint Katharine Drexel, virgin*² - *Day of Abstinence*

12:00nn +Henry Sacchi

Saturday, March 4 *Vigil of the 2nd Sunday of Lent*

4:00pm For the intentions of Raush Aun-Tribuce

Sunday, March 5 *Second Sunday of Lent*

7:30am +For the names enrolled in the OLP Purgatorial Society 2022

4:00pm +Edwin "Ed" Lopes by his friends

The Key to Understanding the Day's Liturgical Significance: *Sunday* is the day that the Church celebrates the Paschal mystery—the Lord's Day—which, according to apostolic tradition, is the day of Christ's Resurrection. The Sundays of Advent, Lent, and during the Easter Season take precedence over other celebrations. **Solemnities** honor significant religious events, beliefs or saints of the greatest importance and universal in their observance that begin at Vespers (or Evening Prayer) the day before. **Feasts** must be observed, though, less important than solemnities, hence, feasts are only observed on the natural day. **Memorials** are of two types: Either the observance is an **obligatory memorial**¹ or an **optional memorial**².

Toward a Better Understanding of The Gospels of Lent

While all three of the Synoptic Gospels (Mt, Mk, Lk) recount that Jesus was tempted in the desert, during Year A, it is Saint Matthew's version that is proclaimed. The passage follows the account of the Lord's baptism by John (Mt 3:13-17) which is considered to be a theophany (Gk. θεοφάνεια) wherein Jesus was proclaimed to be the Son of God. While all three Scriptural versions note that the Spirit led Jesus into the desert, only Saint Matthew adds that Jesus went there in order "to be tempted by the devil." Having said that, the evangelist adds that Jesus "fasted for forty days and forty nights," so, the first temptation dealt with hunger. This reference to how long Jesus went without food serves as a reminder of the forty years the Chosen People wandered aimlessly in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. The stark emptiness of the desert and its life-threatening topography reveals the desert as not only a place of revelation, but also as where the human spirit is sorely tried. In this account, that arid empty landscape should be viewed as the place of a trial. Yet, such an environment also implies solitude which allows those isolated to experience God's presence and, being so overwhelmed by the emptiness, choices that might be ambiguous elsewhere become radical choices – either for or against. An illusory choice which implies that what could be chosen does not matter is impossible in regard to God – it is either yes or no and the preferred answer is yes because yes is not optional. Such an either or choice can only be made by an internal struggle and in tandem with the enticing, opposite alternative posed by Satan. In Greek, the word for devil is *diabolos* (Gk διάβολος), which literally means *one who hurls* or who unjustly criticizes in order to harm. Like an evil adversary that hurls accusations against the just, Satan hurls a series of challenges against Jesus. Christ's temptation in the desert had to be at an unheard of level of contention, whether before or after, because of the titanic nature of the struggle. This desert victory, over the wiles of the devil, proved to be definitive and, after Jesus said yes to the mission of the Father, there would be no going back. At the River Jordan, the voice of God declared, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." The devil sought to undermine what Jesus had heard, just as the serpent had made Eve doubt what God had forbidden them to eat, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; it is only about the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden that God said, 'You shall not eat it or even touch it, or else you will die.' But the snake said to the woman, 'You certainly will not die!'" (Gen 3:3-4) During the Israelites sojourn in the desert, the unending search for food had caused the people to doubt, too; yet, God fed them with manna and quail (Ex 16:12-13). The prolonged fast had to have made Jesus hungry and, taking advantage, the devil said, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become loaves of bread." Quoting the Book of Deuterono-

Pope Francis — *Angelus*, 5 March 2017

"Satan wants to divert Jesus from the way of obedience and humiliation—because he knows that in this way, on this path, evil will be conquered—and to lead Him down the false shortcut to success and glory. But the devil's poisonous arrows are 'blocked' by Jesus with the shield of God's Word (vv. 4, 7, 10), which expresses the will of the Father. Jesus does not speak a word of his own: He responds only with the Word of God. Thus the Son, filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, comes out of the desert victorious."

my, Jesus replies, "One does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes forth from the mouth of God" (Dt 8:1-3). Then, the tempter tries to sow doubt about the Father's love for Jesus. The two of them go up to the parapet of the Temple. The devil says, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down" into the empty space below. Then, Satan cites one of the psalms, "He will command his angels concerning you and with their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone" (Ps 91:11-12). In reply, Jesus counters the devil by once again citing the Book of Deuteronomy, "Again it is written, You shall not put the Lord, your God to the test" (Dt 6:16). Unlike the Israelites in the desert, when at Massah and Meribah, dying from thirst, they challenged God due to the fact that they doubted whether or not God was with them (Ex 17:1-7); now, Jesus refuses to do likewise – His yes meant yes unequivocally! The third temptation, up on a high mountain, involves universal authority over all the kingdoms and nations. This ultimate temptation follows from the Lord's various rebukes to the first two where Jesus had invoked God the Father as His refutation of those temptations. Bringing all the kingdoms of the earth under the authority of God was the essence of the mission given to Jesus by the Father. The devil offers a shortcut to that universal dominion with the proviso that Jesus must prostrate Himself and worship the devil. The Evil One was asking Jesus to render Lucifer *latría* or divine worship and not simply reverence (or *dulia*). *Latria* is reserved for God alone. Yet, Christ's ultimate destiny was to be the new Adam and, because Jesus was tempted and, then, never sinned, He became the Head of an entirely-renewed and refashioned humanity. The role marked out for Jesus in salvation history could never come to pass without this explicit rebuke that He gave to the devil's temptations which testifies to His faith in the Father, and comes from Deuteronomy, "The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve" (Dt 6:13). In the original Greek the expression that the devil *left him* (Gk. ἀφῆσιν αὐτὸν) is to be understood in terms of what is called the historic present tense. This tense indicates that the devil had not left for good and, so, would later return to further tempt Jesus. After failing miserably, the devil leaves Jesus and "angels came and ministered to him." This angelic service is often interpreted as the angels actually feeding Jesus, just as the prophet Elijah had once been fed by angels (1Kgs 19:5-8) in preparation for the prophet's journey of forty days and nights to Mount Horeb.

Eucharistic Revival Began on 19 June 2022 & Concludes with the National Eucharistic Congress: Indianapolis 17-21 July 2024

In the sight of the angels I will sing your praises, Lord.

At the end of the Lord's temptation, Saint Matthew says that the devil left Jesus and then angels ministered to Him (Mt 4:11). Jesus had just rebuffed Satan's third temptation and ordered the devil away. In this last verse of the temptation incident, the devil departs with Jesus being "ministered to" (Gk. δεικόνου) by angels. The word *diēkonoun* which means to minister to or to serve has often been interpreted by scholars in terms of the angels feeding Jesus. The interpretation is undergirded by the time when the prophet Elijah was fed by angels (1 Kgs 19:5-8). In the War Scroll found at Qumran, popularly known as "The War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness," angels are described as forming an army to battle evil. While at odds with the portrayal of angels in the canonical Gospels, it could be a link with this Matthean verse wherein the angels could be visualized as actually aiding in driving off Satan rather than simply ministering to Jesus. The angels are present especially at the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The Mass is, actually, a sacramental participation in the liturgy of heaven, officially rendered to the Trinity by the full host of God's spiritual creation. The presence of the angels introduces the Eucharist into heaven itself. Angelic witnesses help to surround the Mass with a sacred mystery. The next time, as you are seated at Mass, remember that you have entered into a liminal space between Heaven and Earth and, with the angels ministering to that supreme act of worship, see if you can feel or hear the rush of angels' wings as you Praise our Loving Father.

Penance vs. the Virtue of Penance

The word penance is used to translate two Hebrew words, the first (*nacham*) expressing the idea of sorrowful regret, the second (*shub*) highlights more a radical change of mind toward sin, affecting the sinner's entire moral life. *Shub* implies a conscious moral separation from sin, the decision made to forsake it, and a willingness to agree with what God determines to be good. The word penance (Lat. *poenitentia*) expresses both of those Hebraic meanings. Penance manifests the attitude that we have towards sin and God's mercy. Doing penance serves to undergird our distaste for sin and serves as a counterpoint to sheer worldliness. Penance also acknowledges an individual's willingness to repair the damage done by sin, which illustrates our love for God made concrete in terms of our sorrow for sins. According to Father Garrigou-Lagrange, when penance is properly understood as a virtue, this is the result, "To resist the enemy's temptation, which leads first of all to light faults and then to graver ones, Christ Himself told us that we must have recourse to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. And then the temptation will become the occasion of meritorious acts of faith, confidence in God, and love of God." Penance, when understood as a virtue, denotes the morally and religiously appropriate human attitude, bestowed by the grace of Christ, in regard to one's own sin and to sin in general.

Lent - Quadragesima - Tessarakoste

Introduction

The English word Lent is derived from an Old English word *Lencten* which means spring season. However, in the Roman Missal, Lent is identified by its Latin title *Quadragesima* or the Forty. In Orthodox practice, Lent is called *Tessarakoste* or the Great Forty Days (Gk. Μεγάλη Τεσσαρακοστή). One of the aims of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council was described as ressourcement which involved a return to the authoritative sources of Christian faith and, doing so, was meant to be for the purpose of rediscovering their original truth and meaning so as to meet the critical challenges of the contemporary world. In *Sacrosanctum concilium* – the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Lent was described in the following manner, “The minds of the faithful must be directed primarily toward the feasts of the Lord whereby the mysteries of salvation are celebrated in the course of the year. Therefore, the proper of the time shall be given the preference which is its due over the feasts of the saints, so that the entire cycle of the mysteries of salvation may be suitably recalled. The season of Lent has a twofold character: primarily by recalling or preparing for baptism and by penance, it disposes the faithful, who more diligently hear the word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the paschal mystery. This twofold character is to be brought into greater prominence both in the liturgy and by liturgical catechesis (SC, nn.108-109). Thus, the season of Lent is best understood as baptismal and penitential in its essential attributes.

To Prepare for Baptism or Renew Baptismal Innocence

The Fathers of Vatican II also called for the restoration of the catechumenate (see SC, n. 64). In restoring the catechumenate for adults, theologians looked to the ancient church for models of initiation. The normative RCIA process is composed of four distinct periods (evangelization and precatechumenate, the catechumenate proper, purification and enlightenment, and mystagogy) along with three ritual transitions that move individuals from one period to the next. Now known as the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA) which is increasingly common in many parishes, once more, Lent is a time of preparing for baptism. The Latin text of the RCIA was promulgated in 1972 and its English version in 1987. The inspiration came from the early Church, particularly the baptismal practices of the third and fourth centuries. In those early years, those who sought baptism often knew that it could mean martyrdom, but as Christian persecution waned, larger numbers of people sought baptism. The catechumenate (RCIA) was a practice of evangelization so that those who converted could become very strong in the faith. Thus, in the reform of her liturgical rites, the Church renewed that ancient practice whereby people were fully initiated at the Easter Vigil. Those who have never been validly baptized receive all three sacraments at the Easter Vigil – the high point of the liturgical year. The Council Fathers also sought a reformation of the baptismal rites for adults also called for a rite to be drawn up

which acknowledged that Christians once baptized in another Christian denomination could enter into full Communion with the Catholic Church. But what does that mean for the already baptized faithful? Lent’s baptismal character is designed to prepare for the renewal of baptismal promises at Easter and, so, attendance at weekday Mass is akin to an annual retreat. The original Lenten catechesis was more about living the faith and not simply knowing it. Preparation was based on Scripture, not doctrinal teaching. The selection of the Lenten weekday readings are what the Church considers to be the most important passages that a new Christian needs to know in order to practice the faith. In ancient times, the catechumens would gather in the cathedral each day during Lent where the bishop would instruct them using the Scripture readings. Today, these same weekday Scripture readings can be a splendid way of reminding us of the essentials of our faith. The Lenten Scripture readings include the narratives of Jonah and Susanna, the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the parable of the Prodigal Son, the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, excerpts from the Sermon on the Mount, the two great commandments, the Last Judgment and many others, including hope-filled passages from Isaiah and Ezekiel. Both testaments incorporate passages concerning God’s compassion and our duty to the poor which are repeated throughout Lent. Immediately, on the Thursday after Ash Wednesday, the Book of Deuteronomy asks us to choose life and Saint Luke’s Gospel speaks of the death and resurrection of Jesus and our call to follow Jesus by sharing in His Cross.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

For cradle Catholics, when we engage in the three penitential practices of prayer, almsgiving and fasting, remember that prayer and meditating on the daily Scriptures is not reading merely meant for information or inspiration. We are reading to grow in faith, for faith comes through hearing and hearing through the word of God (Rom 10:17). With our faith growing deeper during these forty days, Lent is a time of conversion of heart in order to make the greatest act of faith: the renewal of our baptismal promises. While we have sought to repent on numerous occasions and gone to confession and received absolution for sins, it is by God’s grace that this is the time of recommitment to obedience. Therefore, the Church is preparing to renounce Satan and to be protected from devilish retaliation (see Acts 19:13ff). It is possible to use the divine authority God has over all evil and bring down Satan’s strongholds (see 2 Cor 10:4). The extent of those three penitential practices puts us in a position where we obviously need God’s practical help and do so immediately. As our heavenly Father, God has brought us into being, and now we plead for a deeper faith than ever before. God’s word must be burning inside us (Lk 24:32). Our communication with God should be better than ever and faith is strengthened. If the Lord has His way, the renewal of our baptismal promises on Easter will be the greatest act of faith that we have ever made.