

OUR LADY OF PROVIDENCE CHAPEL
SAINT VINCENT HOSPITAL
WORCESTER MEDICAL CENTER
First Sunday of Lent
March 9, 2025



Temptation reveals the nature of the devil, reveals the reality of the human situation, and it reveals the identity of the children of God

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass: (Monday-Friday at 12 noon)

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

Holiday 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

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MASS INTENTIONS — LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Saturday March 8 *Vigil of the 1st Sunday of Lent*

4:00pm For divine help in Charlene's improving health

Sunday, March 9 *First Sunday of Lent* — Sunday of Orthodoxy

7:30am Asking God for the health of a daughter-in-law and mutual understanding

4:00pm For the health of a soon-to-be born child

Monday, March 10

12:00nn Fulfillment of the intentions of Our Lady Queen of Peace

Tuesday, March 11

12:00nn Asking for the intercession of Saint Peregrine for Patrick James

Wednesday, March 12

12:00nn +Jeffrey Grill

Thursday, March 13

12:00nn For the repose of the soul of Father Ralph DiOrio

Friday, March 14 *Day of Abstinence*

12:00nn For the health & well-being of Michael Burke & family

Saturday, March 15 *Vigil of the 2nd Sunday of Lent*

4:00pm +Richard Gagnon by his wife

Sunday, March 16 *Second Sunday of Lent*

7:30am For the souls in purgatory

4:00pm For the gifts of the Holy Spirit for Samuel Correira

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 memorial¹ or an optional memorial².*

Toward a Better Understanding of the Gospels of Lent

In Saint Luke's version of the Temptation in the Desert, the evangelist notes that Jesus was "filled with the Holy Spirit." Just prior, Jesus left the Jordan River after being baptized and, guided by the Spirit, He went "into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil." Submissive to the Spirit's promptings, Jesus obeys and will do so again after overcoming the devil's temptations: "Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit....He taught in their synagogues..." (Lk 4:14-15). For the first time, after reading from one of the oracles of the prophet Isaiah that foretold God's spirit would be poured out on His Anointed, Jesus said to those in the synagogue, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:21). More than the other two Synoptic Gospels (Mk & Mt), Luke emphasizes the role of the Spirit in the life of Jesus. Like the Israelites during their sojourn in the desert, Jesus endured temptations, as they did. As might be expected, at the end of a forty day fast and ravenous, the devil questions Jesus' identity as the Son of God and, preying on His physical weakness, challenges Him to "command this stone to become bread." This same if-then accusation will also take place on Calvary, when the soldiers jeered at Him saying, "If you are King of the Jews, [then] save yourself" (Lk 24:37). Whether in the desert or on the Cross, Jesus refuses to use His divine authority to save Himself, though He never hesitated to use His God-given ability to save others. In a second temptation, a similar to the first, is the allure of earthly power. Yet, whatever power or authority Jesus has was a gift that came from



the hand of the Father. This heavenly power is nothing like what the rulers of the earth possess, though the illusion of control over "all the kingdoms of the world" had caused Adam to fall from grace. Though Jesus already possessed miraculous power, the extent of that power will only be fully manifested at the end of the paschal journey. After His post-resurrection time with the Apostles, the gift of the Spirit will be communicated to the Apostles. Now that Christ is seated at the Father's right hand and the Apostles are seated upon the twelve thrones, all that transpired from Calvary to the Second Coming will be recapitulated. As the new Adam, Christ succeeded where Adam failed. By His sacrifice on the Cross Jesus undid the wrong Adam had done, because He is both human and divine,

This is why Luke presents a genealogy tracing our Lord to Adam and continuing seventy-two generations. Thus he joins the end to the beginning and gives us to understand that the Lord is the one who has recapitulated in himself all nations scattered since Adam, all tongues and generations of humans, including Adam himself. This is also why Paul calls Adam himself, "the type of the one who was to come," because the Word, Maker of the universe, had begun beforehand to plan in Adam the new "economy" of the human nature that the Son of Man was to take upon himself. God indeed had first created the "natural" man in order that, obviously, he might be saved by the "spiritual" Man. For, since the One who would save him was already in existence, it was necessary that what was to be saved also come into existence so that this Savior might not be without a *raison d'être*. Therefore, it was indispensable that, coming to seek the lost sheep, recapitulating such a vast "economy," and looking for his own handiwork, the Lord should save that man who had been made in his image and likeness, that is, Adam, when Adam would have fulfilled the time of his condemnation...

so in being united to Christ, eternal life can become ours. Knowing that His mission was to sum up, to summarize, to bring to a head—to recapitulate—all previous elements of salvation history into a comprehensive whole, Jesus answered the devil's temptation by murmuring the daily Jewish prayer or the Shema Israel: *Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad* or, in English, either as *The Lord is our God; the Lord is one* or *The Lord is our God, the Lord alone*. The third temptation occurs in Jerusalem, with Jesus standing "on the parapet of the temple." In this Third Gospel, those various references to the Temple are landmarks on the road to Jerusalem (i.e. announcement of the Baptist's birth, the presentation of the Child Jesus, and the finding of Jesus in the Temple), the sacred city where Jesus will die and rise, as well as where the Spirit will descend upon Mary and the Apostles. This final temptation is a prelude to the ultimate event when, while hanging on the Cross, once again being tempted, Jesus would prove to be deaf to those temptations to such a degree that His trust in God the Father would not be shaken, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit..." (Lk 24:46). Having failed to divert Jesus from doing the Father's will and doggedly proceeding toward His ultimate fate in Jerusalem, "[the devil] departed from [Jesus] for a time." The Greek word translated as time (Gk. *καιρός*) is better understood as referring to the opportune time when things come to a head and conditions are favorable to act. Thus, Satan will reappear when Judas goes to the religious and imperial authorities to betray Jesus and when the Lord predicts Peter's betrayal (Lk 22:31-34). The temptation in the desert is a prelude to the denouement of the Lord's passion. The devil's questioning as to whether or not Jesus is the Son of God is the either-or question of faith that concerns the person of Jesus or who you believe He really is. The content of a faithful response to that question lies in Christ's unwavering obedience to doing the Father's will up to and including death on the Cross. After sacrificing His life, the sovereign power of the Lord our God is manifested by His being raised on the third day.

Penance as a Sacrament & Virtue

According to Saint Augustine, "By fasting for forty days before his death in the flesh, it's as though Jesus was crying out, 'Hold yourselves in check from the desires of this world'; while by eating and drinking for forty days after his resurrection in the flesh it's as though he was crying out, 'Behold I am with you until the consummation of the world . . .'" As a penitential season, Lent is the ideal time to also realize that the sacrament of penance is the guaranteed way to forgiveness of sins. Yet, confession is not the only way to practice penance. Saint Thomas Aquinas pointed out (*Summa Theologiae* III q. 85) that penance is not only a sacrament but also a virtue. Christian penance has assumed diverse forms throughout the history of the Church and one of its often unrecognized forms is going on a pilgrimage. All pilgrimage is, in some sense penitential in nature, in that it is meant to be a voluntary response to the sense of sinfulness and the need to seek God's forgiveness. This is where it is helpful to have an understanding of the *virtue of penance*. This virtue is perhaps one of the most forgotten of all Christian virtues, more than likely because Aquinas did not place it in his treatise on the virtues, but rather, among his treatise on the sacraments. Simply put, the virtue of penance is the habitual practice of seeking to amend for one's sin. Those who have this virtue are able not only to recognize their sins, but desire to also be willing to do penance for it, and actually to engage in acts of penitential disciplines for them. The Angelic Doctor discusses this virtue with the sacraments specifically because Aquinas sees it as the virtue possessed by those who seek the sacrament of penance. Generally most people are ill-prepared to observe Lent as they should because they have not exercised the virtue of penance regularly. Like all virtues, penance cannot be developed and maintained only 40 days a year. Rather, we must strive for the regular practice of penance throughout the year. Looking to Thomas, this not only means regularly seeking the sacrament of penance, but to look at the larger penitential traditions of Church, which has long observed Friday as a weekly day of penance, in addition to the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. The virtue of penance asks the faithful to see their sins as something that can draw them toward Jesus, as an aid in becoming His disciples. When you name your sins and want to make amends, by seeking the sacrament of Confession, and in choosing to do little penances, as sacrifices to amend for sins, you grow closer to God. In recognizing sins, you also recognize your need for God. No one is perfect or self-sufficient. Everyone needs God's grace and to see how much God wants to give grace to us. Thomas notes that you can never actually amend for your sins; yet God, whose mercy transcends justice, can forgive your sins despite the inadequacy of the penitential acts.

Understanding the Mass—Both Memorial & Sacrifice

After praising and glorifying the Blessed Trinity in the *Gloria in excelsis*, according to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, "...the Priest calls upon the people to pray and after that invitation, both Priest and people observe a brief period of silence so that they may become aware of being in God's presence and call to mind their intentions. Then the Priest pronounces the prayer usually called the 'Collect' and through which the character of the celebration finds expression (*GIRM*, n.54). The Collect is

THE MASS
I. Introductory Rites
Entrance
Veneration of the Altar
Greeting
Penitential Rite
Kyrie Eleison
Gloria in excelsis Deo
Collect
II. Liturgy of the Word
Scripture Readings
Homily
Nicene/Apostles Creed
Prayers of the Faithful
III. Liturgy of the Eucharist
Preparation of the Gifts
Eucharistic Prayer
1. Preface
2. Sanctus
3. Epiclesis
4. Consecration
5. Mysterium fidei
6. Anamnesis
7. Offering
8. Intercessions
9. Doxology and Amen
Communion Rite
Lord's Prayer
Rite of Peace
Breaking of the Bread
Communion
Prayer after Communion
IV. Concluding Rites
Blessing
Dismissal
Veneration of the Altar
Personal Thanksgiving

an oration by a priest which conclude the Introductory Rite of the Mass. The prayer's sentiments are all directed to God the Father, through Christ, and in the Holy Spirit. The people's assent to the prayer is expressed with an Amen -- the Semitic root from which Amen is derived means firm, fixed, or sure, and its related Hebrew verb also means *to be reliable* and *to be trusted*. The Septuagint or Greek Old Testament usually translates amen as so be it. While most biblical translations retain Amen, some English versions render it as verily or truly. The Collect has this structure: (1) invitation to pray; (2) silent reflection for the faithful to recollect their personal intention or thoughts in the silence of their hearts; (3) gathering all those silent prayers into one oration, the priest, then, prays to God by collecting those intentions into one plea to the Father. This is one of the three presidential prayers of the Priest -- the other two are the Prayer over the Offerings and the Prayer after Communion. These prayers are declared by the priest, in his role as president of the liturgical assembly, he pronounces them on behalf of the entire

community. They are collective prayers, meaning that they are not the personal expressions of the priest but represent the supplication and praise of the whole gathered Church.

The Structure of the Collect

Every Collect (or Opening Prayer) has several parts that following the concise call or invitation *Oremus* or *Let us pray*: (a) *Invocation* that is almost universally addressed to God the Father; (b) the *acknowledgement* of various divine attributes of God that is often indicated by the Latin word *qui* or *whom*; (c) the *petition* asking God for one explicit blessing; (d) the *aspiration* asking either for the desired result or seeking a further purpose for the prior petition that usually begins with the Latin word *ut* meaning in order that; (e) then, pleading for Christ's *mediation*; (f) fol-

lowed by the people's Amen. This pattern can be summarized this way: You (God the Father), Who (identifying the good God has done), Do (the petitions or needs of a given day), and Through (Christ in union with the Spirit).

Contrasting Versions of Translations of the Collect:

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Before 27 November 2011, then known as the Opening Prayer, on that Sunday, the Priest would have said this presidential prayer, "Lord, fill our hearts with your love, and as you revealed to us by an angel the coming of your Son as man, so lead us through his suffering and death to the glory of his Resurrection." Such a translation was a descriptive, eloquent prayer that incorporates significant content about the Annunciation, the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery. Yet, at the end of that same year, for the first time, this revised Collect was offered: (a) Pour forth we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts, (b) that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, (c) may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of the Resurrection, (d) Who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever, (e) Amen. The revised (and now current) translation supports an even more detailed version of the same rich content about the mysteries of faith, but it also does so while preserving the beautiful wording of a traditional Catholic prayer that is easily recognizable, namely, the Angelus. A traditional prayer and practice, usually recited thrice-a-day -- morning, noon, and nightfall -- with the emphasis on the salvific mystery of the Incarnation as seen through the lens of the Archangel Gabriel's appearance to the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation. Adult Catholics, who are very familiar with the Angelus would have never realized from the earlier translation that the Latin version of the Collect was identical to the conclusion of the Angelus. It is truly the same prayer because the Latin text of the Angelus and this Collect are identical. How spiritually-uplifting the current translation of the Collect suits that connection between the two to shine forth more thoroughly, especially as it is proclaimed on the last Sunday of Advent, just before Christmas. This revised translation also illustrates that the recovery of traditional devotional language such as what is enshrined in the Angelus can deepen public prayer. Older adults might recall how hand missals and prayer books, prior to the Second Vatican Council, contained a similar tone that constituted a grand, formal style. This higher eloquence was often abandoned or downplayed in the earlier translations, but has been rediscovered in the Missal's third edition because there is a certain timelessness in that manner of praying. Liturgical time unites past, present, and future into one. Prayer is not just a looking back to the past as it commemorates what happened in Christ's Paschal Mystery, a past that is made present. Yet, it is also a future-oriented prayer for the consummation of that mystery when Christ comes again—making the future present now. Always asking for grace or God's mysterious and free gift manifested by the Spirit working within us. This inner transformation requires our acceptance.