

6th Sunday of Ordinary Time - Feb 14, 2021

Sunday's Readings

First Reading

Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46

The Law regarding leprosy is given to Moses and Aaron.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 32:1-2,5,11

A prayer of contrition and confession for sin.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:31—11:1

Paul urges the Corinthians to imitate him as he imitates Christ.

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:40-45

Jesus cures a person with leprosy, who reports his cure to everyone.

Background on the Gospel Reading

In today's Gospel, the man with leprosy took the initiative, approaching Jesus and asking for healing. In doing so, the leper violated the religious customs of the day by approaching a person who was clean. His request to Jesus can be interpreted as a courageous and daring act. The confidence of the leper in Jesus' ability to heal him is evident in the words of his request. But his words can also be read as a challenge to Jesus, asking just how far Jesus was willing to extend himself in order to heal someone. While healing the man, Jesus touched him, which also violated established social norms. This is an important sign of the depth of Jesus' compassion for the man and an important statement about Jesus' interpretation of the Law of Moses.

Although Jesus touched the leper, he did not break completely with the Law of Moses. He instructed the man not to tell anyone about the cure and told him to present himself to the priests as prescribed by the Law of Moses. The first instruction sounds nearly impossible to honor. Certainly, the man would want to share the good news of his healing, and his quick improvement would require an explanation. The second instruction honors the Law of Moses.

Today's Gospel invites us to think about the choices we make as individuals and as a family. Jesus was faced with a choice in today's Gospel. By choosing to heal the man with leprosy, Jesus showed God's

compassion for the sick and the outcast. The man knew that Jesus had a choice and that Jesus could reject his request. He may have expected that Jesus would not help him. The social taboos regarding leprosy certainly gave him little on which to base his hope. In the person of the man with leprosy, we see an image of all those in need. The sick and the outcast of our world are watching us, to see if we as Christians will choose to extend ourselves to others in need of healing and compassion.

Gather with your family and talk about some of the choices you have made as a family. In choosing to heal the man with leprosy, Jesus chose to show God's compassion and mercy. All our choices reflect our faith, and others are watching. Conclude in prayer together, asking God to help your family show compassion to others in your family decisions.

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Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 17, 2021



First Reading

Joel 2:12-18

Return to the Lord for he is merciful.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 51:3-6b,12-14,17

Create a clean heart in us, O God, and be merciful.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2

Be reconciled to God; now is the day of salvation.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6,16-18

Jesus teaches that almsgiving, prayer, and fasting should be done in secret.

Background on the Gospel Reading

Today we celebrate Ash Wednesday, the first day of the liturgical season of Lent. In this season, we prepare ourselves to celebrate the high point of our Christian life, Easter. Each year, the readings for Ash Wednesday are the same. They call us to a change of heart and teach us about the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. These disciplines are to be part of the Christian life during every season, but during the season of Lent, we renew our commitment to them.

The meaning behind tracing a cross on our foreheads with ashes (the liturgical sign of Ash Wednesday) is a summary of our Christian life. On one level, the ashes remind us of our origin and our death. (In the words of the prayer said when we receive ashes: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.") The ashes are also the sign of our victory: the cross of Christ. In his death and resurrection, Christ conquered death. Our destiny as Christians is to receive the victory over death that Christ won for us. We acknowledge that victory when we "turn away from sin and are faithful to the gospel," words from the alternative prayer when we are signed with ashes.

The season of Lent presents families with an opportunity to examine our family life and to re-commit ourselves to the Christian practices of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. Each of us is invited to do these things as individuals, but we can also do one or more actions as a family. Ash Wednesday is a good time for families to pray together and to plan the family's Lenten practices.

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God will not allow you to be lost if you persist in your determination not to lose him.
-St Pius of Pietrelcina

Special Announcement from Fr. Joe

The public Masses will begin on Tuesday February 16, 2021 with the 30% capacity, following both the Health Canada and the Hamilton Diocese COVID-19 guidelines.

So, there will be a THANKSGIVING MASS at 9.00 a.m. on Tuesday.

Wednesday is ASH WEDNESDAY
February 17, 2021. We will have two Masses at 9.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m.
Ashes will be distributed in both Masses.

Thursday is regular morning Mass at 9.00a.m.

Fridays in Lent we will not have the morning Mass. Instead, we will have the Stations of the Cross followed by Mass at 7.00 p.m.

Weekend Masses are as usual, Saturday evening at 4.00 p.m. and Sunday morning at 9.00 a.m. in Mount Forest. Saturday evening at 5:30 p.m. in Harriston and Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. in Ayton.

Let us reflect the passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ in this Season of Lent.

Let us spend more time in prayer in this Season of Lent.

Let us read the Bible in this Season of Lent.

Let us do Fasting and charity in this Season of Lent.

May God bless you. You are all in my daily prayers. Be safe.

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY WITH JESUS

The [Diocese of Hamilton](#) is pleased to bring you an Ash Wednesday Liturgy that can be celebrated, in safety, in the home. Below you will find tips for celebrating the Lenten season with your family, an outline of the Liturgy of the Word, and a video with the Gospel Proclamation and Reflection by Bishop Douglas Crosby, OMI.

TIPS FOR CELEBRATING THE LENTEN SEASON WITH YOUR FAMILY, FROM THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME

1. CARVE OUT TIME

Together as a family try to schedule some intentional time for prayer and reflection each week as we draw closer to the great feast of Easter. When can you gather together to pray? Do you have a calendar in the home? Try counting down the 40 days of Lent with little footprints, stickers or stamps marking your journey towards the celebration of Holy Week. Remember to mark the Sacred Sundays during the Lenten Season in a special way as these are exclusive of the 40 days of preparation.

2. SET THE SCENE

Create an intentional space for prayer. Working together to create a prayer center in the home can be a lovely opportunity for the creativity of your family members to shine. Make sure the space you choose is comfortable and inviting for all children present. Think about utilizing signs and symbols from the Church to heighten awareness to the importance of this prayer time; candles, a Crucifix, a purple cloth, a Bible and signs and symbols of spring. If someone in the family is musical, the inclusion of music always elevates prayer.

3. KEEP IT SIMPLE

Engage in prayer and the Celebration of the Word throughout the Lenten season in ways that are simple and accessible for your family. [Use the suggested Liturgy Guides and resources found on our website.](#) Watch a live streamed or recorded parish Mass and share with one another what you heard in the Sunday Gospel and Homily. Utilize your favourite prayer to root your family prayer each day.

4. EMBRACE LENTEN RITUALS

Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving are important Lenten rituals that help us strengthen our relationship with God. A prayer routine invites God into the day-to-day pulse of our homes. Fasting is the action of choosing to go without something we enjoy. Traditionally, most Christians refrain from eating meat on Friday. Try to schedule "Fish Friday" on the menu. Almsgiving is an important act of sacrifice during Lent. Almsgiving is not necessarily a financial sacrifice, but giving of time and talents to serve those in need. Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving help us give the best of ourselves for God's glory.

5. KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Take time throughout the season of Lent to talk about the importance of preparing well for Easter. Consider these conversation starters in the home:

- God calls us to work hard to show our love for Him and for one another during Lent through prayer, fasting and sharing all that we have. How is God calling you to grow this Lent?
- Jesus sacrificed His life on the Cross out of love for us. Sometimes sacrifice is hard, but it can bring life to others. What have you sacrificed out of love for another today?
- How can our family continue to prepare for the joy of Easter?

AN OUTLINE FOR THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

WITHOUT THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

After the family is gathered, a parent begins:

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

The parent(s) trace the Sign of the Cross while offering the following and encouraging the children, if necessary, to join them: "Whenever we gather to pray, we gather in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

INVITATION TO PRAY

The parent(s) may pray in these or similar words. Parents may ask the children questions or sharing with the children the purpose of Lent.

Ash Wednesday opens the liturgical season of Lent. In our ancient Christian tradition, it is a time of penance and fasting. We usually receive ashes on our foreheads at church or school. However, because of COVID-19, to protect everyone, we open Lent at home. Ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. This year, we even fast from ashes.

The parent(s) then bless children and one another by making the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the children and one another, saying the following words: **Repent, and believe in the Gospel.**

A LITANY FOR LENT

The parent may pray the litany below and let the children know that the response is: **Lord, have mercy.**

Pope Francis tells us that another name for God is "Mercy." We thank God for Mercy. Our response today is "Lord, have Mercy."

- Encourage us Lord to do penance. R
- Strengthen us Lord to resist. R
- Show us how to live forgiving lives. R.

- Help us to reject bullying, unfairness, and injustice. R.
- You accepted death to bring us to eternal life. R.

OPENING PRAYER

A parent prays on behalf of the family.

Loving God, you sent us Jesus to save us from our sins.

Have mercy on us and help us fast, pray and give alms.

Forgive our sins and help us to see your love. Amen.

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION AND REFLECTION

The parent(s) then play the following proclamation and reflection by His Excellency, Bishop Douglas Crosby.

The parent(s) are invited to discuss the video. Parents are encouraged to ask their children questions and/or share about their own understanding of Lent. Here are some guiding questions: What did Bishop Crosby say to us today in his message? What can you tell me about almsgiving? Why is fasting important? What can you fast from during Lent? How as a family can we pray together?

CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING

The parent(s) may invite the children to pray together the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Glory Be or another suitable prayer.

The parent(s) may then bless the children individually or collectively by tracing the Sign of the Cross on their foreheads while offering a prayer in these or similar words:

God, as we begin the discipline of Lent, make this season holy by our self-denial. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.