



*Saint Michael the Archangel
Catholic Church
2010*

Lake Jackson, Texas

Regular Lenten Services

Sunday Masses

Saturday Vigil: 5:30 pm
Sunday 8:00 am
9:30 am
11:00 am

Weekday Masses

Tuesday 5:30 pm
(8:30 am Mar. 2)
Wednesday 8:30 am
Thursday 5:30 pm
Friday 6:00 am
8:30 am

Vespers (Evening Liturgy of the Hours)

Sundays ("F" Wing) 6:30 pm

Rosary

Monday 7:00 pm
(6:00 pm on Mar. 22)

Stations of the Cross

Friday 7:00 pm
(K of C Fish Fry 5:00-7:00pm)

Regularly Scheduled Confessions

Tuesday 5:00 - 5:30 pm
Saturday 4:00 - 5:00 pm

Adoration Chapel

Every Day 9:00 am to 12:00 midnight

Special Lenten Services

Ash Wednesday - February 17

Mass with Ashes 8:30 am, 5:30 pm
Liturgy of Word w/ Ashes 6:30 am, 12:00 noon
7:00 pm

St. Joseph Altar & Meal—March 7 12:30pm (Sun.)

Feast of Saint Patrick—March 17 (Weds.) 8:30am

Solemnity of Saint Joseph—March 19 (Fri.) 8:30am

Parish Reconciliation Service

Monday, March 22 7:00 pm

Solemnity of the Annunciation—March 25 (Thur.) 5:30pm

Youth Stations of the Cross

Friday, March 26 7:00 pm

Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion - March 28

Palms Distributed All Masses

Solemn Procession: Sat. 5:30 pm & Sun. 11:00 am

Holy Thursday—April 1

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:00 pm

Adoration at Altar of Repose until Midnight

Good Friday—April 2

Celebration of Our Lord's Passion 3:00 pm

Stations of the Cross 7:00 pm

Holy Saturday—April 3

Easter Vigil 8:30 pm

Easter Sunday—April 4

Masses: 8:00 am, 9:30 am, 11:00 am—Church
9:30 am, 11:00 am—Hall

The Lenten Season

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends at dusk on Holy Thursday, when the sacred Triduum begins. Historically, Lent developed in the Church as the whole community prayed and fasted for those preparing for Baptism. At the same time, those members of the community who were already baptized prepared to renew their baptismal promises at Easter, thus joining the catechumens in seeking to deepen their own conversion. We are all responding to a clear call to conversion, to that movement away from sin and toward Christ that we have to embrace over and over again through our lives. Through this annual “retreat” we prepare ourselves to fully celebrate the wondrous mysteries of the Triduum, culminating in the joy of Easter.

To Do or Not To Do

Traditionally, Lent has been a time to both “give up” some things and also to “take on or do” some things. These are ways of acting upon Jesus’ words in the Gospel we hear on Ash Wednesday, which suggest the disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. We frequently ask, or are asked, “What are you GIVING UP for Lent?” Giving up has commonly meant refraining from eating candy or sweets, eating less in general or other things that we often do to excess or could do without. It could also mean giving up some habit in our lives which we need to change. Perhaps giving up impatience, jealousy, or being a source of stress to others would be harder than giving up favorite snacks, but could be a life change that helps us advance our spiritual journey. This could all be considered an aspect of fasting.

Prayer and almsgiving are examples of another category of Lenten discipline that would answer the question “What are you going to DO for Lent?” We can all spend more time in prayer. Beyond the opportunities shown on pages 2 & 3 of this brochure, reading from scripture, joining a bible study, participating in Sunday night Vespers, or joining the Prayer Warrior list is an excellent way to incorporate more prayer into our lives. See the parish website (www.smlj.org) to learn about the Prayer Warriors.

Perhaps the money we save by not treating ourselves to favorite snacks or eating more than we have to, could be reserved for giving alms for the poor. Remember that our Lenten self-denial can translate into benefiting the poor. Beyond the giving of money and food, perhaps the greatest sacrifice we could make in the frenetic world that we live in is the gift of our time in service to the Lord. One example would be the contributing our time and talents to ministries of the parish. Think of the ways that you could share the skills and energy that you have been blessed with for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

My Lenten Plan

In addition to what “To Do” and what “Not To Do”, here are some of the opportunities we can include in our plan to make Lent the powerful spiritual journey that it can be for us.

ASH WEDNESDAY—Plan to join the faith community in the official beginning of Lent at one of our Ash Wednesday liturgies. By coming forward to be marked by ashes we commit that this Lent will be a season of repentance and ongoing conversion.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS—Each Friday evening, we pray the Stations of the Cross. This moving devotion helps us to experience the saving passion and death of Our Lord.

DAILY MASS—Daily Mass continues to be a source of strength and grace during Lent, with the addition of a special early Friday morning Mass for those whose schedules make attending regular times difficult.

RECONCILIATION—In addition to the regular bi-weekly confession opportunities, the parish Lenten Reconciliation Service provides another opportunity for sacramental Penance.

PRAYER—There are many opportunities to add to our prayer lives during Lent. Some of these include spending an hour with Jesus in the adoration chapel, joining us for Evening Prayer on the Sundays of Lent, and praying the rosary in community on Monday evenings.

FASTING—As a gift of self-denial and to help us to relate to those who are much less fortunate than we are, we commit to the Lenten guidelines on fasting and abstaining from meat.

GIVING—Plan to do extra works of charity, consisting of giving both of our monetary resources and our time and talent. Help in a ministry serving the faith community and those in need in the world around us.

INSPIRING OTHERS—We all know a relative, friend, neighbor, or co-worker who may be needing to re-connect with God. Lent is a wonderful time to encourage them to come back to church where they will be welcomed with open arms by our faith community.

KEEPING THE TRIDUUM HOLY—Allow Lent to be a preparation for your participation and joyful celebration of the high holy days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter.

The God of Second Chances

In 2010 we are in year “C” of the three year liturgical cycle. During Lent in year “C”, we hear some amazing scriptures giving us story after story about God’s willingness and yearning to forgive us and give us another chance to live in His ways. On the Third Sunday of Lent, we hear the story of the fig tree which has produced no fruit getting another chance to live and prosper. On the Fourth Sunday of Lent, we read the famous story of the Prodigal Son, welcomed back in the loving arms of his father in spite of having turned away from him. Finally on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, we witness the plight of a woman caught in adultery being forgiven and given a new lease on life by Jesus.

These Gospel passages are a clear message to each one of us. We are told that no matter what our past contains, no matter how we have sinned against God and our neighbor, He is ready to take us back with joy and celebration. All we need do is acknowledge our wrongdoings and accept God’s bountiful grace.

Our God is a God of Second Chances.

Catholics Coming Home

Lent is a very common time of the year for people to hear the call of the Holy Spirit to begin, or to take up again, their faith walk with Jesus Christ. In many inactive Catholics are planted the seeds of faith which are ready to grow and bloom again. Because Lent is such a powerful season of renewal, it is the perfect time to re-ignite the flame of faith.

Our God of Second Chances is waiting with open arms to welcome any and all who hear the call to return to His Church. As the Lenten journey reminds us of the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross for the salvation of humankind, it is also a reminder that all who choose to follow Him are welcome, even if they’ve “been away.”

We all know a relative, friend, neighbor, or co-worker who feels a call, even if whispered, to re-connect with God. Many of these seekers are simply waiting for some sign or gentle nudge to re-join the journey that they know is right for them. Many will not take that first step to return without the encouragement or invitation by someone they know.

St. Theresa of Avila said that we are the hands and the feet of Christ in the world. Are you willing to risk rejection or failure in taking the chance to help someone come back to the Lord? The Church is doing her part, the Holy Spirit his part, and now we need to do our part! This Lent, become Christ to someone that you know!

Fasting and Abstinence

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fast and abstinence.

Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence.

Fasting binds all persons who have completed their 18th birthday through those who have completed their 59th year, unless prevented by poor health. On days of fast, one full meal is allowed. Two other meals sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to one's own needs. Eating between meals is not allowed although fluids may be taken.

Abstinence binds all persons who have completed their 14th birthday, unless prevented by poor health. On days of abstinence during Lent, the consumption of meat of mammals or fowl is not allowed. The Church strongly encourages the observance of Friday abstinence throughout the year, but failure to do so is not regarded as sinful.

Other Feasts of Lent

St. Patrick's Day - March 17

Patrick came from Great Britain and suffered a period of slavery in Ireland. After a dramatic escape, he became a priest, and then a bishop. He returned to Ireland and preached the gospel there. The celebration of his feast day, while Irish in origin, has become a very popular occasion in the United States, both in religious and secular environs.

St. Joseph's Day - March 19

We celebrate the feast of St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, who is the patron for the universal church. Our community follows one of the most popular traditions of St. Joseph's feast day, that of hosting a St. Joseph's Table or Altar. This Italian tradition combines a meatless meal for the faithful with donations for the poor.

The Annunciation - March 25

The Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord commemorates Mary being visited by the Angel Gabriel, and accepting and agreeing to her role as the Mother of Our Lord. The date for this commemoration is set at nine months prior to Christmas, the Nativity of Jesus.

The History and Power of Ashes

The custom of using ashes in religious ritual is rooted in the Old Testament. The prophet Jeremiah, for example, calls for repentance this way: "O daughter of my people, gird on sackcloth, roll in the ashes" (Jer 6:26).

The prophet Daniel pleaded for God to rescue Israel with sackcloth and ashes as a sign of Israel's repentance: "I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes" (Dn 9:3).

When the prophet Jonah finally obeyed God's command and preached in the great city of Nineveh, his preaching was amazingly effective. Word of his message was carried to the king of Nineveh. "When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in the ashes" (Jon 3:6).

In the book of Judith, we find acts of repentance that specify that the ashes were put on people's heads: "And all the Israelite men, women and children who lived in Jerusalem prostrated themselves in front of the temple building, with ashes strewn on their heads, displaying their sackcloth covering before the Lord" (Jdt 4:11; see also 4:15 and 9:1).

Just prior to the New Testament period, the rebels fighting for Jewish independence, the Maccabees, prepared for battle using ashes: "That day they fasted and wore sackcloth; they sprinkled ashes on their heads and tore their clothes" (1 Mc 3:47; see also 4:39).

Despite all these references in Scripture, the use of ashes in the Church left only a few records in the first millennium of Church history. Near the end of the 12th century, Pope Urban II called for the general use of ashes on the first day of Lent. Only later did this day come to be called Ash Wednesday. At first, clerics and men had ashes sprinkled on their heads, while women had the sign of the cross made with ashes on their foreheads. Eventually, of course, the ritual used with women came to be used for men as well.

Also in the 12th century the rule developed that the ashes were to be created by burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. Many parishes today invite parishioners to bring such palms to church before Lent begins and have a ritual burning of the palms after Mass.

Some people believe that ashes contain some special magic or powers beyond their spiritual symbolism. There are those who believe that ashes have the power to ward off evil and prolong life. The church teaches that such superstitions go against our belief in God.

The real power of the ashes is in the internal disposition of the believer who receives the ashes on Ash Wednesday. In receiving, we remember who we are. We remember that we are creatures of the earth ("Remember that you are dust"). We remember that we are mortal beings ("and to dust you will return"). We remember that we are baptized. We remember that we are people on a journey of conversion ("Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel"). Therein lies the real power of ashes: what we make of the symbol as we travel through the journey of Lent.

Ash Wednesday

February 17

1st Reading: Joel 2:13-18
2nd Reading: 2 Cor 5:20-6:2
Gospel: Matt. 6:1-6,16-18

6:30 pm Ash Liturgy
8:30 am Mass w/ Ashes
12:00 noon Ash Liturgy
5:30 pm Mass w/ Ashes
7:00 pm Ash Liturgy

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and the liturgies of this day will be some of the most highly attended of the entire year. The imposition of ashes on our foreheads is a powerful outward sign of our commitment to internal repentance and conversion.

The 1st Reading from the prophet Joel rouses us out of our lethargy. He announces that the day of the Lord has arrived and sounds an alarm as he gathers the assembly to mourn our failure to heed God's word. To "rend your hearts and not your garments" is a call to not do hollow outward signs of supplication, but to change from within, in our hearts. The reading ends with a positive re-affirmation that God continues to be merciful and hears our cry.

In the 2nd Reading, Paul addresses the disciples at Corinth with the message of the need for reconciliation. Jesus became one of us so that we could become more like God. We are told that "now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

In the Gospel, Jesus warns us against acting like hypocrites. We are encouraged to perform the traditional spiritual practices of almsgiving, prayer and fasting. However, we are warned that when we do these things, we should avoid false pretense and not look for recognition for our sacrifice and efforts. Jesus tells us to keep our good deeds a secret - God will reward all who act with heartfelt sincerity. Again, the message is that our external appearance and actions are less important than our interior disposition.

First Sunday of Lent

February 21

1st Reading: Deut. 26:4-10	Masses:	Saturday	5:30 pm
2nd Reading: Romans 10:8-13		Sunday	8:00 am
Gospel: Luke 4:1-13			9:30 am
			11:00 am

The 1st Reading is a passage which scholars describe as a "creed" for Israel. It is a short summary of the central beliefs of the people. It was to be recited at the festival of first fruits, when the Israelites offered to God a portion of the first harvest, an acknowledgement that the land itself belonged to God. If God had not given them the land, the seed, and the rain, there would be no harvest. The land was theirs only because it was a gift from God.

The 2nd Reading from Romans encourages us to trust in God. The Israelites trusted in God and were given the promised land; Jesus trusted in God and was raised from the dead, winning eternal life for all of us. What we must do to share in that salvation is simply to believe in Jesus as risen Lord and to call upon him. We do not save ourselves. Salvation is a gift from God.

The Gospel for the First Sunday of Lent is traditionally the story of Jesus' Temptation by the devil. The Spirit, which filled Jesus at his baptism, drove him into the desert, the "home of demons," to be tempted. After Jesus' forty days of fasting, the devil tempted him to abandon his trust in God and to use power to ensure his survival. Jesus countered the devil's temptations by recalling God's care of the people in the deserts and gave them the promised land, so God would care for Jesus in the desert. Jesus' victory over temptation is an example for us that the way to be like God is through obedience and trust, not disobedience and pride.

Second Sunday of Lent

February 28

1st Reading: Gen. 15:5-12,17-18

2nd Reading: Phil. 3:17-4:1

Gospel: Luke 9:28b-36

Masses: Saturday 5:30 pm

Sunday 8:00 am

9:30 am

11:00 am

In our 1st Reading from Genesis, we hear one of the stories telling of God's covenant-making with Abraham. The story of God's people began with Abraham, who was the first whom God called, the first with whom God made covenant. When Abraham was called he obediently left his homeland. God promised Abraham many descendants, the land on which he had settled, and a special, unique relationship with God. With no more evidence than God's word, Abraham believed and rose to true greatness. God sealed the covenant with him in a solemn ceremony depicted in the reading.

In the 2nd Reading Paul encouraged the Phillipians to trust God and wait. Those who lose faith search for what can be gained immediately. Paul scorned them: "Their god is their belly!" But those who wait for God's promises will come into the land of promise and share in Jesus' glory.

The Gospel is yet another symbolic portrayal of God's promise. Immediately after Jesus told the disciples that he would suffer, die, and rise again, he and they were given a vision of the glory which would come after that. Mountains were favorite biblical places for revelation. In the vision that ensued, Jesus was filled with light, symbolizing the presence of God which shone through him. Moses, representing the Law, and Elijah representing the prophets came to talk to him about his passing through death to life. The disciples wanted to cling to Jesus' glory, but they would have to wait for the dying and rising to reveal the Paschal mystery.

Third Sunday of Lent March 7

1st Reading: Ex. 3: 1-8a,13-15	Masses:	Saturday	5:30 pm
2nd Reading: 1 Cor. 10:1-6,10-12		Sunday	8:00 am
Gospel: Luke 13:1-9			9:30 am
			11:00 am

The readings for this Sunday point out to us that liberation from any slavery is a difficult process. Sometimes people being delivered prefer the security of the oppression which they know to the risk of a freedom which they do not know.

In our 1st Reading from Exodus we hear the familiar story of Moses receiving his call from God by encountering him in the burning bush. This was actually a continuation of the covenant with Abraham that God would bless and nurture his people. Often, when the story of a person's call was told in the Bible, the person objected for some reason. Moses objected five times, but God finally won the debate. This story also informs us of the name for God that he gave to Moses, "I AM."

The reading from 1 Corinthians is Paul's meditation on what happened to the people who were so wonderfully delivered in the exodus. All were given the same deliverance, but not all remained faithful to God.

The gospel story was Jesus' answer to those who thought they could use the theory of retribution (the good will be blessed, the wicked punished) to judge others. He gave examples which contradicted this theory and used the symbol of the barren fig tree, a favorite symbol for an unfaithful people. The tree was given a second chance to see if it might bear fruit. The parable taught that God continued to wait for the people to return to him. The wait would not be forever and that now was the acceptable time to return, to accept God's deliverance, and to live as people freed from sin.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 14

1st Reading: Josh. 5:9a,10-12	Masses:	Saturday	5:30 pm
2nd Reading: 2 Cor. 5:17-21		Sunday	8:00 am
Gospel: Luke 15:1-3,11-32			9:30 am
			11:00 am

The readings for this Sunday function in a prophetic way, helping us to imagine a radical newness which is otherwise beyond us, a vision of new beginnings.

The 1st Reading tells briefly of Israel's entrance into the land of promise. The people had crossed the Jordan just as they had crossed the Red Sea. They celebrated Passover, the memorial of their deliverance from Egypt. The two Passover celebrations (in Egypt and in the new land) and the two water crossings bracket the wilderness period and link the exodus to the promised land. No longer needing manna, they had a home of their own in a land of plenty.

In the 2nd Reading Paul described the reconciliation that results in new creation. Christ not only rejoiced in the reconciliation of his other brothers and sisters with God, he took their guilt upon himself, even to the point of becoming sin himself, so that we sinners might in time be reconciled, even to the point of becoming the very holiness of God.

The gospel story is one of the most loved of Jesus' parables. The story of the Prodigal Son needed no interpretation by Jesus. The message was not only of the father's (God's) forgiveness of the second son (us), but also that we, unlike the older son, should rejoice in the return of lost brothers and sisters to the Lord. Jesus was saying that not only did he himself eat with sinners, but that God even throws a party at the return of sinners.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 21

1st Reading: Is. 43:16-21	Masses:	Saturday	5:30 pm
2nd Reading: Phil. 3:8-14		Sunday	8:00 am
Gospel: John 8:1-11			9:30 am
			11:00 am

In this final Sunday before entering the solemnity of the Passion, God announces liberation, deliverance from captivity and freedom.

In today's 1st Reading, the prophet was trying to encourage the people to accept deliverance when it came. Cyrus the Persian, after defeating the Babylonians, allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem. But having adapted to their life in Babylon, some did not want to return to their homeland. The prophet proclaimed the need to accept deliverance, the need to return. God was working a new exodus.

The 2nd Reading shows Paul speaking of a different kind of liberation. Regarding a dispute between early Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians, Paul maintained that salvation did not come through scrupulous observance of the law, but through faith in Christ and his resurrection. In the end, salvation would come as a gift from God, freely given.

In the Gospel reading from John, a woman, having been caught in an act of adultery, is presented to Jesus as a form of trap for him. Jesus once again shows his boundless mercy toward sinners. Although he did not contradict the law nor declare the woman guiltless, he faced her judges with their own guilt. The self-righteous who condemned the woman ended by condemning themselves. The woman, who accepted her own guilt, ended by being forgiven. Jesus passed true judgment, forgiving the repentant, and condemning the self-righteous.

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

March 28

Gospel: Luke 19:28-40	Masses:	Saturday	5:30 pm
1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7		Sunday	8:00 am
2nd Reading: Phil. 2:6-11			9:30 am
Passion: Luke 22:14-23:56			11:00 am

On Palm Sunday we begin the solemn entrance of Christ into His passion, death, and resurrection, the events which will bring about his longed-for-victory over sin and death and Satan. This day is a story of triumph and death.

The Gospel reading, done today in the very beginning of our liturgy, tells the story of Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Many people had come to Jerusalem to celebrate the week-long Passover, in which they retold their story of liberation from Egypt, passing this on to the next generation so that they would understand what it meant to belong to the chosen people of God.

Many in town had heard Jesus preach and had seen some of his "signs and wonders," and had come to believe that Jesus might be the messiah. But their understanding of the term "messiah" was someone who would come with great power to conquer their enemies and re-establish the kingdom of Israel. Instead of entering Jerusalem mounted on horseback as a general or member of royalty, Jesus rode in on the back of a donkey (as prophesied by Zechariah). He was continuing to portray that the real path to salvation was the way of humility, pardon and nonviolence. Because he didn't fit into their preconceived notion of "messiah," many Jews were unable to see Jesus for who he was.

The tone grows much more somber as the readings culminate in the proclamation of the Passion according to Mark. The passion accounts contain some of the most powerful details in the Gospels. Here we get a counter-cultural different view of the kingship of Jesus, from the throne of the cross.

Holy Week & The Triduum

Holy Week - stretching from Palm (Passion) Sunday to Easter Sunday - is the summit of the entire church year. For Christians, it is a most exciting time. The liturgical celebrations are moving, the experiences life-changing, and the emotions intense. We accompany Jesus as he briefly enjoys his triumphant entry on Palm Sunday. On Holy Thursday at the celebration of the Last Supper of the Lord, we receive Jesus' teaching of service and humility. We partake in the Eucharist, which he instituted as his eternal gift to us, and commands us to "Do this in memory of me." We travel with him through his passion and his death, this selfless act of horrible suffering and beautiful love. We vigil in quiet anticipation of recalling the resurrection and shout "Alleluia" at the fulfillment of Christ's promise.

We celebrate the Triduum, the Three Days, of the Paschal Mystery of Our Lord, from Holy Thursday evening through Easter Sunday evening. All of the faithful should make every effort to be present through these celebrations, which are the most beautiful and moving of the year.