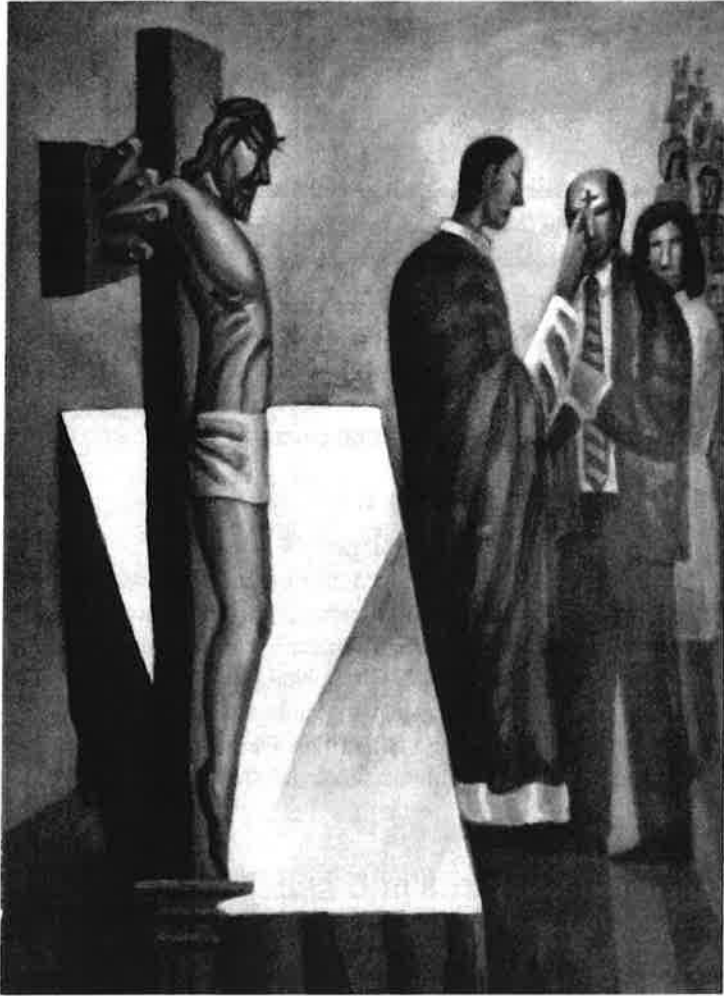


# ASH WEDNESDAY



## Be Merciful

Father of the prophets,  
your prophet Joel  
tells of your graciousness and mercy,  
of your slowness to anger  
and richness in kindness.  
In this acceptable time,  
we turn again to you,  
and walk with your Son  
on the holy road to Easter.  
During these holy days of Lent,  
may we turn away from sin  
to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.  
Even when we sin, O heavenly Father,  
be merciful to us as we try to be merciful  
to each other.

With all our hearts, may we  
adopt a spirit of reconciliation  
and repentance.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
your Son, who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever. Amen.

## Wednesday, March 5, 2014 Repent and Believe

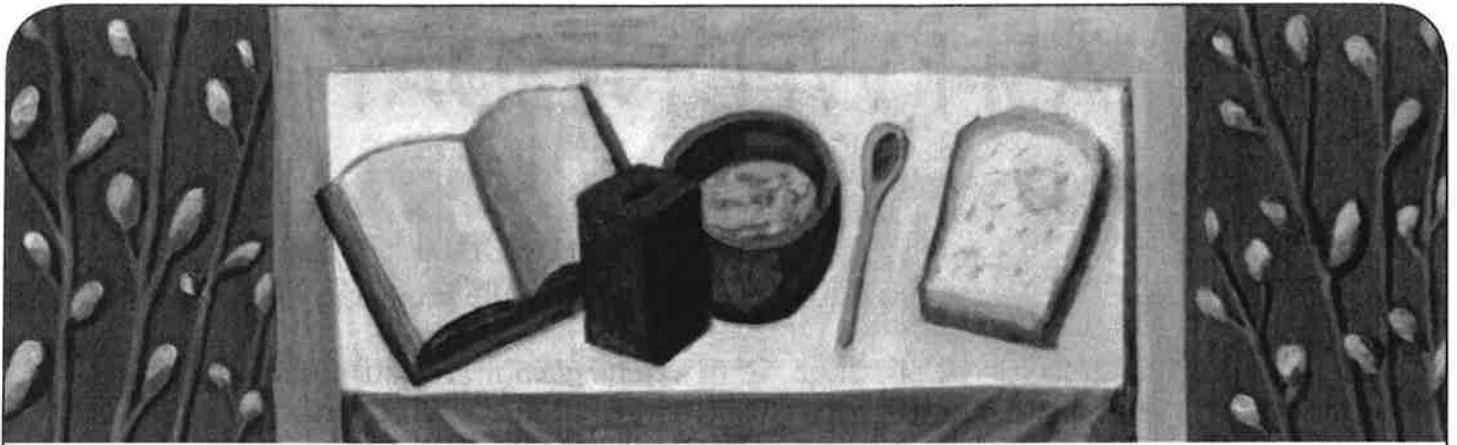


Today's Readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17 (3a); 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18. Crossing the threshold of Lent on Ash Wednesday, the community and those preparing for initiation find themselves on the “porch,” leading to the great door that will be opened on the First Sunday of Lent. Today, and the days that follow until Sunday, we take small steps in prayer and reflection, and take stock of our strengths and weaknesses. Are we prepared for the Lenten journey?

Once again, we are marked with ashes in a public sign of penitence after the proclamation of the Gospel and the homily during the Ash Wednesday liturgy. We return to the Lord with our whole heart, with our whole mind, and all our

strength. With great trust, we turn ourselves over to God. Once again, we open our closed hearts to God, who showers mercy upon his people. The trumpet blast calls us all; no one is excluded.

As our brows are marked with the sign of mortality—the dust of last year's palms making a smudge of a cross on our skin—we pledge to repent and be faithful to the Gospel. In many monastic communities, the monks go up to receive their ashes barefoot, a sign of humility. Imagine how this simple, barefoot state might feel, both today and again on Good Friday when we approach the Cross for adoration. This Cross is a sign of suffering, but also of Christ's victory over sin and death.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, March 3

#### Saint Katharine Drexel

Katharine Drexel (born in 1858) was the second American-born saint and is the patroness of racial justice. She founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and Xavier University of Louisiana, the only historically black, Roman Catholic university in the United States. In these days before Lent, some celebrate Mardi Gras, or Carnival, which originated in communities that wanted to use up meat and dairy products before the fast. It is a time of festivity (parades, masks, puppets, beads, dancing, and jazz music) before the soberness of Lent begins. Today's Readings: 1 Peter 1:3-9; Psalm 111:1-2, 5-6, 9 and 10c (5); Mark 10:17-27.

### Tuesday, March 4

#### Saint Casimir

Casimir, who died in 1484, was a teenage conscientious objector and is the patron saint of youth in Poland and Lithuania. Today is Shrove Tuesday, from the Old English word "shrive," meaning to confess sins, do penance, and receive absolution. This might be a day to "bury the Alleluia," a custom that expresses our practice of not using the word "Alleluia" during Lent. Bury a plaque, scroll, or banner inscribed with the word "Alleluia," (and dig it up again at the beginning of Easter). Today's Readings: 1 Peter 1:10-16; Psalm 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 (2a); Mark 10:28-31.

### Wednesday, March 5

#### Ash Wednesday

During this season, the Scriptures give us images of penance and Baptism. We journey with those preparing for Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, and we also are preparing—to renew our baptismal promises at Easter. We try to act justly, pray, fast, and give alms. A good practice during Lent is Operation Rice Bowl. For more information, visit Catholic Relief Services (CRS) on the web at [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org), or call

1-888-277-7575. Donations go to needy people overseas, and you will find prayers, reflections, and recipes for simple, meatless meals on the CRS website. Today's Readings: Joel 2:12-18; Psalm 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17 (3a); 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18.

### Thursday, March 6

#### Create a Place for Prayer

Today's Gospel implores us to take up our cross each day and follow Jesus. In the weeks ahead, this will demand much prayer and reflection. Create a place for prayer in your home. Near a chair, on a small table, place a purple cloth, candle, Bible, crucifix, or other inspiring holy image. May your work there be blessed! Today's Readings: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 (40:5a); Luke 9:22-25.

### Friday, March 7

#### Saints Perpetua and Felicity

Perpetua, a noblewoman of Carthage and mother of an infant son, and Felicity, Perpetua's slave and an expectant mother, chose death rather than renounce their faith during the persecution of Christians by the Roman Emperor, Septimius Severus, around the year 203. They were attacked by beasts and then beheaded, yet these holy women stood firm in the faith. On our Lenten journey, let us learn from their strength. Today's Readings: Isaiah 58:1-9a; Psalm 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19 (19b); Matthew 9:14-15.

### Saturday, March 8

#### Saint John of God

John of God was born in Portugal in 1495 and founded a hospital in Granada, Spain. His assistants later formed the Order of Hospitallers of St. John of God. Today, the Order of Hospitallers serves many who are sick and suffering in a number of care facilities throughout Southern California. Like Jesus, they serve as ministers to the sick and suffering. Today's Readings: Isaiah 58:9b-14; Psalm 86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6 (11ab); Luke 5:27-32.



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 Keeping the Seasons  
Reproducibles for Lent-Triduum-Easter 2014

# LENT/HOLY WEEK, 2014

## St. Cecilia Church, Ames, Iowa

*Please read and save for reference throughout the season.*

### REGULATIONS regarding FASTING and ABSTINENCE



1. **Everyone 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday (March 5, 2014) and all the Fridays of Lent.**
2. **Everyone 18 years of age and under 59 years of age is bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (April 18, 2014)**
3. **On these two days of fast and abstinence, only one full meatless meal is allowed.** Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one's needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. **Eating between meals is not permitted on these two days,** but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or ability to work would be affected, the law does not apply.
4. **Catholics should not lightly excuse themselves from the fast and abstinence prescribed by the Church.**
5. Lent is the principal season of penance in the Christian year. **Priests, religious and laity are strongly urged to develop and follow a program of voluntary self-denial** (in addition to following the Lenten regulations), **serious prayer, and a performance of works of charity and mercy.**

(Source: Archdiocese of Dubuque: Worship Office)



### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Every Catholic serious about their faith should avail themselves to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance/Confession) during Lent as part of their personal spiritual preparation for the renewal of their baptismal promises at Easter. **Anytime during the Season of Lent is an appropriate time for this celebration, not just, or even primarily, waiting until Holy Week. With both priest availability and everyone's schedules, please seriously consider participating in one of the area Communal liturgies.**

#### Communal Celebrations:

Sunday, March 30                      2p.m.  
Thursday, April 10                    7p.m.

#### Individual Celebrations:

Saturday afternoons:                3:15—4:30 p.m. (Please, no confessions after 4:25 to allow me time to finish by 4:30 and then to prepare for 5 p.m. Mass.)





Monday, April 14: 11:00 a.m.—12:00 noon  
Wednesday, April 16: 11:00 a.m.—12:00 noon & 5:30—6:30 p.m.

*(In conformity with church liturgical law, no public celebrations of the sacrament on Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday.)*

**Individual appointments apart from the regular schedule (if necessary) may be arranged by contacting Fr. Secora at: [jsecora@sceciliaparish.org](mailto:jsecora@sceciliaparish.org) or by phone: 515-233-3092 (you must state your name and leave a phone number contact).**

### **STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

The traditional Lenten devotion, **Stations of the Cross** will be prayed **each Friday night of Lent at 6 p.m.** (Since this is a devotional prayer, a variety of perspectives in terms of themes and prayers will be used.)

April 18: **Good Friday, 2 p.m.** led by St. Cecilia School 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Class

### **HOLY WEEK**

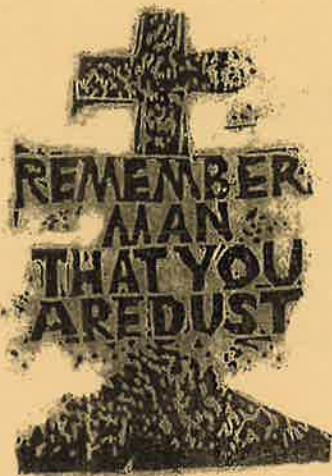
**Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, April 12/13:** Palms blessed before all Masses. Saturday 5 p.m and Sunday 8:30 a.m. Masses begin in Church. **Sunday 10:30 a.m. Mass begins with everyone assembling in multi-purpose room of St. Cecilia School with blessing of palm and Palm Sunday procession to church for Mass.** (*Incense used at 10:30 a.m.*)

**Holy Thursday, April 17:** Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:30 p.m. (*Incense used*)

**Good Friday, April 18:** Liturgy of Good Friday at 7 p.m.

**Easter Vigil, April 19:** Vigil Liturgy at 8:30 p.m. (*Incense used*)

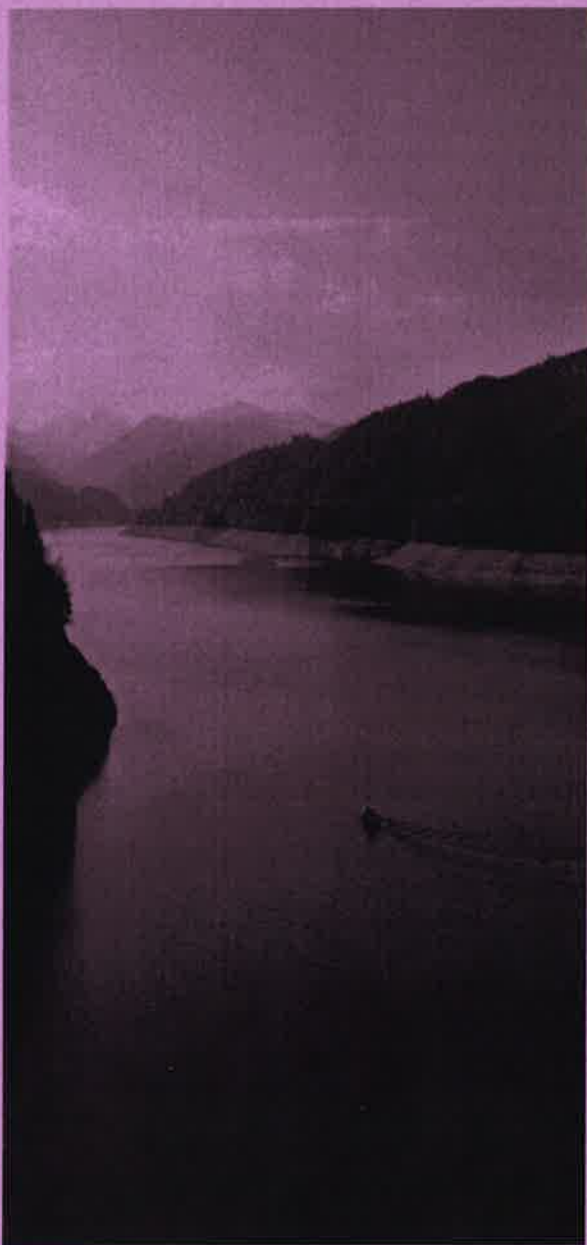
**Easter Sunday, April 20:** Masses at 7, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.





## Letting God Use Us: Humility as a Stewardship Virtue

*This article is part four in a series of 12 reflections on stewardship virtues by ICSC member, Dan Potvin, Director of Stewardship for the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, Canada.*



There was a time when my understanding of humility was actually a stumbling block to my growth as a disciple. I believed that humility required that I embrace an overly timid stance in life. The result being a struggle with the tension between remaining humble while at the same time confidently responding to the call to be a disciple and to share the hope that I have in Christ with others. I found a renewed vision of humility in the words of C.S. Lewis, *"Humility does not mean that we think less of ourselves... it simply means that we think of ourselves less."* In these words I discovered what I like to call a healthy-humility. My gifts are not of my own doing; they come from and belong to God. This humble disposition should give us the God-grounded confidence, and the courage, to boldly, yet kindly, use our gifts to glorify God; that's healthy-humility.

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Now you're ready to take up any challenge  
and follow Christ.

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Jesus said, *"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me"* (Luke 9:23). Note that Jesus puts denying ourselves as the first requirement. The humble person denies that their talents, abilities and opportunities have anything to do with themselves. The 'deny self' motto is – "It's not mine and it's not about me!" Now you're ready to take up any challenge and follow Christ.

Some may think that adopting the attitude of unworthiness is being humble. So often you hear people say "I am not good enough to get involved in ministry"; this is false humility. Sometimes we need to just get over ourselves, get out of the way, and humbly let God use us. We can do this by confidently, generously, and joyfully, sharing our gifts. Blessed Mother Teresa said, *"If you are discouraged it is a sign of pride because it shows you trust in your own power. Your self-sufficiency, your selfishness and your intellectual pride will inhibit His coming to live in your heart because God cannot fill what is already full. It is as simple as that".* Humility is so much more productive than pride.





## LENTEN IDEAS – 2014

Ideas for experiencing a more meaningful Lent through prayer, fasting and almsgiving:

### Fasting:

- Fast from watching TV one night a week so that you can spend time on a Lenten practice such as praying, reading the Bible, and serving others
- Fast from watching one movie during Lent and give the money and the time on service to others
- Fast from using foul language and put-downs and begin affirming others with positive speech to encourage, rather than discourage others
- Fast from holding resentments and learn to practice forgiveness
- Fast from gossiping and dishonesty and begin the practice of honesty and truthfulness
- Fast from a favorite snack food or drink and set aside the money you would have spent on the item(s) to a favorite charity
- Fast from being angry or upset with people who have hurt or offended you and pray for the courage to forgive them
- Fast from feeling guilty or angry with yourself; instead, remember God's great love for you



### Praying:

- Participate in daily Mass
- Participate in the Stations of the Cross on Fridays
- Participate in a Communal Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance or celebrate the Individual Rite of Penance (Note: Do this early in Lent. The whole of the season is one of penance, not just Holy Week.)
- Increase the amount of time you spend in Eucharistic Adoration or consider beginning the practice of Eucharistic Adoration.
- Increase the amount of time you spend praying for others by five or ten minutes a day
- Add the rosary to your prayer life personally or as a family on a daily or weekly basis
- Participate in a parish program such as ALPHA or other adult faith formation offering
- Spend ten to fifteen minutes a day reading a book on some area of spiritual growth, for example the books mentioned in the homily on the First Sunday of Lent.

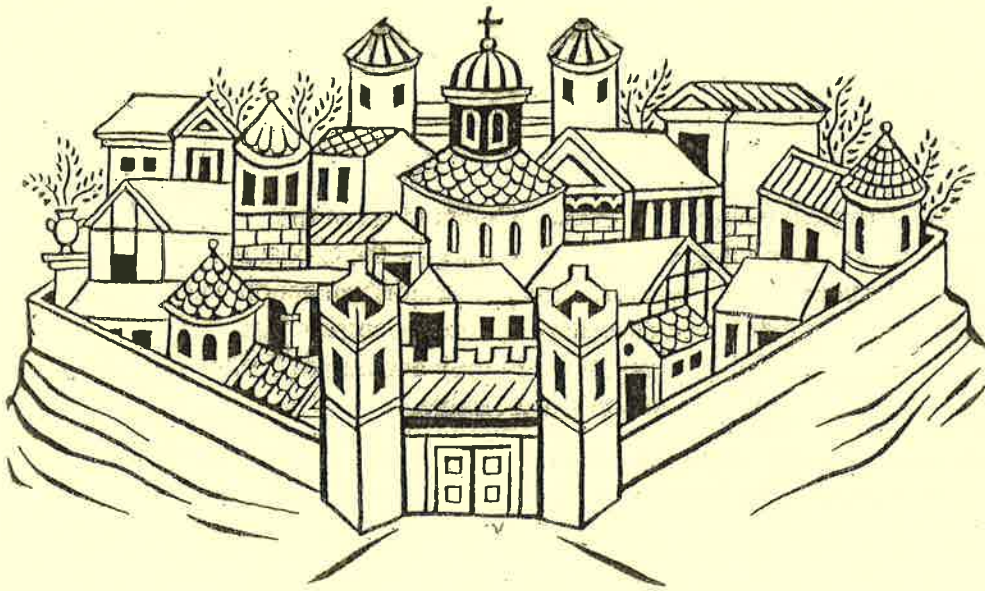
### Almsgiving:

- Study Church teaching on social justice in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (the section on Commandments 5-10) as well as recent papal teaching in Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation: *The Joy of the Gospel*.
- Obtain, read, and reflect on "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" with the 2011 introduction, our nation's Bishops teaching on helping form our consciences in this election year available at *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.org* or if do not have internet access you can obtain a hard printed copy by stopping at the parish



office

- Donate personal possessions (in good repair) such as excess clothing to the local clothing collection site (Bethesda Lutheran Church)
- Donate time/volunteer for service during Lent, e.g. Food at First, a homeless shelter, nursing home or some similar program
- Learn about the programs in which our parish Social Justice Committee is involved and prayerfully discern involvement at some level
- Train to be a hospice volunteer or support the work of the Hospice movement
- Give the gift of sight by donating old eyeglasses or unused frames to the local Lion's Club who recycle them and distribute to the needy
- Donate diapers, formula, baby clothing, baby furniture and maternity clothing to Birthright or the Gabriel Project. If you knit or crochet, make booties or baby blankets and donate them to either of these two organizations which support a life affirming alternative to abortion.
- Consider volunteering in the office of the local "Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance" agency



I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem . . . (Revelation 21:2)