

# WE THIRST FOR YOU, O LORD



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*Before Jesus began his ministry, the Spirit “drove him out into the desert.” After forty days he emerged to announce that the kingdom of God was at hand and to encourage the people to “repent, and believe in the gospel.” As we begin the season of Lent, we, too, enter into our own desert.*

## Repent and Believe

Mark 1:12–15

Today’s Gospel contains two important aspects to the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. We are told that he went out into the desert for forty days, where he was tempted by Satan and ministered to by angels. Next Mark says that,

after the death of John the Baptist, Jesus announced that the “time of fulfilment” was at hand and began his preaching and teaching.

What lesson lies here for us? While Lent is a time of service to others, it must also be a time of preparation and renewal of self. We cannot give what we do not have. Just as Jesus had to spend time in the desert, so we, too, need to take time this season to allow God to show us where we need to change and give us the courage and conviction to act on those changes. This give and take is part of the flow of life and one of the great lessons of Lent.

### FOR REFLECTION

- › What will I do this Lent as an outward sign of my repentance?
- › How might I deepen my relationship with God this holy season?
- › How do I overcome temptation?

### Lenten Prayer

Unto to you, I cry, my God!

“You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” — Genesis 3:19

*Lord, help us see today  
and all of its stresses  
in the light of your eternal love.*



### Catechism CONNECTION

“By the solemn forty days of Lent the Church unites herself each year to the mystery of Jesus in the desert.” — *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 540



## OUR FAITH

# Forty Days in the Desert

**W**hy did Jesus spend forty days in the desert before beginning his ministry? The number forty has a special meaning in Scripture and is symbolic of preparation before a major life change. Moses spent forty days fasting and praying on Mount Zion when he received the Ten Commandments (Ex 34:28). An Israelite patrol spent forty days spying on the land of Canaan before reporting back to Moses and Aaron (Nm 13:25). And the entire Israelite people spent forty years wandering in the desert before gaining access to the promised land (Nm 14:34). Jesus likewise spent forty days before leaving his old life as the son of the carpenter to bring new life to the entire world.

## Fasting and Abstinence



- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of both abstinence and fasting.
- Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence (abstaining from meat).
- Ash Wednesday is forty-six days before Easter, but Lent is considered forty days long, because Sundays are not counted as days of Lent.

## FAMILY ACTIVITY

# Family Calvary Stones

**T**he days of Lent have traditionally been used as a spiritual pilgrimage, during which we symbolically travel with Jesus to his death on the cross. To help emphasize the idea of Lent as a journey, collect forty small stones, one for each day of the season. (These are sometimes available at craft stores.) Each night at dinner, pray for one person and write his or her name with a marker on one of the pebbles. Collect the stones in a small bowl, and during Holy Week use them to make a “mound” of prayer that holds up a crucifix.



## SIGNS OF THE SEASON

### Lent

The word “Lent” has a specific religious connotation today, but originally it was used to mean “spring.”

### The Color Purple

The deep purple color that fills the Church during Lent symbolizes Christ’s suffering and death but, because purple is also the color of royalty, it foreshadows Christ’s kingship and resurrection.



Designpics

### Ash Wednesday

On this first day of Lent, we receive ashes in the form of a cross on our forehead and are reminded to “turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel.” In receiving ashes, we embrace Jesus’ journey: the cross of suffering and the promise of resurrection. We are marked as believers, as sinners, and as people in need of Christ’s forgiveness and salvation.



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## IOWA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

The Public Policy Voice of the Bishops of Iowa

### **The Catholic bishops of Iowa today issued a statement in opposition to the death penalty. Here is the complete text:**

We speak in opposition to the use of the death penalty in any form and to its possible reinstatement in Iowa.

Marking the 25th anniversary of the Catechism of the Catholic Church last fall, Pope Francis said the death penalty is, in itself, "contrary to the Gospel, because a decision is voluntarily made to suppress a human life, which is always sacred in the eyes of the Creator and of whom, in the last analysis, only God can be the true judge and guarantor."

It is a duty of the state to punish offenders and defend the common good. However, in a modern society where the death penalty is not needed to maintain public safety, punishment must "correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and [be] more in conformity to the dignity of the human person," (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2267). For example, in Iowa, a conviction of first-degree murder means life in prison without parole.

In addition, the application of the death penalty has been deeply flawed in our country:

More than 160 persons have been found innocent while on death row. It is likely that innocent persons have been executed.

There is racial bias. More than three-fourths of death row defendants have been executed for killing white victims, even though African-Americans make up about half of all homicide victims.

The use of the death penalty is a long and costly process, more expensive than life without parole.

We oppose reinstatement of the death penalty in order to send the message that the cycle of violence can be broken without taking life. We ask the people of Iowa, and especially members of the Catholic Church, to join us in opposing capital punishment out of respect for our common human dignity and in light of the teachings of Jesus about vengeance.

Archbishop Michael Jackels of Dubuque  
Bishop R. Walker Nickless of Sioux City  
Bishop Richard Pates of Des Moines  
Bishop Thomas Zinkula of Davenport



# Social Justice Newsletter February 2018

A Committee of St. Cecilia's Catholic Church



## ENCOUNTER LENT 2018

**CRS Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services' Lenten faith-in-action program.** It offers opportunities for us to engage daily in the spiritual pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. And, it's an opportunity for us as a parish and school to come together as a community and reflect on what it means to live out our Gospel call to go out and encounter those most in need.

We will reflect on how an encounter with our neighbor can be transformative.

We will see how our prayers, fasting and almsgiving can support those worldwide who are forced to flee their homes to find safety or better opportunities.



**Join our faith community**—and nearly 14,000 Catholic communities across the United States—in a life-changing Lenten journey of encounter with CRS Rice Bowl. **Pick up your family's Rice Bowl, starting on Ash Wednesday, from the baskets located on either side of the entrance to the church or in the Narthex.** During the 40 days of Lent, as companions on the journey, we will encounter our neighbor.

**CRS Rice Bowl—Stations of the Cross ... Walk alongside Christ on the journey of his Passion and remember our brothers and sisters here and around the world who experience suffering and poverty each day.**

*Prayer—Holy God, be with us during this Lenten season as we meditate on your Son's journey to Calvary. Remind us that still, in this present day, many of your children continue that walk to Calvary, carrying heavy, difficult crosses. May we be Simon to those whose burdens are too heavy to be borne alone.*



*May we be Veronica to those who need the touch of love and comfort. And may we, struggling with our own crosses, always remember your promises of justice, mercy and peace. Amen*



**Please Join the members of the St. Cecilia Social Justice Committee on Friday March 2, 5:30 p.m. at St. Cecilia's Church as we remember Jesus in the stations of the cross and His love for those in need.**

(for the complete CRS Stations of the Cross for Lent go to [crsricebowl.org](http://crsricebowl.org))

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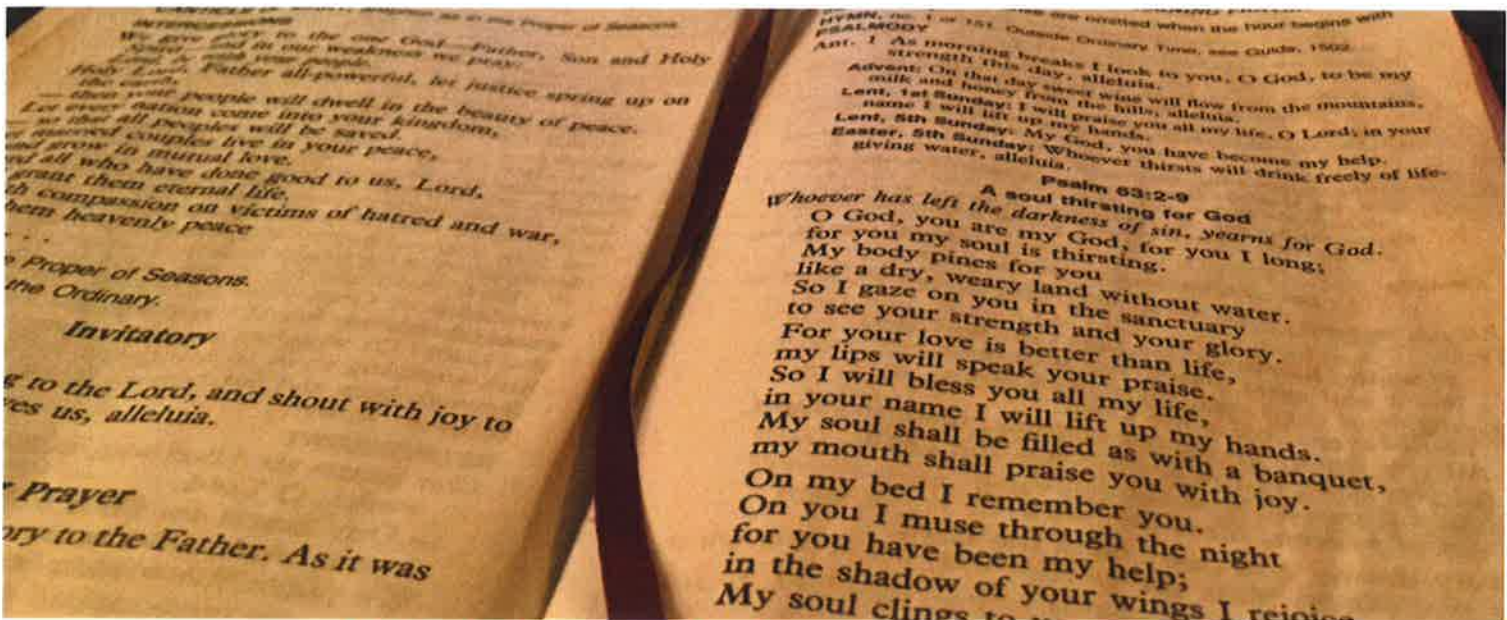
The Social Justice Committee meets on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Oscar Romero Room. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**CONSIDER BECOMING A MEMBER**



St. Cecilia's Parish Life Committee organized a clothing drive for the Waterloo, IA Saint Vincent de Paul Society the weekend of January 27-28, 2018—it was an amazing site to behold as piles and piles of clothing and household items were donated by St. Cecilia parishioners to our Diocesan friends in Eastern Iowa. We are a **UNITED giving community.**





## A Workshop on the Liturgy of the Hours

Hosted by the Deacon Community

March 3, 2018 | 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. | St. Gabriel Church, Reinbeck

**The Liturgy of the Hours is the Church's response to the command to "pray always." Its purpose is to sanctify time, to consecrate the phases of our day. During every hour of every day, all around the world, bishops, priests, deacons, religious orders, and many lay people pray this prayer. Let's join them.**



Presented by:  
Dave and Jackie Harris

The Liturgy of the Hours is "part two" of the official, public worship of the Catholic Church ("part one" being the Mass). This workshop will help you discover the beauty of this prayer, how it developed before the time of Jesus, why it is relevant today, and how you can learn it and apply it to your personal prayer as well as the community prayer of your parish.

### Schedule:

8:30 a.m.      Gathering and registration  
9:00 a.m.      Morning Prayer  
3:30 p.m.      Departure

### Directions:

To St. Gabriel Church 21275 U Avenue, Reinbeck: HWY 20 (East or West) take the Dike exit and go South on U Ave. approximately seven miles.

### Registration Fee:

Registration of \$15 per person fee includes registration, refreshments, handouts and lunch. Please bring your Christian Prayer Book or order one before February 23, 2018.

### Registration Form (Due by February 23, 2018):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ +\$15.00      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ +\$15.00      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Single Volume Christian Prayer Book      +\$30.00      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Registration Fee enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Note: If you have a smart phone, The Liturgy of the Hours is available on a free app.

Send registration form and check made payable to "Archdiocese of Dubuque" to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate at PO Box 479, Dubuque