



SAINT MARY OF THE BAY, WARREN, RI
invites you to our 2021 Lenten series

WORD AND WORSHIP WEDNESDAYS

Wednesday, February 24, 7pm

Stations of the Cross with Mother Teresa

Wednesday, March 3, 7pm

Joyful Joseph: A Reflection for the Year of Saint Joseph

Wednesday, March 10, 7pm

Lenten Praise and Worship: Uplifting Music to Inspire

Wednesday, March 17, 7pm

Prayer with Patrick: What Saint Patrick Can Teach Us Today

Wednesday, March 24, 7pm

Can Pain Have Meaning? A Reflection on Redemptive Suffering

**EACH EVENT WILL BE HELD IN THE MAIN CHURCH
AND WILL INCLUDE EUCHARISTIC ADORATION
AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CONFESSION**

   **@warrencatholic**



Mass Intentions

First Week of Lent

Saturday, February 20

4pm: John Souza Jr.
Requested by wife and family

Sunday, February 21

8am: For all parishioners
10:30am: Donald Fitting
Requested by friends at RWU
6pm: Joseph Ohl, six month remembrance
Requested by Dan, Alisa, Zoe, Brigid and Xavier

Thursday, February 26

8am: Josette Costa
Requested by family

Second Sunday of Lent

Saturday, February 27

4pm: Joe Silva, 1st anniversary
Requested by his sister, Ida Hoffma

Sunday, February 28

8am: For all parishioners
10:30am: John Sienkiewicz
Requested by family
6pm: Mary Smith
Requested by the Smith Family

Sabbath@Sundown

Sunday Mass at 6pm in Saint Mary of the Bay
645 Main Street, Warren

*A warm and welcoming atmosphere for believers and seekers,
and anyone looking for prayerful refuge before a new week*

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Parish Offertory

Weekend of February 13 & 14, 2021

Budget Envelopes: \$3,927.00 Loose: \$1,385.00
Online: \$782.00
(Average Online Gift: \$24.44 Number of Users: 32)
Total: \$6,094.00

Thank you for your generosity!



Padre's Ponderings

Dear Parishioners,

We have begun the holy season of Lent. I hope that you will join us for any or all of our Lenten series, "Word and Worship Wednesdays." Each Wednesday evening will have a different theme, although each event will include Eucharistic Adoration and the opportunity for individual Confession. I hope that you will also invite friends and family to join you!

Lent, in many ways, is a season for getting back to the basics. We strip everything away that has cluttered our lives and focus on our relationship with God. We engage in prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We discipline our appetites in order to gain greater self-mastery. We recall to ourselves who we are and whose we are. Fundamentals are important and Lent helps us recover them and reflect on them more deeply.

It's very fitting, then, that during this season of "getting back to the basics," I will begin participating in a twelve-week (virtual) seminar for pastors on parish leadership. You may have heard me mention in conversation or in preaching an important book on parish renewal, *Divine Renovation: Bringing Your Parish from Maintenance to Mission*, by Fr. James Mallon. You will certainly be hearing more about it in the future! Fr. Mallon's ministry includes offering training and mentoring to pastors who are looking to ensure that their parishes remain mission-centric.

Catholic parishes in general throughout the country (and especially in the Northeast) have sought to merely *maintain* programs, leadership structures, organizational models and even facilities, that are no longer functioning as effectively as they did in a previous age. By focusing on maintaining the status quo, many parishes have begun to lose sight of the "big picture." They have forgotten why we ultimately exist as a Church, which is to bring the message of the Gospel to the world! When we start to think in terms of the "big picture" and our ultimate mission, we are freed to think bigger and bolder.

I am grateful to the team at Divine Renovation for accepting me into this program which will hopefully equip me with the tools I need as your pastor to ensure that we are a mission-driven parish. I know that we are well on the way to being just that: a community focused on Christ and sharing him with a world that desperately needs his healing and his grace. While there are many challenges ahead as a church, I also see so many signs of hope. Please pray for me and the other pastors who will be participating in this exciting program.

In other news, what have you given up for Lent? Sweets? Wine? Your favorite meal? Pope Francis recommended last year giving up "useless words, gossip, rumors, [and] tittle-tattle." Not a bad place to begin. Lenten resolutions are great, but they are of little to no avail if they do not discipline us to be more prayerful, more self-controlled, and more generous. Think of Lenten practices or sacrifices that will accomplish those ends and you may need to re-think what you wanted to give up in the first place! I know I did!

Until next week,

Fr. Joe



Please Take Note



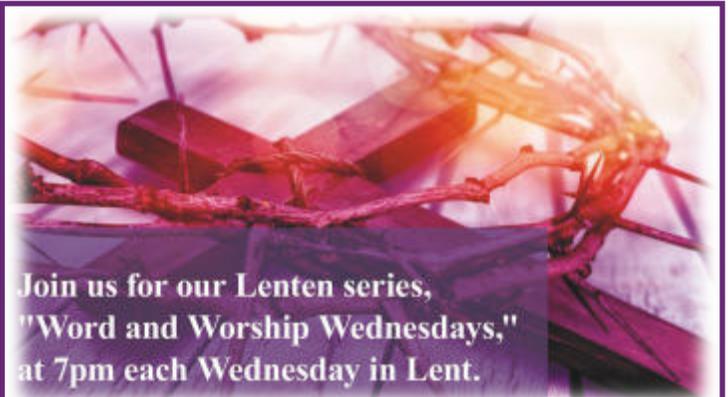
Throughout the season of Lent, an icon will be displayed in the sanctuary to provide a visual focus for our common worship. The image is called "Christ the Bridegroom" and features prominently in the Eastern liturgy of Holy Week. It portrays Christ crowned with thorns, with hands bound, wearing a mock cloak of honor and holding a mock scepter of authority. It is a particularly profound image for the season of Lent, as we recall Christ's willingness to suffer for us.

But why exactly is this image called "Christ the Bridegroom"? Throughout the scriptures, the sacred authors use the image of marriage to describe the relationship between God and his people. When Israel breaks her covenant with God, the prophets are quick to liken her actions to marital infidelity. Jesus portrays himself as a bridegroom who will make his appearance at an unknown hour (see Matthew 25:1-13). And the bible concludes with the "wedding feast of the Lamb" (Revelation 19:7-9). In Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom, God has definitively espoused his bride, the Church.

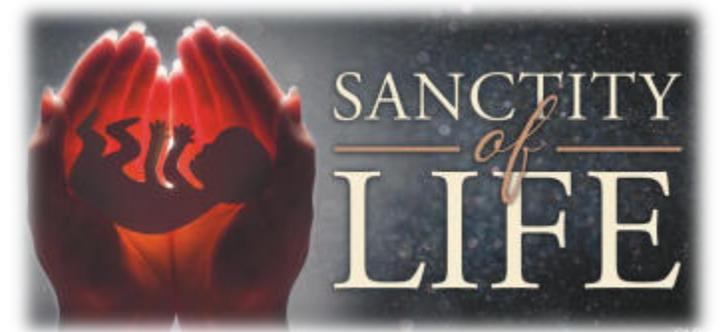
But our Bridegroom did not claim his bride finely attired in a glorious celebration. He claimed his bride by offering his life for her on the cross. So the crown and cord, which feature prominently in wedding ceremonies in many cultures to this day, are exchanged for a crown of thorns and a coarse rope. Wedding attire is exchanged for a borrowed cloak, thrown over Jesus in mockery.

The sight of the suffering Christ might have filled many with horror at the sheer ugliness of physical pain and bodily torture. But this sight for the believer is one of absolute beauty. The bride is overcome with love at this sight of her Bridegroom, knowing that his life was laid down for hers. Take a moment to visit the icon after Mass and to offer a prayer. Our Eastern brothers and sisters pray with icons frequently and often refer to them as "windows into heaven."

In praying with this icon, consider the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: *"we return to the 'two trumpets' of the Bible...to the paradox of being able to say of Christ: 'You are the fairest of the children of men,' and: 'He had no beauty, no majesty to draw our eyes, no grace to make us delight in him.' In the Passion of Christ...The experience of the beautiful has received new depth and new realism. The One who is Beauty itself let himself be slapped in the face, spat upon, crowned with thorns...However, in his Face that is so disfigured, there appears the genuine, extreme beauty: the beauty of love that goes 'to the very end'; for this reason it is revealed as greater than falsehood and violence. Whoever has perceived this beauty knows that truth, and not falsehood, is the real aspiration of the world...It is, as it were, a new trick of what is false to present itself as 'truth' and to say to us: over and above me there is basically nothing, stop seeking or even loving the truth...The icon of the crucified Christ sets us free from this deception that is so widespread today. However it imposes a condition: that we let ourselves be wounded by him, and that we believe in the Love who can risk setting aside his external beauty to proclaim, in this way, the truth of the beautiful."*



This week we will pray the **Stations of the Cross with reflections by Mother Teresa**. The night will also include Eucharistic Adoration and the opportunity for individual Confession. We hope you'll join us and bring a friend along!



40 Days for Life: The spring campaign for this year's 40dfl begins on February 17, Ash Wednesday, and continues until the end of Lent. 40dfl is 40 days of prayer and fasting for an end to abortion, for the conversion of those who support and promote abortion and for the closing of abortion clinics. Since the first 40dfl campaign in 2007 there have been 17,804 unborn babies saved; 206 abortion clinic workers have converted and left their jobs; and 107 abortion clinics have closed. The campaign involves peaceful prayer at our local Planned Parenthood or a commitment to prayer and fasting at home. **We are hoping to get 100 parishioners from SMOB to make a commitment during this campaign**, whether it's at the abortion clinic or from home. Please contact Barbara Fisher at 401 323 9723 or at bythekickie@gmail.com if you want to participate or if you have any questions. Thank you!





Memorial Gifts

We are often asked about opportunities for **memorial gifts**. Memorial gifts are a concrete way to honor the memory of a deceased loved one, to ensure that they are prayerfully remembered to God, and to honor God through a contribution for public worship.

We are especially grateful to **Gary and Bethany Furtado** who recently made a generous donation in memory of their mothers, **Virginia A. Furtado** and **Muriel J. Morris**. Gary and Bethany's gift will enable the purchase of a new set of **sanctuary appointments**, which should arrive just in time for Easter. Thank you, Gary and Bethany!

A generous donor who wishes to remain anonymous has made a substantive gift which will fund the **installation of our new screen and projector**, as well as a **camera for live-streaming**. We hope that that project will be completed by Easter. Thank you!

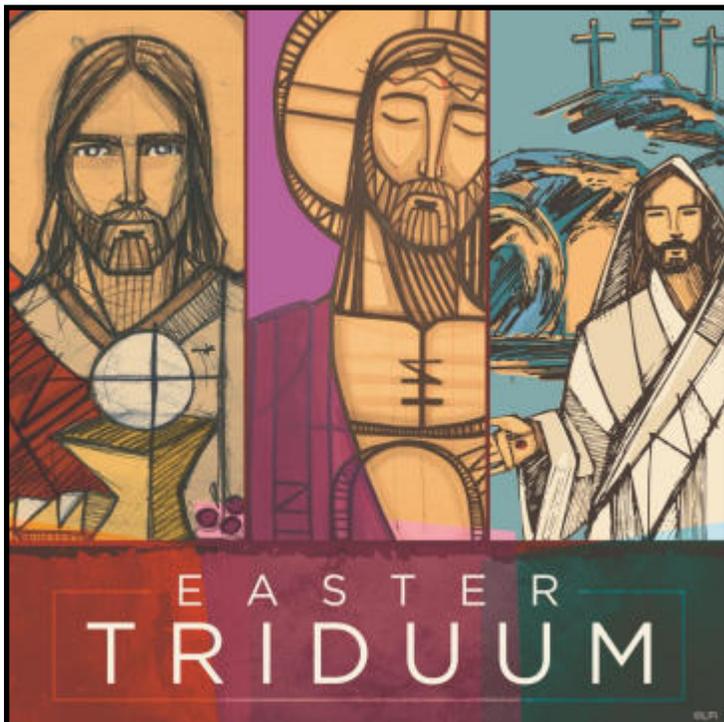


Speaking of Easter, it is our hope that the new **Easter Candle**, which will be blessed and lit at the Easter Vigil, will be donated in memory of a deceased relative or friend of your family. The Easter Candle symbolizes Christ's resurrection, so it is particularly fitting that it be given in memory of someone who has died. Whoever donates the candle will hold it as it is inscribed, blessed and lit at the Easter Vigil; and will present the candle during our celebration in the night. The Easter Candle remains lit at every liturgy throughout the fifty days of the Easter season and continues to be lit at every parish funeral and at every baptism throughout the entire year. This year's candle, fashioned by Marklin Candle Company in New Hampshire, is truly a work of art in wax. If you are interested in donating this year's Easter Candle and in participating more closely in the most sacred liturgy of the entire year, please call Fr. Joe at 401-245-7000, extension 11.

We still also have available for memorialization:

- A white altar cloth for Christmas and Easter
- A set of white cloths for Ordinary Time
- A purple altar cloth for Advent
- A purple altar cloth for Lent
- A red altar cloth for Palm Sunday and Pentecost
- A set of cloths for occasional uses, such as funerals
- A set of ciboria (receptacles for holding the consecrated hosts).

Please prayerfully consider honoring the memory of a deceased loved one through a **memorial gift**. Call the parish office at 401-245-7000 or email stmary02885@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



April 1, 2021 - Maundy Thursday

7pm: Mass of the Lord's Supper
The Chapel of Resevation will remain open until midnight for private prayer and devotion
(No 8am morning Mass)

April 2, 2021 - Good Friday

3pm: Stations of the Cross
7pm: Celebration of the Lord's Passion
(No 8am morning Mass)

April 3, 2021 - Holy Saturday

8pm: Easter Vigil in the Holy Night
(No Confessions, No 4pm Mass)

Please mark your calendars now and plan on joining us for the Paschal Triduum. These are the three most sacred days of the year for Christians, and the celebrations on each day almost form a single, continuous liturgy. The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night is the most solemn celebration of the entire liturgical year. People are often willing to stay up late for a Mass at night on Christmas Eve, but are less willing to come to the Easter Vigil! We strongly urge you to plan on participating this year. It will be the culmination of our parish observance of Lent and shouldn't be missed except for a serious reason. We will open the Easter Vigil with these words: "Dear brothers and sisters, on this most sacred night, in which our Lord Jesus Christ passed over from death to life, the Church calls upon her sons and daughters, scattered throughout the world, to come together to watch and pray." May we heed that invitation of the Church and gather together as one community of faith to mark the most sacred of nights and the central mystery of our salvation.

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