

300 Clinton Avenue
North Plainfield, NJ 07063-1613
Phone: (908) 754-8812
Fax: (908) 754-0120

Email: stlukesinfo@gmail.com

Website: www.stlukenp.weconnect.com
<https://facebook.com.StLukesRCChurch/>

The Church of St. Luke

Roman Catholic Diocese of Metuchen

*We come together as a community of faith
to celebrate our life together in Christ.*

Rev. Msgr. Michael Corona
Deacon Glenn Robitaille

Mass Schedule - Church

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm

Sunday: 10:00am

Daily Mass

Monday to Friday

7:30am (Parish Center Chapel)

Holy Days of Obligation

(Check bulletin for time)

Reconciliation During Lent

Saturdays 4:00-4:45 pm

Sundays 9:00-9:30 am

or by calling the Rectory.

Anointing of the Sick

Call the Rectory if a family member or friend is in the hospital or ill.

Religious Education (Sunday)

Grades Kg.- 8.....8:45-9:50am

Parish Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday

9:00am - 12:30pm

Tuesday and Friday

10:00am - 1:30pm

Parish Trustees

Kenneth E. Phillips, Sr.

Elizabeth Rifino

Parish Staff

Parish Secretary

Jean Tietjen

Assistant Parish Secretary

Linda Smith

(908) 754-8812, ext. 3

stlukesinfo@gmail.com

Director of Religious Education

Jeanne Enteman (908) 754-8812, ext. 5

enteman@verizon.net

Youth Minister

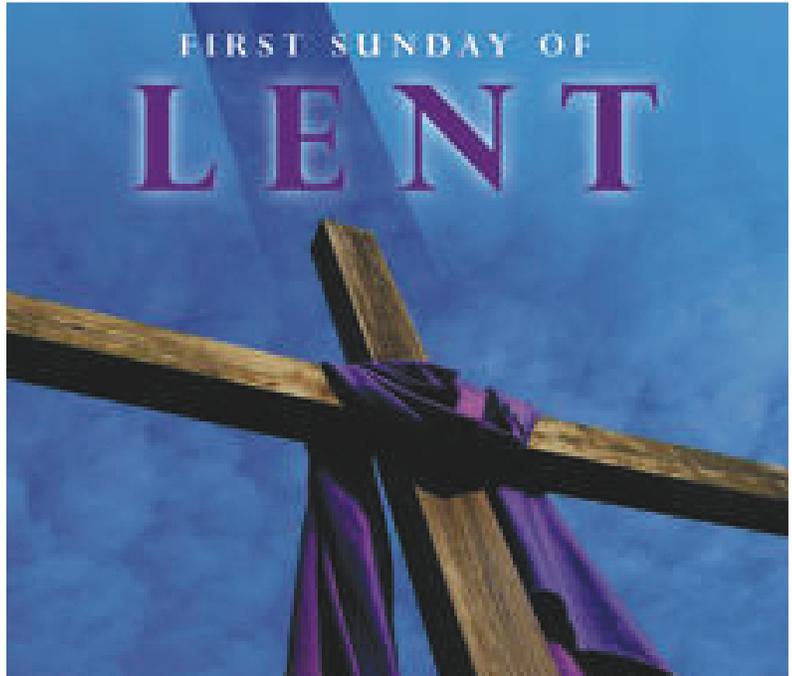
Lidia D'Armiento (908) 591-8397

stlukesyouthnp@gmail.com

Bulletin Information

Rectory Office (908) 754-8812 ext.3

stlukesinfo@gmail.com



Sacrament of Baptism: Baptisms are celebrated after Sunday Mass by scheduled appointment. Parents are asked to call the Rectory Office at (908) 754-8812 to schedule a date and make arrangements to attend the Baptismal Instruction Program. Attendance at one session is required with both the parents and godparents.

Sacrament of Marriage: Diocesan policy requires that couples participate in a marriage preparation program prior to their wedding at least one year in advance. Call the Rectory Office to make an appointment with the Pastor.

Sacrament of Holy Orders and Consecrated Life: Anyone interested in learning more about a life of service to the People of God as a priest, deacon, a religious brother or sister, is encouraged to call the Rectory for further information.

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults): A small group process by which a person inquires into becoming a Catholic, and may receive the Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, First Eucharist, and Confirmation, followed by continued growth in the faith. Anyone interested, may contact the Rectory.

Parish Membership: All new families and individuals are welcome to our Parish. We welcome you to our spiritual and social life. Call the Rectory to register and become involved in our spiritual and social life. Download a Registration form from our website, complete and mail to address indicated, or call the Rectory.



First Sunday Of Lent
February 21, 2021



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Four days ago, we observed Ash Wednesday with the hearing of God's Word and ashes placed on our foreheads. The holy season of Lent has begun. We are set on a journey that takes us from the bucolic hills of Galilee to the bloody horror of Calvary. We make this journey not on our own, but rather following our Lord who goes before us. We follow not quite sure why he must go this way or what it is that compels us to walk where he walks. But follow we must.

Today's lessons span millennia, reaching back to those near legendary times of Noah and forward to that day when days will be no more. Our worship seems framed by these distant, mysterious moments when God acts as He speaks, telling us who we are and how we got to where we are and what by His grace we can become.

I sense a heartbeat to these texts that might be missed if we fix our minds on what are really side issues. We are tempted to focus on events following a flood crowned by an arc of color, or brood at length about our Lord's temptations in the desert, or spend energy speculating what Saint Peter meant when he spoke of the risen One preaching to "spirits in prison." Those are fascinating aspects of these stories, but in my judgment, not the heartbeat pulsing through the lessons like blood coursing through our veins.

No, what is here in these Scripture Lessons is a larger theme, a grander truth that commands our attention this first Sunday of Lent. In a word, let's "overhear" these three lessons, asking what is behind, under, around, and even beyond these stories. And if you will, and if we can, I believe we will overhear the story that shows us the great lengths God goes to save us, love us, bless us, call us, and create in us the good work of grace. It is this good grace work that is the essence of the Lenten journey. What is God saying to us?

In our Old Testament Lesson, we see Noah's invitation to work with God in making right what was wrong with creation. The story of God saving humanity and the animals using an ark hewn from wood speaks of God's patience with us. God, the eternal Creator and Sustainer of life could have chosen to wipe the slate clean, consigning all creation to judgment and destruction. But the Lesson tells us that God went to great lengths to involve one person and his small family as partners in making this world what God created it to be.

If God would go to such lengths to reclaim his broken creation, what lengths might He go to love us back to Himself? We who know we are of the dust and return to dust, are the beloved sons and daughters of God. This world that God pronounced "good" is still God's world needing our attention, our involvement, our care. The rainbow still splashes across the sky after a storm to remind us the lengths God went long ago and the lengths God still goes to love us into relationship with Him.

Our Gospel lesson shows us another dimension to this heartbeat pulsing through our Scriptures. Our Lord, still feeling baptismal waters dripping from his brow, is led into the wilderness and there, after 40 days of fasting, is tempted by the devil. Saint Mark's telling of this event is the briefest in the Gospels: the Spirit urges our Lord to go into the wilderness where he is tempted 40 days by the devil, his only companions are "wild beasts", and finally, angels come to minister to him. Out of the crucible of those 40 days, Jesus goes to Galilee declaring, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news."

What lengths will God go to love us back to himself? Jesus endured the loneliness and brutality of a 40 day fast, the madness of Satan's temptations, and the confusion of knowing his cousin John was imprisoned. Physically and emotionally spent, he begins his ministry admonishing us to repent and believe good news. Good news! Did you hear it? Good news! Here is a

picture of God's unfailing generosity, this grace work that God does through the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here we see not so much a picture of a wilderness fast and the devil's nefarious attempts to trap our Lord, but God's work to bring us good news even when life seems to hang by the thinnest of threads.

But the scale of God's work does not end either in the barrenness of a desert or the hills of lush Galilee. Saint Peter, looking back on the entire life, death, and resurrection of our Lord tells us the lengths God went to save not only us, but all creation for all time. Writing to Christians feeling the lash of Roman persecution, Peter reminds them that Jesus suffered unto death, but that God "made him alive in the Spirit" by his resurrection from the dead.

Though I don't now, nor will I ever completely understand the sentences that follow, Saint Peter tells us the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is so central to God's work that the risen One preached good news to the disobedient men and women who perished in the days of Noah. This grace work of God in Jesus Christ, the good news we believe and in which we live spans the centuries, showing us the lengths to which God has gone and to which God will go to bring us into loving relationship with him.

In this holy season that we began on Ash Wednesday, we may relinquish some pleasure or commit to a renewed awareness of God's claims on our lives---all good choices in these days---but the heartbeat of Lent is not what we *give up*, but what God *gave out*, the lengths to which God went to show us the way of love is His and our way of life. No fast, no measured devotion, no hours in prayer or acts of mercy compare to what God did for us in Jesus Christ. So as we journey in these days, let's ponder often and deeply the great lengths to which God has gone and still goes to love us into His life of love and grace.

In your charity, please pray for the sick and lonely-visit them if you can. Also please remember to pray for all who have wandered from the Faith and all who have died especially the babies who have been killed through abortion this past week and their parents.

May God always be pleased with us. Monsignor Michael

 **Mass Intentions
for the Week**

Saturday, 5:00 PM	February 20 People of the Parish
Sunday, 10:00 AM	February 21 1st Sunday In Lent Jerry Cozewith r/o Gil & Peggy Olini
Monday, 7:30 AM	February 22 No Intention
Tuesday, 7:30 AM	February 23 Bob Mayer r/o June Diller
Wednesday, 7:30 AM	February 24 People of the Parish
Thursday 7:30 AM	February 25 No Intention
Friday, 7:30 AM	February 26 No Intention
Saturday, 5:00 PM	February 27 Theresa Senna r/o Nieces & Nephew
Sunday, 10:00AM	February 28 2nd Sunday In Lent People of the Parish

O Lord, be present with all those who serve our country. Comfort their spirits with your divine presence. Keep them close to You & grant them strength, wisdom & grace. In your kindness we ask you to remember the sick members of our parish, & those who reside in nursing homes & senior care facilities. & those in need of our prayers.

A special thank you to all the Medical Personnel and First Responders who continue to sacrifice for others on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic. Please continue to keep them all in your prayers.

Mass Intentions and Sanctuary Candles are arranged through the **Rectory Office** by calling (908) 754-8812, or by sending an email message to stlukesinfo@gmail.com. Personal visits to arrange intentions are always welcomed.

READINGS THIS WEEKEND

First Reading Genesis 9:8-15: God establishes a covenant with Noah, giving a rainbow as its sign.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22: In our baptism, we are saved through Christ's death and Resurrection.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:12-15: Jesus is tempted in the desert by Satan.

First Sunday Of Lent

"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God..." - Mark 1:14

Do you ever think about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to come into Galilee, knowing that John had just been arrested for teaching the same message that Jesus was proclaiming. It must have taken great love and trust for Jesus to do what the Father had sent Him here on earth to do. In the same way, following a life of stewardship takes great love and trust from us. We must be willing to surrender completely to God, trusting that God will always give us all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.

Pope's Intentions for February

Violence Against Women: We pray for women who are victims of violence, that they may be protected by society and have their sufferings considered and heeded.

Lenten Fast and Abstinence Observance:

Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence. The norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59.

When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding from age 14 onwards.

If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the "paschal fast" to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily his Resurrection.



Stations of the Cross

Fridays at 7 pm in the chapel.

The church is open for private prayer Mon., Wed., & Friday from 10 am to 12 pm

St. Luke Family Ministry



Remember to please continue supporting our Heart to Heart contribution basket.

Parishioners!! The Heart-to-Heart Ministry is accepting non-perishable food items (soups, tuna, canned vegetables, fruits, mac & cheese, pasta, pasta sauce, rice, dried beans, cereal, cookies, juices), diapers, & personal care products, as well as food gift cards for local victims of the COVID-19 pandemic. We wish to continue to support our local Fish and other community food banks. We anticipate local food needs will accelerate in the wake of unemployment due to the crisis. Please try to be generous as possible. Thank you.

If you know of individuals/families in need, please call the rectory.

Reflections On Faith meets every 2nd and 4th Sunday at **11:30 am** on ZOOM. If you wish to participate in the ZOOM meeting, please contact Jerry Mckenna at gerard1938@verizon.net or Maria D'Antuono at mdantuono23@msn.com for the meeting invitation.

Please provide the rectory office with your current email address & phone number.

GROCERY CARDS are available to purchase before & after each weekend Mass. *Volunteers needed to sell the cards, especially on Saturdays.*

If you are interested, please call the rectory.

COVID VACCINE: Individuals can register for the vaccine by going to the following website: <https://covidvaccine.nj.gov/>

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic Please call to reserve your seat. *Social distancing (6 feet) must be adhered to at all times. The pews marked with red tape & a sign are not available for seating. There is a limit of 57 people in the church.*

WEEKLY COLLECTION

Thank you and may God bless you for your continued generosity to our Parish.

February 7th \$3,120.00
Online Giving \$ 348.58

ST LUKE OFFERS ONLINE GIVING for parishioners, who prefer to donate through the convenience of automatic payments. Sign up for Online Giving at our parish website <https://stlukenp.weshareonline.org/>

HOW TO REPORT SEXUAL ABUSE

If you were sexually abused by a member of the clergy or anyone representing the Catholic Church, or you know someone who was, you are encouraged to report that abuse to law enforcement and/or contacting the Diocesan Response Officer at (908) 930-4558 (24 hrs./7days a week). For more information on how to report abuse, visit our Diocesan website: <https://diometuchen.org/report-a-suspected-abuse>



Bingo & all events have been cancelled/postponed until further notice due to the Covid-19

Erin T. Gigoux
Manager
N.J. Lic. No. 4995

Daniel M. Pellegrino
Director
N.J. Lic. No. 3128



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