

**ST. PATRICK  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Neola, IA

**Parish Office:**  
712.485.2750  
office@stpatricksneola.com

**Priest Office:**  
712.485.2753  
priest@stpatricksneola.com

**Faith Formation:**  
712.485.2754  
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**Parish Hall:**  
712.485.2433

**Website:**  
www.stpatricksneola.com



**St. Patrick Catholic Church**  
310 Avon Street  
P.O. Box 127  
Neola, IA 51559

**Administrator:** Rev. Julius Itamid  
**Deacon:** Rev. Mr. Scott Brooks  
**Faith Formation Director:** Shannon Nye  
**Business Manager:** RaeShelle Jensen

**MASS TIMES:**

Weekdays: See page 2 for schedule  
Saturday Evening: 5:30 PM (April to September)  
4:00 PM (October to March)  
Sunday Morning: 9:30 AM  
Holidays: As announced in the bulletin  
Reconciliation: First Saturday evening before Mass

**ST. COLUMBANUS  
CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Weston, IA



**St. Columbanus Catholic Church**  
22720 Weston Ave  
Underwood, IA 51576-3920  
Served from Neola

**MASS TIMES:**

Sunday Morning: 8:00 AM  
Holidays: As announced in the bulletin  
Reconciliation by appointment

*March 1/2, 2025*  
*Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

READING I Sirach 27:4-7  
PSALM 92: Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.  
READING II 1 Corinthians 15:54-58  
GOSPEL Luke 6:39-45

*March 5, 2025*  
*Ash Wednesday*

READING I Joel 2:12-18  
PSALM 51: Be merciful, O Lord,  
for we have sinned.  
READING II 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2  
GOSPEL Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

*March 8/9, 2025*  
*First Sunday of Lent*

READING I Deuteronomy 26:4-10  
PSALM 91: Be with me, Lord,  
when I am in trouble.  
READING II Romans 10:8-13  
GOSPEL Luke 4:1-13

**Introduction to the Liturgy of the Day**

Taken from "Pastoral Patterns" by GIA Publications, Inc.

As we approach the penitential season of Lent, we hear a warning from Jesus about sin. Don't focus on the sins of your brother, your sister, or your neighbor; look at your own sins. Every year, Lent affords us the opportunity to recognize our sinfulness and our need for God's forgiveness, which Jesus offers us most dramatically on the cross. Gathered for Mass today on the eve of Lent, let us commit ourselves to recognizing our own faults and failures, repenting of our sins, and resolving to follow the Lord more faithfully.

**Introduction to the Liturgy of the Word**

Taken from "Pastoral Patterns" by GIA Publications, Inc.

We begin our journey into God's word today with some ancient proverbs, collected by Sirach to teach morality. What we say and what we do reveal the kind of person we are. Paul explains that because of Jesus, sin has been defeated and death cannot win in the end. In the Gospel, Jesus warns his disciples about being blind to one's own sins while at the same time judging others for theirs. May today's readings lead us to examine our words and actions and reflect on what they reveal to others.

It's very easy to be judgmental, especially these days. Social media tends to encourage and reinforce that behavior. Before we know it, we've disparaged someone for what they said or did. Let today's Gospel be a warning to us. Notice that it offers an alternative. Refocus. When it comes to failings, look in the mirror, not out to the world. Especially as we enter Lent, we should practice examining our consciences. If we do so honestly, we can identify how to improve ourselves... and the way we see others. Note also the way Jesus counsels us to handle the faults in others. We're not told to condemn our brother or accuse our sister. No, we're called to kindly help them. Then both you and them will be better.

**Question of the Week**

Taken from "Pastoral Patterns" by GIA Publications, Inc.

What beam in my eye will I remove this Lent? What fruit will I produce during Lent? In other words, what two concrete things will I do to see more clearly and to contribute to Jesus' mission?



### Weekday Masses

Mar 3- No Mass  
 Mar 4 - Jerry Konz ..... 8:30 AM  
 Mar 5 - **Ash Wednesday** - St Patrick ..... 6:30 PM  
 Mar 6 - No Mass  
 Mar 7 - No Mass

### Weekend Masses

Mar 8 - St. Patrick Parish - Cliff & Clara Talty ..... 4:00 PM  
 Mar 9 - St. Columbanus Parish ..... 8:00 AM  
 Mar 9 - St. Patrick Parish - Ray & Loretta Stinn ..... 9:30 AM

### MARCH 5, 2025 - 6:30 PM - ASH WEDNESDAY

Lector - RaeShelle Jensen  
 Servers - None  
 EME - Scott Brooks, Brittany Busch, Eric Busch

### MARCH 8, 2025 - 4:00 PM

Lector - Stacie Denning  
 Servers - None

EME - Scott Brooks  
 Travis Bolte  
 Andrea Bolte

### MARCH 9, 2025 - 9:30 AM

Lector - 3rd Grade Class  
 Servers - Vivian Gross  
 Grace Konz  
 EME - Scott Brooks  
 Jody Cook  
 Rhea Gross

### MARCH 15, 2025 - 4:00 PM

Lector - Max Michels  
 Servers - None  
 EME - Scott Brooks  
 David Mann  
 Maureen Mann

### MARCH 16, 2025 - 9:30 AM

Lector - Corey Hough  
 Servers - Haley & Jordan Harder  
 EME - Jenny Hall  
 Chad Harder  
 Kari Kunze

### MARCH 22, 2025 - 4:00 PM

Lector - Travis Bolte  
 Servers - None  
 EME - Scott Brooks  
 Mary Ann Thomas  
 Bonnie Wredt

### MARCH 23, 2025 - 9:30 AM

Lector - Matt Brummett  
 Servers - Connor & Elena Brummett  
 EME - Emily Leaders  
 Angie Kozeal  
 Kaitlin Kozeal

### TITHE COUNTERS

Mar 2 - Diane Rodenburg	Peggy Thielen	Roger Hall
Mar 9 - Cecilia Powell	Dani Baxter	Rita Heinen
Mar 16 - Anne Brummett	Roberta Morse	Kevin Nye
Mar 23 - Mark Pogge	Sue Stenlund	Dani Baxter

### COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

Mar 2 - Norm Baker	Stacie Denning
Mar 9 - Jennifer Fischer	Carolyn McDermott
Mar 16 - Jeannie Disalvo	Roberta More
Mar 23 - Jennifer Fischer	Norm Baker

**ST. PATRICK SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION:** St. Patrick Catholic Church of Neola, IA scholarship application is now available. Applicants will need to pick up and fill out two forms. Application and Sacrament information sheet must be obtained in person, by the applicant only, from only Father Julius. Forms are not available online and will not be mailed nor emailed out. Forms must be submitted in person, by the applicant only, to only Father Julius. Mailed, emailed, scanned or faxed forms will not be accepted. Forms must be submitted before 3:00 pm CST on April 11, 2025. This scholarship is not associated with any other scholarships.

**HOO DOO PARADE FLOAT:** Exciting news! St. Patrick will be submitting a float in the parade this year. We are looking for help from our kids in the parish to help us decorate the float on Saturday, August 30th. In order to schedule a time that works for most, we have created a Doodle to find the time that suits the most people. Please go to <https://doodle.com/group-poll/participate/aOLnBlpb> and select a time. You do not have to have an account to vote. It is important to let people of Neola know we support them and are here as well! If you have any questions, please call Shannon. We also would like to know who will be able to walk in the parade with us as well! Please email me at [dre@stpatricksneola](mailto:dre@stpatricksneola) or call 712-485-2754 and let me know if you do not have access to fill out the doodle.

### **Calendar of Events:**

Mar 5 - Ash Wednesday Mass, St Patrick, 6:30 pm  
 Mar 7 - Stations of the Cross, 5:00 pm  
 Fish Fry, 5-7 pm  
 Mar 9 - Children's Mass  
 All Family Lent Event, parish hall, after 9:30 Mass  
 Mar 11 - Pastoral Council Meeting, St Patrick, 7:00 pm  
 Mar 12 - Stations of the Cross, St Columbanus, 5:30 pm,  
 followed by Mass  
 First Reconciliation/Eucharist Class, 6:30 pm  
 Mar 14 - Stations of the Cross, 5:00 pm  
 Fish Fry, 5-7 pm  
 Mar 16 - Faith Formation Sessions, 10:45-11:45 am  
 Mar 17 - St. Patrick Day Mass, 6:30 pm  
 Mar 18 - Finance Council Meeting, St Patrick, 6:00 pm  
 Mar 19 - Confirmation Class, 7:00 pm  
 Stations of the Cross, St Columbanus, 5:30 pm,  
 followed by Mass & Finance/Pastoral Council Meeting  
 Mar 21 - Stations of the Cross, 5:00 pm  
 Fish Fry, 5-7 pm  
 Mar 22 - St. Columbanus Mass, 6:00, followed by parish potluck  
 Mar 23 - Faith Formation Sessions, 10:45-11:45 am  
 Lenten Retreat with Fr. Mike Nolte, 3-7 pm, ends with dinner  
 (High School Required)  
 Mar 25 - The Annunciation of the Lord Mass, St Patrick, 6:30 pm  
 Mar 26 - Stations of the Cross, St Columbanus, 5:30 pm,  
 followed by Mass  
 Mar 28 - Stations of the Cross, 5:00 pm  
 Fish Fry, 5-7 pm  
 Mar 29/30 - Catholic Relief Services Collection  
 Mar 30 - Faith Formation Sessions, 10:45-11:45 am  
 Reconciliation, 3-8th grades, 11:00 am  
 April 2 - Stations of the Cross, St Columbanus, 5:30 pm,  
 followed by Mass  
 First Reconciliation/Eucharist Class, 6:30 pm

### **Offering Report**

	<b>Last Week</b>	<b>Fiscal Year to Date</b>
Sunday Envelopes	\$ 2,310.00	\$ 75,174.00
Open Offering	\$ 308.00	\$ 6,910.19
Children's Offering	\$ 12.60	\$ 705.11

### **Memorial Calendar**

Mar 3 - Memorial of St. Katharine Drexel  
 Mar 4 - Memorial of St. Casimir  
 Mardi Gras / Shrove Tuesday  
 Mar 5 - Ash Wednesday (day of obligatory fast & abstinence)  
 Mar 7 - Memorial of Ss. Perpetua and Felicity  
 World Day of Prayer  
 Mar 8 - Memorial of St. John of God  
 International Women's Day  
 Mar 9 - Daylight Savings Time begins



**ANNUAL DIOCESAN APPEAL:** Today is Annual Diocesan Appeal Sunday across the Diocese of Des Moines. The Annual Diocesan Appeal gives us the opportunity to *Cultivate Connections in Christ* and support the ministries and services in this Diocese from which you and our parish benefit. Every gift, regardless of the size, is vital to the success of the Appeal. Please visit [www.DMDiocese.org/giving](http://www.DMDiocese.org/giving) to make an online gift or pick up a contribution form in the church entrances and drop it in the collection basket.

- St. Patrick's Parish goal this year is \$28,624
- St. Columbanus' Parish goal this year is \$5,799

## YOU ARE INVITED!

**WHAT:** *Rewind the Times Party*  
**WHEN:** *Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> 5:00pm to ?*  
**WHY:** *Cause we are ready to party like the good old days!*  
**HOSTED BY:** *St Patrick's Church, Dunlap*

Join us for a Catered Supper,  
 Costume Party, and 70's Dance!



**Cash Raffle**  
 CASH PRIZES 1 - \$5,000. 2 - \$1,000.  
 3 - \$500. 5 - \$100.



**Cash Prizes for Best Costume!**  
 1<sup>st</sup> Place \$100.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Place \$50.00  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Place \$25.00  
 4<sup>th</sup> Place Boones Farm  
 Strawberry Hill Wine



**Catered Meal**  
 by Staley's

# ST. PATRICK'S DAY Dinner

Saturday March 15<sup>th</sup>

HOSTED BY NEOLA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT  
 Dinner 4 pm - 7 pm Free Will Donation  
 Corn beef, cabbage, roast beef & all the trimmings

At Fire Hall 401 Front St Neola

**Neola Busy Members 4-H Breakfast**  
**Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**8:00 am to Noon**

**Neola Area Community Center**

Scrambled eggs, sausage, pancakes, biscuits &  
 gravy, cinnamon rolls, orange juice and coffee  
 Free Will Donation

**Pilgrimage to Italy with**  
**Father Dan Kirby & Father Mike Mahoney**  
**October 20-29, 2025**

Assisi \* St. Clare \* Papal Audience \* Basilica of St. Francis \* Orvieto \* The Vatican \*  
 Crypt Mass in the Basilica of St Peter \* St Paul Outside the Wall \* The Colosseum \* Rome  
 \* St. Mary Major \* Sistine Chapel \* Pantheon \* Jubilee Year 2025 \* Basilica of St. John  
 Lateran \* San Clemente \* Siena \* Catacombs of St. Priscilla

For more information, visit: <https://www.traveltymepilgrimages.com/pilgrimage-to-italy-jubilee-year-with-father-dan-kirby>

### March Birthdays

Julie Klein	1	Andrew Baxter	8	Kathleen Roane	16	Kaylee Lopez	26
Lisa Pape	1	Claire Schoening	8	Eugene Johnson	16	Evan Reineke	27
Anna Baragary	1	Kelly Alfors	9	Lexi Powell	16	Chris Corrin	28
Nancy Ryan	2	Audrey Haverkamp	10	Heath Rodenburg	17	Lori Eckrich	29
Kelly Dollen	2	Dani Baxter	10	Walter Ausdemore	17	Angie Rodenburg	29
Morgan Lausen	2	Chyane Sparks	10	Mary Beth Bladt	18	Jack Murphy	29
Adam Goeser	3	Vince Wilson	11	Pearl Huddle	18	Adam Ring	30
Melinda Bruck	3	Ashley Lopez	11	Dan McDermott	19	Isabella Buckholdt	30
Rob Larsen	4	Kurt Hulsing	12	Ellie Wollenhaupt	19	Michael Denning	31
Rachel Hundtofte	5	Joan Justice	12	Bill Busch	20		
Patrick Andersen	5	Sheila Heilman	12	Michael Ring	20		
Mike Greiner	6	Vern Bertelsen	12	Marilyn Alfors	21		
Pat Ausdemore	6	Tyler Weidner	12	Jackie Bertelsen	21		
Matt Fletcher	6	Andrew Morse	13	Jean Hofmaster	21		
Nikki Scriven	6	Pat Fischer	14	Nancy Rohatsch	22		
Darrel Petersen	7	Patricia Skretta	14	David Kramer	23		
Trenton Huebner	7	Tim Slobodnik	15	Luke Hundtofte	24		
		Sam Hulsing	16	Ben Fischer	24		

### March Anniversaries

Ryan & Lori Tiarks	1
Tony & Trisha Alfors	6
Mike & Melinda Reineke	6
Mark & Karla Pogge	9

\*Please contact the parish office  
 if we missed anyone.

We welcome you into God's family! If you are interested in learning more about our church, or would like to join, please pick up a registration form at one of the entrances of the church, stop by the parish office, or call Father Julius for an appointment.

For information about Baptism, Sacrament of the Sick, Pastoral Visitations, Reconciliation, RCIA, Marriage, Adoration, or the Prayer Chain, please visit our website at <https://stpatricksneola.com/> or contact the Parish Office at 712.485.2750.

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# Living LENT

## Lent 2025 begins with Ash Wednesday Mass at St Patrick on March 5th at 6:30 pm

**LENT BOOKS** are available in the church entrances for you to pick up. There is one book for adults/families and one for kids.

**MINISTERS NEEDED FOR HOLY WEEK:** Please see the sign-up sheet in the back of church or contact the parish office. Thank you!

**MEMORIALS:** If you'd like to make a donation (perhaps in memory of a loved one) towards the cost of the Lilies that adorn our sanctuary during the Easter season, please put your donation and the name(s) of the person in an envelope and mark it "Lilies". Drop the envelope in the collection basket or deliver it to the parish office. Deadline is Sunday, April 13th.



**COMMUNAL PENCE NIGHTS:**

- St. Columbanus - April 9th - 5:00 pm
- St. Patrick - April 15th - 7:00 pm - 2 priests will be available

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** will be held every Wednesday evening at 5:30 pm at St Columbanus Weston and every Friday evening at 5:00 pm at St Patrick Neola. We thank everyone that has signed up to lead the Stations this year. Here is the schedule for St Patrick Neola:

- March 7 - Fr Julius and Deacon Scott
- March 14 - Wollenhaupt Family
- March 21 - Samantha & Alexandra Nye
- March 28 - Wulff Family
- April 4 - Roger & Jenny Hall
- April 11 - Norm Baker & Grace Shively



## St Patrick's Hall, Neola IA

**When:** Friday, March 7                      Friday, March 28  
 Friday, March 14                      Friday, April 4  
 Friday, March 21                      Friday, April 11

**Serving Time:** 5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

**Adults: \$15.00 - Children (5-10 Yrs.): \$5.00 - Children Under 5: Free**

**Dinner includes: Fried Alaskan Pollock, Baked Potato, Orsi's Bread, Cole Slaw, Relishes, & Dessert!**

**(May substitute grilled cheese sandwich for fish)**

**For Questions, contact the Parish Office at 712.485.2750  
 For Carry Out's call 712.485.2433**

## The Healing Power of Forgiveness Lenten Retreat



Fr. Mark Nolte

**Sunday, March 23, 2025**

**St Patrick Parish Hall  
309 3rd St, Neola, IA 51559**

*3:00 pm: Session begins in the Hall  
 4:00-4:30 pm: In the Church  
 Adoration and Examination of Conscience  
 4:30 to 5:30 pm: Confession  
 5:30: Dinner in the Hall*

**Everyone is Invited!**

Fr. Mark was born February 16, 1960 and was raised in a large Catholic family in Fort Smith, Arkansas. He is one of ten children. Prior to receiving his call to the priesthood, Fr. Nolte was an Optometrist in Nashville from 1986 to 1995. Through his involvement and life-changing experiences with the Catholic charismatic renewal, he eventually felt led to join the Diocese of Nashville in 1995 to begin his studies for the priesthood. Within a few years, however, he began to feel a strong calling to religious life, particularly to a more contemplative life-style. His search for community life eventually led him to Omaha, Nebraska where he became a member of the Intercessors of the Lamb community from 1997 to 2010. Since his ordination on June 1, 2002 in the archdiocese of Omaha, Fr. Nolte has served in Omaha as the associate pastor at Holy Cross parish from 2002 to 2005, St. Margaret Mary's parish in 2006, and again at Holy Cross parish in 2012. As a member of the Intercessors of the Lamb, and in addition to his parish duties, he has also directed both public and private retreats as well as parish missions throughout the United States and abroad. In January of 2013 he returned to the diocese of Nashville and was appointed as associate pastor at St. Rose of Lima parish in Murfreesboro. He also served as pastor of St. Edward in Nashville before returning to Omaha as the pastor of St. Gerald Catholic Church in July of 2016.

## FISH FRY CIRCLE SCHEDULE:

March 7 – Fish Fry Hosted by circles:	1 – Terryl Greiner 2 – Carol Masker 3 – Jan Craft	4 – Rita Schnitker 5 – Julie McDonough 6 – Cecilia Powell
March 14 – Fish Fry Hosted by circles:	7 – Teresa Hoffman 8 – Rhea Gross 9 – Diane Rodenburg	10 – Shannon Nye 11 – Sandi Pauley 12 – Roberta Morse
March 21 – Fish Fry Hosted by circles:	13 – Jody Cook 14 – Peggy Thielen 15 – Joan Justice	16 – Mary Baker 17 – Hannah Cook 18 – Liz Lyons
March 28 – Fish Fry Hosted by circles:	1 – Terryl Greiner 2 – Carol Masker 3 – Jan Craft	4 – Rita Schnitker 5 – Julie McDonough 6 – Cecilia Powell
April 4 – Fish Fry Hosted by circles:	7 – Teresa Hoffman 8 – Rhea Gross 9 – Diane Rodenburg	10 – Shannon Nye 11 – Sandi Pauley 12 – Roberta Morse
April 11 – Fish Fry Hosted by circles:	13 – Jody Cook 14 – Peggy Thielen 15 – Joan Justice	16 – Mary Baker 17 – Hannah Cook 18 – Liz Lyons

**Circle heads: please call your people on your assigned dates.  
 Men and Women are needed. (High School helpers always appreciated!)  
 Each circle is responsible for getting bars/desserts and workers.**

**Friday help is needed:  
 Fish Preparation: 7:00 am  
 Food Preparation & Set Up: 9:00 am  
 Fish Fryers, Kitchen Help, Serving, Cashiers, & Clean-up: 4:00 pm  
 Coordinators: Shannon Nye, 712.309.1436 or RaeShelle Jensen, 402.676.1980**

# 2025 Lent Project

**The Parish Pastoral Council** at their meeting on February 12th reached out to Father Julius and voted that for this year's Lent Project, we assist both the area Food Pantry and Father Julius' home parish of St Benedict Church, Nyaje in the Archdiocese of Calabar Nigeria. Here is how you can help:

## Monetary donations:

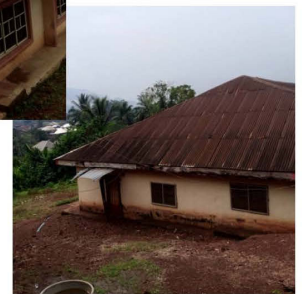
- Place in the box on the donation table at the front of church marked: "2025 Lent Project" or mail your donation directly to the parish office at P.O. Box 127, Neola IA 51559.
- Please make all checks payable to St. Patrick's Church.
- All monetary donations will be split evenly between the two organizations unless otherwise noted.

Food Drive: We will be collecting non-perishable food items and paper products. These can be placed on the donation table at the front of church. Needed items include cereal, soups, sugar, canned fruit, tuna & chicken, but any donation is appreciated.

Donations will be collected from Ash Wednesday (March 5th) through Easter Sunday (April 20th).

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**St Benedict Church, Nyaje in the Archdiocese of Calabar Nigeria:** St. Benedict is a small Rural Village Community which is Father Julius' hometown. They are in need of a new roof on their church. Any funds raised will go to help pay for the new roof.



The **Food Pantry** was in Neola for over 20 years. It started in the old Senior Citizen's Building until it was torn down. Then it was moved to the Legion until it was sold. It was then moved to the basement of the old Neola City Hall and now is located at the Minden United Church of Christ. The Food Pantry serves families in the communities of Neola, Persia, Underwood, Minden, Avoca, & Harlan.

**Hours:** Saturday morning's from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

**Contacts:** Mark Bjorling at 402-968-5357 or Geri Bjorling 402-215-4637

# Growing in FAITH™

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March 2025

**St. Patrick's Church, Neola and St. Columbanus Church, Weston**

Rev. Julius Itamid, Administrator

## One Minute Meditations

### St. Agnes of Bohemia

Imagine refusing marriage proposals from two kings and the Holy Roman Emperor.

For Agnes, daughter of Queen Constance and King Ottokar I, none but the King of Heaven could win her heart. In 1236, after financing the construction of a Poor Clare monastery in Prague, she entered this monastery with seven other noblewomen. Elected abbess, she continued to perform the lowliest tasks in the community. She exchanged letters with St. Clare of Assisi, which survive today.

### Scripture is God's love letter

Sacred Scripture isn't just a record of events that happened long ago but is intended for us today. When we read the Bible through the lens of Church teaching, we see God revealing the ways of the love of His heart for each of us, "back then" and still today.

"And what is the secret of perseverance? Love.

Fall in Love, and you will not leave him." —St.

Josemaría Escrivá

## Cultivate a heart for Lent

Just as an experienced gardener prepares the soil before planting to ensure healthy growth, we must prepare the "soil" of our hearts during Lent. This season invites us to clear away obstacles that hinder our relationship with God and nourish our spirits through prayer and the Sacraments. By doing so, we cultivate the "good fruits" that lead to a renewed and vibrant spiritual life.

**Uproot the Weeds:** Studies suggest that forming a new habit takes at least three weeks, depending on its nature. Begin by uprooting unhealthy habits and replacing them with holy, life-giving practices. Start small but be consistent — like waking up just five or ten minutes earlier to pray. Even small acts of self-discipline build the spiritual strength needed to face greater

challenges, including temptations.

**Nourish the Soil:** Spiritual growth isn't possible without grace. Mother Teresa, despite her incredible work, insisted on a daily Holy Hour, affirming, "How can we last even one day living our life without hearing Jesus say, 'I love you' — impossible." Follow her example by creating and following a routine of daily prayer, weekly Mass, and monthly Confession.

**Preserve the Fruits:** Commit to practices that bring new life, like choosing kindness over gossip, and prayer over screen time. By nurturing these habits, you'll encounter Jesus' love more deeply and reflect that love to others.

As we journey through Lent, may our hearts become fertile ground where faith, hope, and love can blossom abundantly.

**Why Do Catholics Do That?**

**Why do Catholics give something up for Lent?**

Catholics around the world make sacrifices during Lent to remind us that God is greater than anything the world can offer. By giving up small comforts or practicing acts of self-denial, we acknowledge that every good gift comes from Him. The sacrifice serves to remind us.

True love requires sacrifice. God demonstrated this perfectly by giving His only Son for our salvation (John 3:16). Our Lenten sacrifices help us imitate this divine love. By uniting our sacrifices with Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the Cross, we become more like Him.

# The virtue that leads to a balanced life

Prudence is the virtue of wise decision-making, guiding us to apply moral principles in everyday life with clarity and integrity. It empowers us to navigate complex situations with fairness and sound judgment.

**Act justly and fairly by treating others with justice**, free from favoritism or prejudice. For example, when caring for children, prudence ensures we give equal attention to each child, fostering an atmosphere of respect and equality.

**Balance courage and caution** by finding the middle ground between fear and recklessness. Prudence empowers us to make bold yet responsible choices. For

example, taking out a mortgage for a comfortable home is a prudent investment, whereas going into excessive debt to impress others is not.

**Master desires and avoid greed** to keep from becoming enslaved by life’s pleasures. This virtue helps us avoid excessive consumption. Prudence allows us to appreciate good food, fine entertainment, or the latest technology without falling into excessive consumption.

**Prudence brings us practical wisdom.** When we practice prudence, we not only make better decisions but also move closer to living a balanced, fulfilling life.

## from Scripture

### John 9:1-41, Faith gives us true sight

In this Gospel reading, Jesus cured a blind man on the Sabbath by making mud and smearing it on the man’s eyes. This cure was two-fold; the man received both physical sight and the sight of faith. As he was being questioned by the Pharisees, his understanding of who Jesus was moved from knowing Him as simply a man, to acclaiming Him as a prophet, and finally, to worshipping Him as the Son of God.

While the faith of the cured man progresses, the spiritual sight of

the Pharisees does the opposite. In their anger, they were blinded to the truth—that the curing of the blind man was God’s work. Furious that Jesus failed to observe the Sabbath, they refused to believe that the man had been blind from birth and had been healed by Jesus.

In Baptism, we are given the gift of faith—the ability to “see” God and our life in relation to him. The longer we follow Jesus and learn from Him, the better we understand Him. However, through sin, we can become spiritually blind.

## Q & A Why don’t I feel better after Confession?

After Confession, many feel lighter, more peaceful. Other times, we may feel no change, or even sadness. Still, we are forgiven. Here’s how to find peace.

**Make amends:** That lingering unease might be God’s gentle nudge to make things right. Forgiveness is given in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, but healing continues through restitution. If you confessed to stealing \$20, you’re forgiven—but you still need to return it. Making amends completes the reconciliation process.

**Reject false guilt:** “Healthy” guilt alerts us to sin, like a burglar alarm. Once you’ve confessed, the alarm should turn off. If guilt lingers, recognize it as a temptation to doubt God’s mercy. God doesn’t hold grudges and neither should you. If you’re struggling, seek help from a priest, counselor, or trusted Catholic friend.

Then do what pleases Him most – be still and let Him love you.

## Feasts & Celebrations

**March 6 - St. Colette (1447).** St. Colette was born in Corbie, France. She was orphaned at seventeen and gave her inheritance to the poor. She later became a Franciscan Tertiary and later reformed the Poor Clares. She founded seventeen convents under the reformed rule.

**March 17 – St. Patrick (493).** Born in Scotland, St. Patrick was kidnapped and brought to Ireland as a slave. He escaped but later returned to become the bishop of Ireland and is credited with establishing the Church there.

**March 19 – St. Joseph, Husband of Mary.** Jesus’ earthly foster father and husband to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph is a model of fatherhood and protector of families.

**March 20 – St. Cuthbert (687).** St. Cuthbert joined the Benedictines at the Melrose Abbey. For his holiness, fervor and charity, he was made abbot of the Lindisfarne Abbey. He retired to be a hermit.

**March 25 – the Annunciation.** The angel Gabriel visited the Blessed Virgin Mary with the extraordinary news of her role as the mother of God. Even at her young age, she had complete confidence in God’s grace and trusted in his wisdom.

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