



February 2017

Ministry Update

A newsletter from Kildare and Leighlin Faith Development Services
for parish team members and all parish ministers

Looking ahead to
Lent's destination
and our celebration
of Easter

Sunset on Holy
Saturday, April 15
8:27 p.m.



**We are called to begin the
Easter Vigil in darkness
around the Easter fire. Many
parishes, then, will be
looking at a post 9 p.m. Vigil**

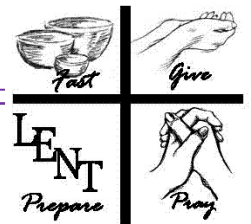
Sunrise on Easter
Sunday, April 16
6:27 a.m.

Regulations for Fasting in Lent

As Catholics we are asked to abstain from meat and to fast on two days in the year, **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday**. **Fasting means** that one full meatless meal can be eaten in the day. Two other meatless meals may be taken to maintain strength but together they should not exceed one full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juice, may be taken between meals.

The fasting regulation **applies to** all Catholics aged 18 to 59 while those aged fourteen and above are asked to abstain from meat. **Some people are not required to fast**; these include those who are sick, pregnant or nursing women and manual labourers according to need.

In the past, Irish Catholics were required to abstain from meat every Friday. While still not a requirement, the Irish Bishops' Conference has suggested it as a form of **Friday Penance** during Lent.



PREPARING PARISH LITURGIES

PRACTICAL TRAINING FOR PARISH LITURGY GROUPS IN THREE SESSIONS

This course is an initiative of the Kildare and Leighlin Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation. The three sessions will explore how to go about preparing parish liturgies as a group, culminating in the practical task of preparing the parish celebration of Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.

TIME AND VENUE:

Mount St Anne's Retreat Centre, Killenard, Co. Laois:

Thursday, March 2, 9 & 23, 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Post Easter Review session to be scheduled)

BOOKINGS: PLEASE NOTE SESSIONS LIMITED TO 60 PEOPLE

Through Christine at Faith Development Service, fds@kandle.ie / 059 9164084. Participating parishes are asked to make one booking for the group leaving name of parish, number attending and contact name and number for the group.

To help our preparation and to make sure of enough handouts for participants, bookings must be made on or before Friday, February 24. Early bookings welcome.

The Meaning of the Word Lent

The English word 'Lent' comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *Lencten*, meaning 'Spring'. In other languages the word comes from the Latin, *Quadragesima* – a period of 40 days. In the Christian tradition the forty days is understood to refer to a



time of intense prayer and preparation; we remember the biblical stories of Noah and the flood of 40 days, the forty years the Israelites spent wandering in the wilderness and Christ's forty day fast in the desert in preparation for his earthly ministry.

Things to know about Lent:

- ✝ Lent exists for the sake of Easter! It is the forty-day period of preparation for the Church's celebration of Easter.
- ✝ Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (this year, March 1) and ends before Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday (this year, April 13).
- ✝ Lent has six Sundays (Palm Sunday being the sixth Sunday.)
- ✝ There is a double focus in Lent – **baptism** and **penance**. It is the final stage of preparation for adults who will be baptised at the Easter Vigil. For those of us already baptised it is a time to recall our baptism and prepare to renew it at Easter.
- ✝ Lent calls us to a time of self-reflection, penance, and turning back to God as we ready ourselves to renew our baptism.
- ✝ It is a time to reflect on God's word to us in our lives today, to **pray, fast** and reach out to others in **charitable action**.
- ✝ We can look at Lent as a communal journey of the Christian community back to God...our **annual retreat** culminating in the joy of Easter.

Carrying the legacy of the Jubilee of Mercy into this Lent

In the Jubilee Year **Pope Francis** taught us by word and deed about God's mercy. The spiritual and corporal works of mercy remain valuable and practical ways for us to be agents of God's mercy in the world. Lent can be a time to find simple ways of carrying out some of these works in our daily life. We might take a lead from the Pope and make the Fridays of this Lent, **Fridays of Mercy**.

***Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Clothe the naked
Shelter the homeless
Visit the sick
Visit the imprisoned
Bury the dead***



***Counsel the doubtful
Instruct those lacking knowledge
Correct sinners
Comfort the sorrowful
Forgive offenses
Bear wrongs patiently
Pray for the living and the dead***

Care for our common home, the earth

See the works of mercy parish posters and kandle.ie for more

A Lenten Reflection...

There is no point in walking without a destination.
Lent is our journey with a goal. It points us to our destination.
But how do I reach you Lord and put my steps in yours?
I risk becoming self absorbed or running after distractions.
I might be tempted to go in another, less demanding direction.

Renew in me today the call of my baptism.

Orient my life towards the Easter Sun
which cuts through the fog, clearing my path.

In the Lenten season that awaits,

may your Word be a light for my footsteps.

May I enter into that still place where I may meet you on my walk...

(Author Unknown)

Some Resources for Journeying through Lent

Kildare and Leighlin Scripture Sharing
Booklets are available to order through
FDS@kandle.ie / 0599164084 at a cost of
€2.50 + p.p.

Stations of the Cross for our Times is an 18 -
page booklet available for use by parishes or
individuals from FDS at a cost of €1.50 +p.p.

The very popular Pocket Guide to Confession
is available for parishes to order free of
charge (post will be charged) through FDS.

A Date for Your Diary! Chrism Mass 2017

Monday, April 10, 7:30 p.m. in the
Cathedral of the Assumption, Carlow.

Bishop Denis warmly invites parishioners
from across the diocese to join him for this
Mass during which the priests of the
diocese will renew their priestly promises
and the Oil of Catechumen, Oil of the Sick
and Chrism will be blessed and consecrated
for use in parishes in the coming year.

***Please come early to be sure of a seat!
Parking and refreshments afterwards in
Carlow College.***

A Table Prayer for Lent

God of mercy and love,
source of our hope,
this season of Lent we ask your
blessing upon us and upon this meal
we are about to share.

As we give thanks for the gift of this
food we remember those people
who will go without a meal today.

We remember, too, those who
hunger for more than physical food.

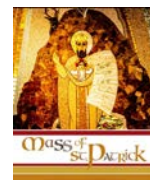
We pray that all of us will seek out
and be nourished by the daily bread
that comes from you alone.

We ask this through Christ our
Lord. AMEN.

Mass of St Patrick

New Mass Setting by Fr Liam Lawton

Dates and venues will be posted in the
coming weeks for a workshop to teach this
new Mass Setting to Choirs in the diocese.
We look forward to singing it at our Chrism
Mass. Congratulations to Fr Liam!



Trócaire

The 2017 Lent Resources draw on Trócaire's work with communities vulnerable to natural disasters in Honduras and include 'Laudato Si' Reflections', a study guide with Stations of the Cross for use in the parish, community group or home during the Lenten period. Resources are available in both English and Irish.

A Quote from the Parish Resources for Lent: Hope means to keep living amid desperation and to keep humming in the darkness. Hope is knowing that there is love. It is trust in tomorrow, it is falling asleep and waking to work when the sun rises. In the midst of a gale at sea, it is to discover land. In the eyes of another, it is to see understanding. As long as there is hope, there will also be prayer. And God will be holding you in his loving hands.

(Henri Nouwen)

A question and a prayer for ourselves as we start our Lenten journey...

In his message in this year's Scripture Sharing Booklet **Bishop Denis** writes: "It strikes me that an annual operation transformation has been part of my life long before the RTE programme, and that its name is Lent...Our Lent might begin with the prayer: '**Lord, help me to know what needs changing in my life**'. That could be the beginning of our transformation in which mediocrity is exchanged for fullness of life, just as God wants for us. But along with knowing comes work! The Lenten call to the generosity of almsgiving, a deeper commitment to prayer, and the practice of penance and fasting are purposeful actions leading us deeper into relationship with God and with one another."



Word and Music this Lent

This year we are treated to the readings of Year A in our Sunday Lectionary – the collection of readings for Mass. As well as the annual account of the temptation of Christ in the desert and the Transfiguration – both this year from the Gospel of Matthew – we get to hear as a community the stories of the woman at the well, the curing of the man born blind and the raising of Lazarus. These are powerful reminders of the gift of light, truth and life that comes to us from God through our baptism.

The music of Lent is sparse and unadorned, calling us back to basics and supporting us in word and tone on the journey we are making. We notice the absence of the Gloria and the Alleluia and we hold on to the prayer of the Lenten psalm refrains: *Have mercy on us, O Lord, for we have sinned – May your love be upon us O Lord, as we place all our trust in you – O that today you would listen to his voice, harden not your hearts – The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want – With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.*

Website Resources for Lent and Easter Triduum

kandle.ie has a number of resources for parishes, including Resources for Ash Wednesday (A Service of Ashes, Suggestions for Reaching Out from the Mass, A Rite of Sending Forth Ministers with Ashes), Lent Morning Prayer, Lenten Celebration of Evening Prayer, Preparing a Parish Celebration of Reconciliation, Sample Examinations of Conscience, Taizé Prayer Around the Cross, as well as ample notes and work sheets on the Liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. Check out iCatholic.ie for video inputs on these liturgies.