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**PASTOR'S LENTEN REFLECTION**

Henri Nouwen, a Dutch Priest, and past spiritual leader of the L'Arche Daybreak Community, wrote the following in his little book called With Burning Hearts:

*"When you are feeling only your losses, then everything around you speaks of them. The trees, the flowers, the clouds, the hills, and valleys, they all reflect your sadness. They all become mourners. When your dearest friend has died, all of nature speaks her name, the branches, heavy with leaves, weep for her, and the dahlias and rhododendrons offer their petals to cover her body. But as you keep walking forward with someone at your side, opening your heart to the mysterious truth that your friend's death was not just the end but also a new beginning, not just the cruelty of fate, but the necessary way to freedom, not just an ugly and gruesome destruction, but a suffering leading to glory, then you can gradually discern a new song sounding through creation, and going home corresponds to the deepest desire of our heart."*

Jesus death was, in many ways, no different than that of any other human being. By emptying Himself of God and choosing to become fully human at His crucifixion, while nailed to a cross, Jesus chose to die as one of us. Death is a scary thing; and make no mistake about it, it was a scary thing for Jesus as well. Did He not cry out from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And do we not also feel abandoned and very much alone at times, and perhaps especially at the loss of a loved one or the prospect of our own death?

It is true that God already knows every part of our being; those places in our hearts where the light shines, as well as those that remain in the dark. But God needs to hear from us. Good relationships are not built on assumptions about what the other one may be thinking, and our relationship with God is no different. Are we able to say to Jesus, "Yes, we trust you and entrust our lives to you.", just as Jesus entrusted Himself to God? If so, then we go beyond simply walking in Jesus presence – we dare to open ourselves to communion with Him. God desires nothing more than communion with us.

In and through Jesus, God wants, not only to teach and instruct us, but to become one with us. But we need to invite Him into our lives. And when we do a mysterious thing happens. The one whom we have invited, becomes our host. He invites us to share bread with Him, and to drink wine from His cup. He invites us further, to the most intimate place in the universe, to join Him on the cross, where God's deepest desire and ours meet. Might we now see more people coming to weekday, and weekend Masses now that we have returned to 30% capacity. LENT, calls us to embrace the CROSS, and to do our best in keeping the Lenten disciplines of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving.

Shalom, Christopher+  
Parish Priest

**Pastor**  
Rev. Father Christopher Gerard Gillen P.P.  
Diocesan Social Justice Office Rep.  
Member of Ontario Bishops' Social Affairs Commission.  
Spiritual Chaplain to Diocesan D&P  
Spiritual Director to Acts Retreat Ministry Men & Women.  
Intern to Mental Health/ Addiction Counselling Hamilton.

**Sunday Masses in Lockdown**  
Saturday Vigil 5:00 pm  
Sunday 9: 00 am.10:00 am. 11:00 am

**Weekday Masses**  
See Schedule on the inside of the bulletin

**In Office Hours**  
Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am to 12:00 pm  
**NOW OPEN**

**Administrative Assistant**  
**Financial Recorder**  
Sandy Johnson

**Reconciliation/Confessions**  
By Appointment Only in COVID-19

**Requesting Sacraments**  
Must be registered and practicing  
Call office for details

**St Martin Elementary School**  
Phone 905-957-3032

**Cemetery**  
Ron Roscovich at 905-386-0648

**Parish Organizations**  
Catholic Women's League  
President - Carolyn Vaughan

**Knights of Columbus**  
Grand Knight - Pierre Paradis  
koc.16421@gmail.com

**Facility Maintenance**  
Tom Diletti - tom.diletti@gmail.com

**Parish Groups**  
Children's Liturgy. Youth Ministry  
West Lincoln Loaf of Bread  
Parish Events Group  
Parish Financial Council  
Responsible Faith Ministry  
ACTS Retreat Teams

Diocese of St. Catharines  
**Bishop of the Diocese**  
Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.  
Diocesan Website: www.saintcd.com

**St. Martin of Tours Roman Catholic Church**



REFLECTION  
WEEK 3

Lent

**SPECIAL YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH**

166 West Street, P.O. Box 74  
Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0  
Telephone: 289-956-0221  
Email: st.martins@cogeco.ca  
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**March 7, 2021  
Year B  
The 3rd Sunday of Lent**

# March 7, 2021

## The 3rd Sunday of Lent - Year B

### MASS TIMES, INTENTIONS, PARISH CALENDAR

Mon	Mar 8	9:00 am	For the health and healing of Anthony Mancini	by Knights of Columbus
Tues	Mar 9	9:00 am	For the health and healing of Lloyd Buchan	by Knights of Columbus
Wed	Mar 10	9:00 am	For the health and healing of Andy Lipiec	by Knights of Columbus
		10:30 am - 12:pm	Gethsemane Centre Mass/ Adoration/ Confessions	Father Christopher
Thurs	Mar 11	9:00 am	Thanksgiving	by Andrew & Caroline Steger
		2:00 pm - 3: 00 pm	Centre for Mental Health & Addiction (CMAH) Zoom Meeting	Fr. Christopher
Fri	Mar 12	9:00 am	+Kaz Kolodziej	by Ursula Jasinski
		9:30 am	Stations of the Cross	
			Sacramental Confessions available after the devotional Way of the Cross	
		10:30 am	1:00 pm Pastoral Home Visits to Our Seniors	Father Christopher
		7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	<b>RETURN</b> of Praise and Worship at Gethsemane Centre -	Father Christopher
Sat	Mar 13	8:40 am - 10:00 am	That Man, Is You - Zoom Seminar/Program	Fr. Christopher
			<b>The 4th Sunday of Lent</b>	
		5:00 pm	Pro Populo Dei - For the special intentions of St. Martin's Parish Family	
Sun	Mar 14	10:00 am	+Christina Terpstra	by the deWilde family

#### PARISH ON YOUTUBE

Go to St. Martin Church Smithville

Not every Mass or other celebrations will always be LIVE! We are still learning how to Live Stream. Notices in the Mass schedule will note if the Mass is being lived streamed.

#### ONLINE EUCHARIST

##### Cathedral of St. Catharine of Alexandria

Sunday Mass live stream at 11:30 am.

Visit the diocesan website for viewing:

[www.saintcd.com](http://www.saintcd.com) or on YouTube

St. Joseph Grimsby:

<http://www.facebook.com/StJoeGrimsby>

Vision TV: Sun - 8:00 am

Mon - Fri - 8:00 am & 12:00 pm

Sat - 8:00 am & 9:30 am

Salt + Light: Sun - 11:00 am & 10:30 pm

Mon - Sat - 6:30 am, 11:00 am,

3:00 pm, 10:30 pm

Yes TV: Sun - 10:30 am & Mon - Sat - 1:00 pm

Internet : [www.dailytvmass.com](http://www.dailytvmass.com)

[www.youtube.com/dailytvmass](http://www.youtube.com/dailytvmass)

#### COVID-19 AND PARISH STEWARDSHIP

While the situation of COVID-19 continues to develop in our lives and communities, it is increasingly evident that the pandemic has had, and will continue to have for some time to come, a far reaching impact on all of us. We appeal to your generosity as we need the weekly stewardship of one and all, to maintain our financial commitments

A special thank you to those who send in their weekly/monthly stewardship. Also, to those who have begun with E-Transfers, we thank you. Stewardship Envelopes for 2021 are available for pickup at the front foyer of the church building. Call ahead to arrange a safe time for pickup.

Unfortunately, 68 stewardship boxes have not been picked up. Less than half of the parish is financially supporting us through the pandemic. Try and make an effort to support us weekly or monthly. Thank you.

#### DEVELOPMENT & PEACE CARITAS CANADA

Do you know that D&P supports a school for peasant filmmakers in Colombia?

This week in the "Share Love, Share Lent" campaign, discover the creative ways in which we assist communities in speaking for and taking charge of their own development.

In keeping with the Catholic Social Teaching principle of participation, let your Lenten journey make a difference in the world. Learn about our work and consider giving to help sustain it. For inspiration, information, and to donate, visit [devp.org/sharelent](http://devp.org/sharelent).

#### NEW STATUE OF ST. JOSEPH

In this Year of St. Joseph, we are delighted to have this beautiful new statue. Several generous parishioners have paid for this new statue for our church. We thank you for your generosity. May St. Joseph protect and guide your families in this special year. God bless you all.

#### "ETIQUETTE AT EUCHARIST"

You will be asked to sanitize your hands using the new automatic dispenser (touchless) just inside the main door.

Please wait for a hospitality team member to escort you to your assigned pew. In order to ensure physical distancing, please remain in your seats once seated. Do not decide to move because you want to sit with family or friends. We know that some have expressed a desire to sit where they usually do. This is not possible at this time.

Communicants are to remove their masks while the person ahead of them is receiving and bow; and after the priest says "the Body of Christ" and the answer "Amen" is given, only then does the communicant cross the red line (hands extended) to receive and step into the "marked circle" to consume the Bread of Life.

**We will return to our pews after receiving Holy Communion. We depart from the back pews after receiving direction from the ushers.**

Note: The washrooms are to be used only if absolutely necessary; parishioners making their way there during Mass tend to be a distraction to the others. As well, please refrain from touching any surfaces upon entering or exiting the church (anything touched has to be cleaned).

The doors are closed/locked when Mass begins for a reason: the TEAM have a right to worship and are not obliged to wait unnecessarily. Also, attending one Mass on the weekend is sufficient; please be mindful of others by not taking a space someone else could have.

Lastly, be respectful of the ushers and cleaners and their tasks; their willingness to serve is of benefit to us all because if there are no ushers and no cleaners there can be no "open church".

All of the above is for your safety and the protection of all.

It is not meant to be unwelcoming.

## **OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**

February 22, 2021

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We are hearing a lot more about 'COVID fatigue' these days. It seems that people are becoming tired of being constantly bombarded with information about the pandemic. We have medical experts, and many others, who are constantly sharing facts, figures, and opinions about the coronavirus. The truth is, that what we are being told can be contradictory and misleading at times.

With so many voices, we can feel overwhelmed and confused. This is especially true when we consider what is being said about the coronavirus vaccines. What are we to believe?

As your bishop, I would like to add one more voice that I hope will help to bring some clarity to this situation. Since medical science is not my area of expertise, I will only speak about our Church's response to the ethical use of these vaccines.

From a moral perspective, there is a significant concern because all of the current vaccines have used abortion-derived cell lines in either testing or in production. Unfortunately, there are no other ethical vaccines available at the present time. It is hoped that in the near future, a vaccine can be produced that has no connection to abortion. We need to be strong advocates, lobbying pharmaceutical companies, if we want this to happen.

At the present moment, many Catholics question whether they can receive this vaccine in good conscience. This is a serious matter, so the Church has offered some guidelines to assist in making that decision.

You will find information concerning the COVID-19 vaccines on our Diocesan Website ([www.saintcd.com](http://www.saintcd.com)). The resource is entitled, "Directives Concerning COVID-19 Vaccines." This brief two-page document summarizes the essential criteria for reflection on this issue, and I hope that you will find it helpful. It also contains links to other Church documents that you should find useful.

One of those resources is from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. I wish to highlight one paragraph from that document that offers some important considerations regarding the COVID-19 vaccination.

"At the same time, practical reason makes evident that vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, it must be voluntary. In any case, from the ethical point of view, the morality of vaccination depends not only on the duty to protect one's own health, but also on the duty to pursue the common good. In the absence of other means to stop or even prevent the epidemic, the common good may recommend vaccination, especially to protect the weakest and most exposed. Those who, however, for reasons of conscience, refuse vaccines produced with cell lines from aborted fetuses, must do their utmost to avoid, by other prophylactic means and appropriate behavior, becoming vehicles for the transmission of the infectious agent. In particular, they must avoid any risk to the health of those who cannot be vaccinated for medical or other reasons, and who are the most vulnerable" (CDF, Note on the morality of using some anti-Covid-19 vaccines, #5, December 17, 2020).

In summary, I wish to state that from a moral perspective, if certain conditions are met, a Catholic can receive this COVID-19 vaccine in good conscience. Our Diocesan Directives Document helps to explain those conditions as clearly as possible.

In her wisdom, the Church has developed moral principles that assist us when faced with challenging personal decisions. They can assist us at this moment as we consider the use of the COVID19 vaccines.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will grant us wisdom and that Our Blessed Mother will lead us to what is good, true, and beautiful. May she bring us to her Son, Jesus Christ, who will give us peace during these trying times.

With prayerful best wishes, I remain

Yours sincerely in Christ,  
Most Reverend Gerard Bergie,  
D.D. Bishop of St. Catharines

## **Lent 2021**

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This past year has been very difficult as the world has had to deal with a pandemic. We have given up a great deal and endured many difficulties. In certain ways it seems that we have been living a 'long Lent' since March of 2020. So why would we want to embrace this penitential season that begins again on Ash Wednesday? Have we not done enough already?

The truth is that we have endured a great deal; however, many of the things that we have experienced have been more of a distraction than a source of spiritual growth. A number of people feel anxious and lack a genuine sense of peace in their lives thanks to the coronavirus.

Father Jacques Philippe in his book, *Searching for and Maintaining Peace – A Small Treatise on Peace of Heart*, states: "Often, we cause ourselves to become agitated and disturbed by trying to resolve everything by ourselves, when it would be more efficacious to remain peacefully before the gaze of God and to allow Him to act and work in us with His wisdom and power, which are infinitely superior to ours." Father Philippe reminds us that when we are troubled, we need to humbly turn to the Lord if we want peace. When we only rely on ourselves, we are bound to fail and feel frustrated.

We know that after his baptism, Jesus entered the wilderness for forty days and nights. He found peace in this isolated place as he united himself with the Father. Satan tried to distract him; however, Jesus remained steadfast in his response. In his human nature, by his acts of self denial, Jesus became even more dependent on the love of his Heavenly Father. It was doing the will of the Father that gave Jesus the greatest peace.

During Lent we are called to follow the example of Jesus in the wilderness. Through our prayer, fasting and almsgiving, the three pillars of Lent, we are able to focus on God and others. The more we abandon ourselves to the love of God, the greater the peace in our lives. We do not need to worry or be afraid because we know that the Lord will look after us. We pray with greater confidence, "Thy will be done."

Despite the difficulties of this past year, let us use this Lent as a time to cultivate a peaceful heart. May we not allow ourselves to be troubled as we keep our gaze on the Lord. During this time of uncertainty, be confident in the love of God which always brings hope and healing to our anxious world.

Yours sincerely in Christ,  
Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.  
Bishop of St. Catharines

## **CHOOSE LIFE NIAGARA**

The annual general meeting will be held "virtually" on Saturday, March 6 (7:30 pm). All members are invited to attend. Members are those who subscribe to our guiding principles and who have made a donation to Choose Life Niagara in the last two years or contributed as a volunteer to the work of the association. Registration in advance is required to take part in the business meeting. Please phone 905-684-7505 or email [info@chooselife.ca](mailto:info@chooselife.ca) to register.

## **INCOME TAX RECEIPTS FOR 2020**

Are now available for pickup in the front foyer. Please call the office to arranged a safe pickup time.