

Pastor's Column

February 19th, 2023

Do Something Special for Lent

Jesus Christ: Yesterday, Today and Forever ~

Lent is a special penitential season when Catholic Christians try to become better Catholic Christians. Specifically, we try to make some sort of sacrifice for God's Glory, our salvation, and to atone for our sins and the sins of the whole world. Some people do big things and some people do just one small thing, but we should all do something for the One who did everything for us.

Lent begins this Wednesday, so if you haven't already made a Lenten resolution, please do so now. Great things, even little things, don't happen without a commitment and a plan: marriage, parenting, career, good health, etc., all take great commitments and a plan. So does our faith. Martyrs have died for the Lord, and saints have given their whole lives for Him. This Lent please join me in making a commitment, with God's grace, to a sacrifice that would please the Lord and perhaps better ourselves in the process.

I have a list below of things to consider for Lent, yet joining a book sharing group would be at the top of that list. For five weeks, over a dozen small groups will gather to share their insights from Christine Watkins concise version of *The Warning*. See last Sunday's pastor's column about this book. You can find it on our website under resources at <https://holyredeemervan.org/pastor-columns>. For those of you who have not signed up for a Lenten book sharing group, please do so if you can. You can sign up by visiting our website and clicking on the Lenten Small Faith Sharing Group button near the bottom of the home page, or at this address <https://holyredeemervan.org/parish-events/lenten-small-faith-sharing-groups>. If you don't have the internet, please stop by or call the office during office hours.

In addition to fasting on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday, and abstaining from meat on Fridays, here are some other things you might consider doing this Lent:

1. Faithfully attend Stations of the Cross at 5:30pm on Fridays.
2. Go to Confession at least once during Lent.
3. Join a book sharing group for Lent – see above.
4. In addition to Sunday Mass: attend a weekday Mass once a week.
5. Tithe 10% of your income during Lent: 5% to the parish and 5% to other Catholic charities.
6. Pray the rosary with the parishioners before Mass, with your family, or on your own.
7. Pray for five minutes in the morning and five minutes at night.
8. Pray a nine day novena (or longer). There are lots to choose from, just internet search “novenas”.
9. Daily spiritual reading.
10. Watch *The Search* from our free on-line service called *Formed* (for registered parishioners). You can find *Formed* by going to our website and clicking on the Resources tab at the top of the homepage and scroll down to the *Formed* tab. Once on *Formed*, search for *The Search*.
11. Share your faith with a family member, neighbor, or co-worker once a week.
12. Make a weekly Holy Hour in the church, preferably during 24 hour exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from Friday morning to Saturday morning.
13. Visit someone who is lonely. Best done in person but easy to do on the phone.
14. Exercise regularly.
15. Cold showers.
16. Wear a smile every day.

17. Think up your own Lenten resolution.

Here are some ideas for you to consider giving up during Lent.

- 1) Vices of the tongue: complaining, gossip, slander, swearing, using the Lord's name in vain, etc.
- 2) Cut in half or more, screen time: TV screens, internet screens, movie screens, video game screen, smart phone screen [average American teenager looks at their phone over 200 times a day – are you any better?].
- 3) Cut in half or more: radio time or electronic music (this includes talk radio and news).
- 4) Cut in half or more: nicotine, caffeine, alcohol, sweets.
- 5) Think up your own.

Remember these two things as you work through your Lenten resolutions: 1) with God's grace all good things are possible, and 2) setbacks aren't failures, they are opportunities to grow.

Finally, Mass times for Ash Wednesday this week are 8:30am, 11:00am, & 7:00pm. See you there!

May Almighty God Bless You,



Fr. Thomas Nathe

