

POINTS OF INTEREST

Support. Christians in Lebanon are suffering. Please pray for Lebanon! If you are able to relieve some of the suffering, please visit: www.caritas.org.lb

Choir Practice. Join us on Sunday, **March 8** after the Divine Liturgy, for our Choir practice in preparation for the Holy week and Easter celebrations.

Volunteers. Volunteers are needed on Saturday **March 14** at **10 AM** to help set up for the Corned beef and cabbage Luncheon the next day.

St. Patrick's Day. The Annual Corned Beef and Cabbage Luncheon will be on **March 15** at 11:00 a.m. The cost will be \$8.00 for adults; \$5.00 for children and children under 5 for free.

St Ann's Discussion Group. Join us for a Lenten Bible Study which will be held on Wednesday **March 11** at 6.30 PM in the church hall to discuss '**God's plan for Lent**'.

First Penance. The children of the first communion will have their first penance on **Sunday March 22** at 9.30 am in preparation for the first communion that will be celebrated on May 3rd.

Lenten Liturgical Schedule. Let us gather during this Lent each **Friday** at **6:30 PM** and pray the *Ramsho* and have the traditional Maronite Service of *The Adoration of the Cross*.

Bulletin Advertisements. The time has come for us again to seek sponsors for the publication of the parish bulletin. There are several options. For as little as \$8 per month, — you can publish your message or advertisement. For more info call the parish office.

Memorials & Liturgy Intentions. If you like to offer a Memorial or a Divine Liturgy intention for your loved ones, write or call the parish office. In preparing your will, you might wish to arrange for the celebration of Divine Liturgies for yourself and your family.

Verse Of The Week

"Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you."

(Cf. 2 Cor. 13:11)

St. Monica

St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine of Hippo, was born in 322 in Tagaste (located in modern-day Algeria), of christian parents. She was married to a pagan official named Patritius, who had a short temper and lived an immoral life. They three children: St. Augustine, Navigius and Perpetua. It was a source of great pain that Patritius would not permit their children to be baptized. She worried about Augustine, who lived with a young woman in Carthage who bore him an illegitimate son. Her constant prayers and tears for her son had the effect of converting her husband to Christ before his death. Augustine, however, continued on the path that led him away from Christ.

While in Carthage, Augustine fell under the influence of the heretical Manichean sect. His mother was horrified and tried to turn him away from this cult. He led a life focused on pleasure and worldly things in his early years. Though Monica despaired of his ever being brought into Christ, she consistently prayed and wept for him, and he, too, was brought into Christ and baptized. In fact, most of what is known of Monica is from Augustine's Confessions.

St. Monica is considered the patron saint of wives and mothers whose husbands or sons have gone astray.

Saint's Quote

"The proof of love is in the works. Where love exists, it works great things. But when it ceases to act, it ceases to exist."

Pope St. Gregory the Great

Finding everyday holiness in Lent

Beginning with Sunday Liturgy, there are countless ways to get in touch with the Church's spirit of Lent. There are plenty of opportunities to engage in prayer, fasting, and charity. Here are some activities you can use to enter into the spirit of the season:

Remember your own Baptism. If you have memories of your Baptism, share them with your family. If you or other family members have baptized children, ask: "How did you feel as you brought your child to the font?" If you can, ask your parents about your own Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion. Think about what it means to be part of the Body of Christ through these sacred moments.

Create a prayer space in your home. A small table with a purple cloth and a cross or candle on it is all you need. Don't feel guilty if you don't go to your prayer space to pray every day. Set it up in a place where you will see it as you come and go; let it be a quick reminder to raise a prayer of thanks and praise to God.

Bless your children. If you don't do so already, let Lent be a time to begin blessing your children by making the Sign of the Cross on their foreheads. We all need that reminder of our connection to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Clean out, give away. Make traditional spring-cleaning symbolic of the interior cleaning and clearing of clutter that Lent calls all of us to undertake. As part of your cleaning, select items or articles of clothing to donate to others. If you're giving them to someone you know, accompany the gift with a small note detailing a happy memory you associate with the item (e.g., "I wore this on my first date with my husband. May it bring you joy!") to add a personal touch.

Set out on a journey. As the Hebrews journeyed for 40 years in the desert to the Promised Land, we too journey to Easter through the 40 days of Lent — and not always in a straight line. Real spiritual growth often takes a more meandering path. Reflect on this aspect of the season, either alone or with family and friends, by mapping out and then walking a meandering path in your neighborhood or in a nearby park or woods. Create stopping points along the way at which you can pray — for friends, relatives, the neighborhood, our world.

Simplify. Try to keep things simple as a family. So many of us are spending so much of our lives in a relentless pursuit of more stuff. Try to rediscover the simple joys of being together. Don't be discouraged if this doesn't always go well. If we were perfect, what need would we have of a Savior?

Practice and seek forgiveness. Forgive someone for a wrong or hurt, and ask for the forgiveness of someone you've hurt — or at least take a first step. Talk to your priest or trusted friend or adviser and move toward reconciliation. Also take time to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. Even if you aren't ready to celebrate the sacrament, participate in your parish's Lenten Penance service and think about how sin breaks our relationships with others and with God, and how we all yearn to be healed and made whole.

Share in God's generosity. Jesus' death and Resurrection is the ultimate gift to us. Remember all the gifts God has given you, and imitate God's generosity by increasing your offering to your parish and to outside charities, and keep it up throughout the coming year. Try to see these offerings as sharing in the love and generosity of God, a love and generosity that are stronger than sin and death.

Spend time with the Blessed Sacrament. We can never fully plumb or exhaust the mystery of God's presence in the Eucharist. We all would benefit from some extra time spent at church in God's presence before the tabernacle, adoring and contemplating the gift of God's own self to us. This Eucharistic Adoration, like our Eucharistic celebration, is a way to praise and thank God with our prayers and with our lives, to help us participate in Christ's redemptive life, to strengthen the entire Body of Christ, and to help us be Christ in our own lives. Thus our Eucharistic Adoration comes out of, and leads us back to, our community celebration of Sunday Eucharist.

Pray! Offer a brief prayer of praise in the morning and in the evening. Start, return to, or continue praying the Rosary. Start with as little as a decade if that is all you have time for. Talk with Mary, the Mother of God, whom the Church holds up to us as the perfect model of discipleship. Ask her to help you always say "yes" to God's will, as she did.



The Pope Tweets

"The heart grows hard when it does not love.
Lord, give us a heart that knows how to love."

@ Pontifex / Mar 3, 2015