

LENT

**"All are from the dust,
and to dust all return."**

Ecclesiastes 3:20, ESV



Mass Times:

Saturday - 5:00pm Vigil

Sunday - 8:00am & 10:30am

Monday thru Friday - 8:30am

Holy days ~as announced

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday - 3:30 to 4:30pm or by appointment

St. Thomas More Catholic Church

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ASH WEDNESDAY

Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God. (Joel 2:13)

The liturgical use of ashes originated in the Old Testament times. Ashes symbolized mourning, mortality and penance. In the Book of Esther, Mordecai put on sackcloth and ashes when he heard of the decree of King Ahasuerus to kill all of the Jewish people in the Persian Empire (Esther 4:1). Job repented in sackcloth and ashes (Job 42:6). Prophesying the Babylonian captivity of Jerusalem, Daniel wrote, "I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes" (Daniel 9:3).

Jesus made reference to ashes, "If the miracles worked in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, they would have reformed in sackcloth and ashes long ago" (Matthew 11:21).

In the Middle Ages, the priest would bless the dying person with holy water, saying, "Remember that thou art dust and to dust thou shalt return."

The Church adapted the use of ashes to mark the beginning of the penitential season of Lent, when we remember our mortality and mourn for our sins. In our present liturgy for Ash Wednesday, we use ashes made from the burned palm branches distributed on the Palm Sunday of the previous year. The priest blesses the ashes and imposes them on the foreheads of the faithful, making the sign of the cross and saying, "Remember, man you are dust and to dust you shall return," or "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel." As we begin this holy season of Lent in preparation for Easter, we must remember the significance of the ashes we have received: We mourn and do penance for our sins. We again convert our hearts to the Lord, who suffered, died, and rose for our salvation. We renew the promises made at our baptism, when we died to an old life and rose to a new life with Christ. Finally, mindful that the kingdom of this world passes away, we strive to live the kingdom of God now and look forward to its fulfillment in heaven.



Lenten Question

Q: What is Lent?

A: Lent is the forty day period before Easter, excluding Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday (the day before Easter Sunday). [This traditional enumeration does not precisely coincide with the calendar according to the liturgical reform. In order to give special prominence to the Sacred Triduum (Mass of the Lord's Supper, Good Friday, Easter Vigil) the current calendar counts Lent as only from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday, up to the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Even so, Lenten practices are properly maintained up to the Easter Vigil, excluding Sundays, as before.]

Lenten Action.

Invite a non-practicing friend to Mass with you.

Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, you despise nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Missal Reading for February 22nd is located on page 70.

Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Families... don't forget! We are called to fast, pray, and give alms during Lent! It's time once again for the **Staszkw Lenten Family Challenge!** See the FF/YM page last weekend OR this weekend for details! Also flocked to STM Paradise, website'd on www.stmparadise.org, and posted on STM Facebook Page!

Lenten Challenge for all! Did you know that the little "cup candles" we use at Easter Vigil are actually meant to recall our own baptism — and thus symbolize our original baptismal candle?! So really — if everyone had their original baptismal candle — we wouldn't need vigil candles! This is probably how vigil candles began — too many of the faithful lost track of their original baptismal candle — so — Fr. Mitch is issuing us a challenge! Call/look around — and try to find your original baptismal candle! We want you to bring it to Easter Vigil this year! If you cannot find it — don't panic! Fr. Mitch will dedicate "new" candles for everyone this year! You may buy one on your own that reflects who you are as a Catholic and what your baptism means to you (it should be white) — OR as a last resort we will have some very limited options available for purchase on Palm/Passion Sunday ONLY!!! We really want you to find your original candle or purchase one that you chose yourself to be rededicated as your baptismal candle! The point of the challenge is that you search and ask around...parents, godparents, sponsors, boxes in the basement or attic and find your story! You may not be able to find your baptismal candle — but try to find out what happened to it! We know this will be a great story to remember and tell! Kind of like "ancestry.com" for baptismal candles. We all share a common baptism — and so the candle is part of our story to share with others! We will continue forming you so you can really participate in this challenge! Let's really do MORE and be MORE this Lenten Season! Start the search! You have 40 Days!!!

Confirmation

Confirmation is one of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation, along with Baptism and Eucharist. Confirmation involves the "sealing" and strengthening by the Holy Spirit, whose gifts make us more like Christ.

Are you a Catholic adult who has never received the Sacrament of Confirmation? It is not too late to do so. Take advantage of our brief, but comprehensive, Adult Confirmation Program

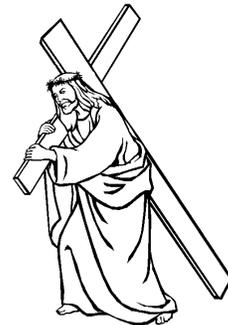
Adult Confirmation is for Catholics over 18 years of age who have received the Sacrament of Baptism and First Eucharist. This will prepare participants to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation with Bishop Soto. We meet Wednesday evenings at 7pm in the Old Rectory beginning February 29th, 2012 you may contact the Parish office and ask for Fr. Mitch, Greg Kidder or Colleen O'Dowd.



FRIDAYS AT 5PM DURING LENT: STATIONS — SUSTENANCE — SOUP

We are called during Lent to fast, pray, and give alms. We are grateful for the continued availability of Stations of the Cross through our ministries during the Season of Lent! This year Stations will begin at 5pm in the Church and be followed in Achieve Charter School's Multipurpose Room (please consider where you park) by a notable and brief teaching and soup.

Those dates are:
Friday, 24 February
Friday, 2 March
Friday, 9 March
Friday, 16 March
Friday, 23 March
Friday, 30 March



*Please also consider attending our Holy Week Adult Faith Formation Session with Dr. Jim McManus on Tuesday, 3 April. We'll be looking at the art/literature of the True Cross (as in the actual cross that Jesus was crucified upon).

Please make arrangements to include Stations, Sustenance, and Soup as part of your Lenten Journey this season!

Lenten Almsgiving

The "quarter keeper" for your sacrificial Lenten daily offering this season will benefit our STM parish ministries to the poor.

40 Days for Life

THIS LENT (2/22-4/6) Paradise/Chico will unite with cities around the world for the largest pro-life effort in history: *40 Days for Life*. Recognizing that "with God all things are possible," we will be praying & fasting for an end to abortion, offering loving assistance to women who are facing the challenges of an unexpected or unsupported pregnancy, while also comforting everyone who has been hurt by this very painful "choice". *40 Days for Life* has, by God's grace, already saved more than 4,300 lives from abortion, led to the conversion of 52 abortion workers, and seen 14 abortion businesses close completely! Please join in these powerful and prayerful efforts! More information next week — but don't wait! We peacefully pray outside Planned Parenthood in Chico and this is for anyone! If you can pray — you can do this! Get involved at 40daysforlife.org



St. Thomas More Catholic Church

Contact Information

Office Hours: Monday-Friday from 11am-4pm

Father Mieczyslaw “ Mitch” Maleszyk
PastorMitch@stmparadise.com

Parish Plant Manager: Greg Kidder Cell 228-6163

Faith Formation & Youth Ministry:
Colleen O’Dowd 514-3892 (call) OR 831-917-5731 (text/call)
www.icatholicyouth.com or www.yacatholic.org

Music Director: Zooba Zwicker Office - 877-4501

Vocation Committee: Lou Donnelly 872-1212

Catholics Come Home: Cathy Gunter 877-3919

Mothers and Others: Norma Degmetich 873-4913

RCIA: Parish Office 877-4501

Table of Plenty: Office 877-1485

Infant Baptism Coordinator (Pre-Kindergarten/younger):
Elaine Helmick 872-7341

St. Vincent de Paul Society: Office 872-4687

Knights of Columbus: Charles Thibault 873-1850

Ladies Guild: Pat Wallila Home 876-9185

Bulletin: Deadline-Tuesday, 4pm, e-mail: donna@stmparadise.com

Bulletin Ads: Joe DiDuca - 877-6842

Master Calendar: PhilB@stmparadise.com

Grief Support Ministry: Lois Gervais 872.0278

Funeral Planning: Barbara Wright 570.0449

Eucharistic Home Visits: Lani McManus 877.6997

Parish Registration forms are located in church vestibule.



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