

Living the Lesson - March - Sacraments

Due by March 31st: send to Julie or Amanda/Jen

Number of Catechesis Hours: 3

Sacraments are visible signs and divine actions that give us God's grace and allow us to share in his work. Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist initiate us into the Catholic Church. Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick heal us when we are physically and spiritually hurting. We live our vocations in the Sacraments at the Service of Communion - Marriage and Holy Orders. Students are focusing on the difference between venial and mortal sins and between an accident, a mistake, and a sin. They will understand how sin separates us from God and discover the healing grace of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. They are learning about the Sacraments at the Service of Communion that focus on God's plan for us.

Lent lies at the very heart of our Catholic faith. While Lent was originally intended as a time of preparation for those being baptized at Easter, it gradually became a time when all of us focus on getting ready to renew our own baptismal promises. It is a time when we reflect on the dying and rising of Christ that has made our salvation possible. The three Catholic observances we follow during Lent — **prayer, fasting and giving alms** — engage us in body, mind and spirit.

- Lent is a time for Prayer when we open our hearts to God's love.
- Lent is a time for Fasting, going without food.
- Lent is a time to go without or abstain.
 - o Fr. Mike: [Picking a Thing for Lent](#)
- Lent is a time for Abstinence- not eating meat.
- Lent is a time for Almsgiving- giving to the poor.
- Lent is a time to ask for forgiveness of our sins (Penance).
- Lent is a time to prepare for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Focusing on these traditional observances will bring your family closer to Christ ... and to one another.

Living the Lesson Activities

There are many activities to choose from this month that incorporate the sacraments and the season of Lent. Please note that Lent is March 5 - April 17, and some of these activities will also be available as part of April's Living the Lesson.

- **Celebrate the sacraments as a family.** There is no greater community activity in the Church than the celebration of the sacraments — the Holy Eucharist chief among them. Share the sacraments with your family and you will find yourselves growing closer to each other, to the Church and to God. Take advantage of one of the many opportunities to go to confession this Lenten season. See the attached documents for when confessions will take place in the Baldwinsville parishes, along with the entire Vicariate.
- Saint Ignatius of Loyola gave us the Spiritual Exercises, including a technique for the ancient prayerful practice of Examen. This is a way to review your day, examine where God is working in your life, and reflect upon what you have to be grateful for, where you may have failed, and where you need God's help to do better.

There are many resources online to help you become familiar with the practice of Examen, but here are the basics:

- Be aware of God's presence. Make a game of this for your child. Where do we see God at work in our lives?
- Review the day with gratitude. Encourage family members to write regular notes of gratitude and post them on the refrigerator.
- Pray about the day. Reflect on the day and what actions could have been avoided or improved. Pray for God's help to do better tomorrow.
- Talk to Jesus about all of this. Discuss what it means to be contrite (or sorry). Say an Act of Contrition together. Also pray an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

- [Living Liturgically during Lent](#)
- Jubilee 2025: Doors of Hope - [March Door](#)
- [Lenten Prayer Chain](#)
- [Family Guide to Lent](#)
- Lenten Activities found in [this folder](#)
 - Pennies for the St. EAS Pantry
 - Lenten Family Calendar
 - Lent with the Saints: Pray with forty holy men and women to accompany you during Lent. Let their lives inspire you to courage, service, surrender, and fidelity. They will help you, as you journey with your family and faith community, to grow with them in faith, hope, and love.
 - Stations of the Cross for Children
- Attend a night of Stations of the Cross
Family Stations at SEAS - March 14 and April 4
- [Stations of the Cross Matching Cards](#)
- [Pray the Stations of the Cross as a family](#)
- **Lent Tree:** Draw a tree with bare branches. Cut out purple hearts and green leaves. Write “Lenten Resolutions for Fasting, Prayer, and Almsgiving” on a piece of paper on Ash Wednesday. Add leaves to the tree periodically during Lent when they have kept their resolutions, so that the tree is filled with leaves by the end of Lent. After Easter you can add butterflies, flowers, etc., to the background. During Lent you can use the title "Change of Heart Tree" and after Easter use the title "He is Risen."
- **Crown of Thorns Activity:** Make a crown (using salt dough recipes easily found online), inserting toothpicks in the dough before baking. Every time a Lenten discipline is practiced or a good deed is done, a toothpick thorn can be removed from the crown. This activity teaches children about the pain that Jesus endured for our sins and how sin wounds us, each other, and God.