

**LITURGIES FOR THE WEEK OF THE
SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
AND THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

February 16 - 22, 2026

Monday, 2/16 † Weekday

6pm: No Mass

**Tuesday, 2/17 † Weekday, The Seven Holy
Founders of the Servite Order**

8am: No Mass

9am: A. S. No Mass

**Wednesday, 2/18 † Ash Wednesday
(Fast and Abstinence)**

9am: A.S.- McKenzie

6pm: Sharon Pfost by Janet Fingerhut

**Thursday, 2/19 † Thursday after Ash
Wednesday**

8am: No Mass

9am: A.S. No Mass

**Friday, 2/20 † Friday after Ash
Wednesday**

8am: No Mass

9am: A.S. No Mass

**Saturday, 2/21 † Saturday after Ash
Wednesday; Saint Peter Damian, Bishop
& Doctor of the Church**

8:30am: No Mass

Saturday, 2/21 † Vigil: First Sunday of Lent

4:30pm: Mary

Sunday, 2/22 † First Sunday of Lent

7:30am: No Mass

9am: A. S. Debbie (Birthday) by Mom

11am: Noelle (Birthday)

This week at SS. C & M & All Saints

Tues, Feb. 17 – 5pm – K of C Fat Tuesday
Celebration, Parlor

Thurs. Feb. 19 – 2:15pm – Legion of Mary

Thurs., Feb. 19 – 4pm – Our Lady of Perpetual Help

Sun., Feb. 22 – 9:30am – Religious Education

K of C Fat Tuesday Dinner

This Tuesday at 5pm: the K of C will host their annual Fat Tuesday Dinner. All Parishioners invited and if you would like to bring a salad or desert it sure would be appreciated

Donna Kida will once again have the Bible Study group at her home each Monday at 9am during Lent. The Studies will begin on Monday, February 23.

This year's Reflections are based on the Sunday Gospel, with Jesus to the Cross, Year A. If interested, you may call the Rectory (574-896-2195) for her address & phone number.

Bring Faith to Life

Sometimes it is difficult to think about God's will. Our fierce human independence balks at the idea of someone else's will being important, even if it is God whose will we are considering.

Yet each of us has moments in which we sense what we are called to do: dreams of making a contribution in the life of another; a simple act of kindness that could make a real difference; a sense of purpose or fruitfulness in which we may find meaning in life; a desire to show compassion, share mercy, forgive another, or give of ourselves in a new and substantial way.

This Lent, discern God's will and resolve to live in the way God most desires. Dream boldly and grow as a good steward. Use your talents, resources, time, and presence to make a difference in the life of another. Bring faith to life.

We would like to thank the Christian Ladies for purchasing the full length altar cloth (green). It was much needed and appreciated. Thank You!!

In the Gospel Jesus says: "Whoever fulfills and teaches these commands shall be great in the kingdom of God." By your gift to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul you indeed put your faith into action as you fulfill the commands of Jesus.

Dear Padre

February 15, 2026

My grandkids' parents don't want them to be baptized. Can I do it myself secretly so as not to cause problems?

Your concern is understandable, but secret baptisms are prohibited in the Catholic Church. The decision to baptize a child is determined by his or her parents. To secretly usurp their decision may cause problems of its own. For an infant to be baptized, "The parents or at least one of them or the person who legitimately takes their place must consent," and "There must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion" (Code of Canon Law, 868 §1). An exception is permitted when the child's life is in immediate danger: "An infant of Catholic parents or even of non-Catholic parents is baptized licitly in danger of death, even against the will of the parents" (CCL 868 §2). Here, the Church's pastoral concern is for the child to receive the immediate graces from the sacrament; the question of raising the child in the faith becomes moot in a life-or-death situation.

"Since the earliest times, baptism has been administered to children, for it is a grace and a gift of God that does not presuppose any human merit.... Entry into Christian life gives access to true freedom" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1282). Continue to pray that your family may see baptism as a sign of God's love, which offers true freedom for humanity. ●

Fr. Byron J. Miller, CSSR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about Dear Padre.

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Righteous Stewards "For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." MATTHEW 5:20 The Pharisees lived according to the letter of the law, not Stewardship. They used this to elevate themselves above the other people. Jesus is clear – it's the love that you have in your heart, for God and others, that will get you to heaven. Simply following church rules to the letter and not out of love, does not necessarily put you on the path to heaven. Attending Sunday Mass and then gossiping about a fellow parishioner on the parking lot is an example of being a modern-day Pharisee.

Good News!

February 15, 2026

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (A)

Sirach 15:15–20 / 1 Corinthians 2:6–10 /
Matthew 5:17–37 or 5:20–22a, 27–28, 33–34a, 37

FR. THOMAS M. SANTA, CSSR

"Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No'" (Matthew 5:37). This teaching of Jesus seems to get lost, perhaps because it comes at the end of a long listing of commandments. Regardless, it seems to get right to the point, almost making the other commandments unnecessary or perhaps clarifying them. Either you are going to be a child of your heavenly Father and live like one, or you are not. If you are a child of God, you would not contemplate any evil behaviors, let alone actually do them.

That is the clarity of the teaching of Jesus. It is authentic. It is compelling. It invites a response. Yet, there are those who were present with him who did not understand. Who missed the point. Who insisted on another way. Who could not discern the simplicity of the truth. To each of these men and women, including some with the religious title of scribe or Pharisee, he observed, "And if the light in you is darkness, how great will the darkness be" (Matthew 6:23). Even sadder is that not only did they miss the point, they also simply walked away.

Do you want to say more than a simple "Yes" or "No"? Do you want to say, "Yes, but... I can't do it now." Or "I can't forgive this particular person." Or "I can't welcome this particular stranger." Or "I can't love him or her or them."

Have you also missed the point? Do you also want to walk away? ●

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Lent Is a Journey of Return to God

We are now embarking on our Lenten journey, which opens with the words of the prophet Joel. They point out the path we are to follow. We hear an invitation that arises from the heart of God, who with open arms and longing eyes pleads with us: "Return to me with all your heart" (Joel 2:12). *Return to me. Lent is a journey of return to God.* How many times, in our activity or indifference, have we told him: "Lord, I will come to you later, just wait a little... I can't come today, but tomorrow I will begin to pray and do something for others". We do this, time and time again. Right now, however, God is speaking to our hearts. In this life, we will always have things to do and excuses to offer, but right now, brothers and sisters, right now is the time to return to God.

Return to me, he says, *with all your heart.* Lent is a journey that involves our whole life, our entire being. It is a time to reconsider the path we are taking, to find the route that leads us home and to rediscover our profound relationship with God, on whom everything depends. Lent is not just not about the little sacrifices we make, but about discerning where our hearts are directed. This is the core of Lent: asking where our hearts are directed. Let us ask: Where is my life's navigation system taking me – towards God or towards myself? Do I live to please the Lord, or to be noticed, praised, put at the head of line...? Do I have a "wobbly" heart, which takes a step forwards and then one backwards? Do I love the Lord a bit and the world a bit, or is my heart steadfast in God? Am I content with my hypocrisies, or do I work to free my heart from the duplicity and falsehood that tie it down?

The journey of Lent is *an exodus, an exodus from slavery to freedom.* These forty days correspond to the forty years that God's people trekked through the desert to return to their homeland. How difficult it was to leave Egypt! It was more difficult for God's people to leave the Egypt of the heart, that Egypt they carried within them, than to leave the land of Egypt. It is hard to leave Egypt behind. During their journey, there was an ever-present temptation to yearn for leeks, to turn back, to cling to memories of the past or to this or that idol. So it is with us: our journey back to God is blocked by our unhealthy attachments, held back by the seductive snares of our sins, by the false security of money and appearances, by the paralysis of our discontents. To embark on this journey, we have to unmask these illusions. But we can ask ourselves: how do we then proceed on our journey back to God? We can be guided by return journeys described in the word of God.

We can think of the prodigal son and realize that, for us too, it is time to return to the Father. Like that son, we too have forgotten the familiar scent of our home, we have squandered a precious inheritance on paltry things and have ended up with empty hands and an unhappy heart. We have fallen down, like little children who constantly fall, toddlers who try to walk but keep falling and need, time and time again, to be picked up by their father. It is *the Father's forgiveness* that always set us back on our feet. God's forgiveness – Confession – is the first step on our return journey. In mentioning Confession, I ask confessors to be like fathers, offering not a rod but an embrace.

We then need to *return to Jesus*, like the leper who, once cured, returned to give him thanks. Although ten had been healed, he was the only one saved, because he returned to Jesus (cf. Lk 17:12-19). All of us have spiritual infirmities that we cannot heal on our own. All of us

have deep-seated vices that we cannot uproot alone. All of us have paralyzing fears that we cannot overcome alone. We need to imitate that leper, who came back to Jesus and threw himself at his feet. We need *Jesus' healing*, we need to present our wounds to him and say: "Jesus, I am in your presence, with my sin, with my sorrows. You are the physician. You can set me free. Heal my heart".

Once again, the word of God asks us to return to the Father, to return to Jesus. It also calls us to *return to the Holy Spirit*. The ashes on our head remind us that we are dust and to dust we will return. Yet upon this dust of ours, God blew his Spirit of life. So we should no longer live our lives chasing dust, chasing things that are here today and gone tomorrow. Let us return to the Spirit, the Giver of Life; let us return to the Fire that resurrects our ashes, to the Fire who teaches us to love. We will always be dust, but as a liturgical hymn says, "dust in love". Let us pray once more to the Holy Spirit and rediscover *the fire of praise*, which consumes the ashes of lamentation and resignation.

Brothers and sisters, our *return journey* to God is possible only because he first *journeyed to us*. Otherwise, it would be impossible. Before we ever came to him, he came down to us. He preceded us; he came down to meet us. For our sake, he lowered himself more than we can ever imagine: he became sin, he became death. So Saint Paul tells us: "For our sake God made him to be sin" (2 Cor 5:21). Not to abandon us but to accompany us on our journey, he embraced our sin and our death. He touched our sin; he touched our death. Our journey then is about letting him take us by the hand. The Father who bids us come home is the same who left home to come looking for us; the Lord who heals us is the same who let himself suffer on the cross; the Spirit who enables us to change our lives is the same who breathes softly yet powerfully on our dust.

This, then, is the Apostle's plea: "Be reconciled to God" (v. 20). *Be reconciled*: the journey is not based on our own strength. No one can be reconciled to God on his or her own. Heartfelt conversion, with the deeds and practices that express it, is possible only if it begins with the primacy of God's work. What enables us to return to him is not our own ability or merit, but his offer of grace. Grace saves us; salvation is pure grace, pure gratuitousness. Jesus says this clearly in the Gospel: what makes us just is not the righteousness we show before others, but our sincere relationship with the Father. The beginning of the return to God is the recognition of our need for him and his mercy, our need for his grace. This is the right path, the path of humility. Do I feel in need, or do I feel self-sufficient?

Today we bow our heads to receive ashes. At the end of Lent, we will bow even lower to wash the feet of our brothers and sisters. Lent is a humble descent both inwards and towards others. It is about realizing that salvation is not an ascent to glory, but a descent in love. It is about becoming little. Lest we go astray on our journey, let us stand before the cross of Jesus: the silent throne of God. Let us daily contemplate his wounds, the wounds that he brought to heaven and shows daily to the Father in his prayer of intercession. Let us daily contemplate those wounds. In them, we recognize our emptiness, our shortcomings, the wounds of our sin and all the hurt we have experienced. Yet there too, we see clearly that God points his finger at no one, but rather opens his arms to embrace us. His wounds were inflicted for our sake, and by those wounds we have been healed (cf. 1 Pet 2:25; Is 53:5). By kissing those wounds, we will come to realize that there, in life's most painful wounds, God awaits us with his infinite mercy. Because there, where we are most vulnerable, where we feel the most shame, he came to meet us. And having come to meet us, he now invites us to return to him, to rediscover the joy of being loved. Pope Francis Homily for Ash Wednesday 2021