

# Lent 2021: A Lent of Gratitude

*Be thankful.*

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ...  
with gratitude in your hearts to God.  
And whatever you do, in word or in deed,  
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Colossians 3:15-17

Three times in this brief passage, St. Paul encourages us to be thankful. In a world where many struggles and problems weigh on us, it is a countercultural act of Christian hope to be a Eucharistic people – literally, people who give thanks to God “always and for everything” (Ephesians 5:20). We are grateful, of course, for our blessings. But trust in God’s saving love, revealed through His Son’s Cross and Resurrection, allows us to be grateful even for those realities that challenge us and test our faith.

This Lent, please join us in “*A Lent of Gratitude.*” Our Lenten penances and the call to conversion are not meant to make this season burdensome, but filled with promise and reassurance, for God’s mercy sustains us, and divine love bestows countless gifts upon us. Gratitude reflects our recognition that all we have and are is God’s gift and makes us better stewards of all that has been entrusted to our care.

Enclosed with this letter you will find a refrigerator magnet to remind you and a day-by-day reflection guide for *A Lent of Gratitude*. Each day of Lent and Holy Week, I suggest a topic for reflection and thanksgiving to God for a blessing, material or spiritual, that has enriched your life. You are also encouraged to sign up for Matthew Kelly’s free daily email inspiration through *Best Lent Ever*; go to <https://dynamiccatholic.com/best-lent-ever>.

The following information will help you incorporate the Lent and Holy Week liturgies and devotions into your family schedules. The Masses will continue to be livestreamed for those who are not yet comfortable returning to church. We hope and pray that as this season progresses, all of us will be able to share in-person community worship in the one Body of Christ ... that would make a true Lent of Gratitude!

## Ash Wednesday Masses – February 17

Ash Wednesday is not a day of obligation, but *it is a day of fast and abstinence*. Masses are:

8:00 a.m.	Sacred Heart	(8:30 a.m. at St. Francis Xavier)
5:30 p.m.	Sacred Heart	(6:30 p.m. at St. Stephen and St. Francis Xavier)
7:00 p.m.	Annunciation	

## Stations of the Cross

Stations will be prayed as follows:

Sacred Heart – Fridays of Lent at 6:30 p.m.  
Annunciation – Fridays of Lent at 7:00 p.m.

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation** will be offered:

- Saturdays of Lent, 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart
- Sundays of Lent, 7:45-8:15 a.m. at Annunciation

Additional times for individual confessions:

- Friday, March 5, 10:00-11:00 a.m. at Sacred Heart (during Adoration)
- Thursday, March 25, 9:00-10:00 a.m. at Annunciation
- Tuesday, March 30, 4:00-5:00 p.m. at Sacred Heart
- Wednesday, March 31, 9:00-10:00 a.m. at Sacred Heart

**Communal Penance Services** with individual confessions will be held on:

- ***Thursday, March 18 at 6:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart***
- ***Sunday, March 21 at 3:00 p.m. at Annunciation***

There are no confessions scheduled after Wednesday of Holy Week. Fr. Ron, Fr. Doug, and I will be helping with Penance Services in our area parishes; please watch the bulletin for these dates.

**Holy Week Liturgies** will be as follows:

**Passion (Palm) Sunday** – *Mass with Blessing of Palms and Procession*

Saturday, March 27	5:00 p.m.	Sacred Heart
Sunday, March 28	8:30 a.m.	Annunciation
	9:00 a.m.	Sacred Heart

**Holy Thursday** – *Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper*

Thursday, April 1	5:00 p.m.	Annunciation
	7:30 p.m.	Sacred Heart

*(there are no earlier Masses permitted on this day; the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed for a period of Adoration after these Masses until reposition at a time to be announced)*

**Good Friday** – *Commemoration of the Lord's Passion* (note: day of fast and abstinence)

Friday, April 2	12:15 p.m.	Sacred Heart
	12:15 p.m.	Annunciation

**Holy Saturday** – *Easter Vigil*

Saturday, April 3	8:00 p.m.	Sacred Heart
	8:00 p.m.	Annunciation

*(there are no earlier Masses this day; the Vigil fulfills the Easter obligation.)*

**Easter Sunday** – *The Resurrection of the Lord*

Sunday, April 4	8:00 a.m.	Sacred Heart
	8:30 a.m.	Annunciation
	10:00 a.m.	Sacred Heart
	10:00 a.m.	Annunciation

Please keep this letter for reference during Lent and transfer the dates to your family calendar. And as always, be assured of my daily prayers in this sacred season.

***Fr. Tom***