

First Sunday of Lent

March 5, 2017

Your prayers are requested for the repose of the souls in this week's Mass intention; for Jeannette Nunes whose funeral mass was celebrated here; for the souls in Purgatory; and for the deceased of our parish.

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| Sat., Mar 4, | 4:00 P.M. | Edna Setera by daughter & family |
| Sun., Mar 5, | 8:30 A.M. | Conrad LaCroix by Jim, Cathy & Heather |
| | 10:30 A.M. | Community Mass: Michael Lopes, Mario Lopes, Vincent Lopes, Francisco Bizarro, Lazaro Rosa, Sr. Mary Nora Smith |
| | 7:00 P.M. | Lucilia Sousa by family |
| Mon., Mar 6, | 12:00 P.M. | For parishioners of St. Mary |
| Tues., Mar 7, | 12:00 P.M. | Gilbert Mainville by wife, Yvette |
| Wed., Mar 8, | 12:00 P.M. | Celina C. Oliveira by Tavares family |
| Thurs., Mar 9, | 12:00 P.M. | Simone Villeneuve by family |
| Fri., Mar 10, | 12:00 P.M. | A Special Intention |
| Sat., Mar 11, | 4:00 P.M. | Alexander A. Dupre by family |
| Sun., Mar 12, | 8:30 A.M. | Edna Schard by St. Mary's Women's Guild |
| | 10:30 A.M. | Community Mass: David Silva, Arthur E. Coia, Frank & Lois Giambo, Wilfred & Yvonne Hebert |
| | 7:00 P.M. | For parishioners of St. Mary |



14-day Memorial Candles: In Memory of Lazaro Rosa by wife, Maria & family
In Memory of Rosa Fernandes & Mary C. Reilly by family

Icon Candle: In Memory of Edward Soares by Tony Oliveira

Hosts for March: In Memory of Simone Villeneuve by family



On the bulletin board at the main entrance of the church there is a priest prayer request calendar for March. Please take one and say a prayer for the priest on that day. Thank you.

There are a number of Icon & Memorial Candles available for this year. The cost for the Icon candle lit for one week is \$10.00 and the Memorial candle lit for two weeks is \$20.00. There are also 7:00PM Sunday Masses still available as well. Please call the rectory if you would like to memorialize any of these.

Budget: \$5749.

Expenses: Water: \$111.

Budget Envelope mailing: \$900.

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be administered here at St. Mary's Church on Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at 7:00PM by Bishop Edgar da Cunha to the candidates from St. Mary's and Our Lady of Fatima.



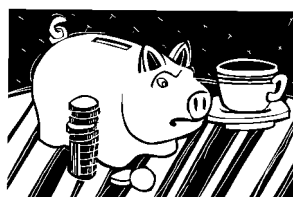
Rehearsal for sponsors and candidates is Sunday, March 19 following the 10:30 Mass. If a sponsor cannot be present, someone must take his/her place to note the sponsor's place for the ceremony.

Please pray for the candidates as they prepare for their full initiation into the Church.

Please note: There will be Confirmation class this Sunday, March 5th.

During Lent, we are asked to focus more intently on "almsgiving," which means donating money or goods to the poor and performing other acts of charity. As one of the three pillars of Lenten practice, almsgiving is "a witness to fraternal charity" and "a work of justice pleasing to God." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2462).

St. Vincent de Paul Society would like to thank everyone for their generosity to our Poor Box and food pantry. Please consider giving to SVdP for your Lenten almsgiving. Help us help those in need in our community.



Parish Lenten Mission - "Called To Be Salt And Light" March 6th - 8th, Mass at noon and 7 PM, directed by Father Thomas Washburn OFM. Plan now to make this your special time of prayer during Lent.

There is a resource for Lent called *Best Lent Ever*. It is a free, daily email program that offers to help make Lent more meaningful in every way. It is based on Matthew Kelly's latest best seller, *Resisting Happiness*. This book leads readers, in a daily personal way, to the realization that they cannot get to where they want to go without God. To use this resource, visit BestLentEver.com to sign up. It is part of the Dynamic Catholic Outreach. It is guaranteed to do more for you than just giving up chocolate for Lent. Give it a try.

"Attic Treasures Sale" Sponsored by St. John Neumann Women's Guild. St. John Neumann Parish Hall located next to Cathedral Camp on Rt. 18 – Middleboro Road in East Freetown. Saturday, March 11th from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ~Free Admission~ Wheelchair accessible~ Continental Breakfast and lunch will be served. Take Chace Road Exit off Route 140.

Bishop da Cunha's 2017 Lenten Message

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate another Lenten season, let us make this a special time of prayer, reflection, Spiritual renewal and focus on the Word of God. The readings for the Liturgy during Lent have a special meaning and call to conversion and change of heart. *"Only the Word of God can change the depths of man's heart, and so it is important that with it both individual believers and the community enter into an ever-growing intimacy"* (Pope Benedict XVI).

Perhaps, more than ever, we need to focus on the power of God's Word to transform our hearts and our world. We live in a time in which we are constantly bombarded with all kinds of messages. All we have to do is turn on the radio, television, or log onto the Internet, for our eyes and ears to be filled with all kinds of negative and positive messages. Words are used to deceive and defraud. Words stimulate anger. Words are used to manipulate, to tempt, to incite wrongdoing. On the other hand, the words we speak every day can also promote respect and civility. They can defuse anger, foster peace and tolerance and bring respect, kindness and joy.

We are certainly influenced by what we see and hear from the powerful media that surrounds us. However, we should be asking ourselves if we are also affected and influenced by the Word of God? How much is the Word of God impacting and changing our hearts and our lives?

Many people hear the message of the Gospel, but do not respond to it; they remain indifferent and the message does not find room in their lives. *"We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we sang a dirge but you did not mourn"* (Mt 11:17). The knowledge of the Word of God is very important, but even more important is to accept it in our hearts and allow it to change our lives. Knowing the Word of God is the first step in the process of accepting God's message and conversion of heart, to do what God wants from us. Knowledge is not an end in itself, but the means toward an end which is conversion.

There are so many changes taking place in our world today and these changes are happening faster than ever before. Technology has brought unforeseen changes in the way people communicate with and relate to each other. Despite all these changes, the Word of God remains timeless. May we all find enough time each day during this Lenten season, in the midst of our busy and hectic lives, to listen to God as He speaks to us in Holy Scripture. May His Word transform our hearts.

Is this going to be the Lenten season during which I will:

- Spend more time in prayer and less time watching television?
- Spend more time with my family and less time with my smart phone?
- Spend more time in silence and less time with the noises of life?
- Pay more attention to God's Word and less attention to social media gossip?

May we pray with the Lenten preface which says: *"For You have given Your children a Sacred time for the renewing and purifying of their hearts, that, freed from the disordered affections, they may so deal with the things of this passing world as to hold rather to the things that eternally endure"* (Preface II of Lent).

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.
Bishop of Fall River

