

# Partners *in* FAITH™



Helping our children grow in their Catholic faith.

February 2026

**St. Aloysius Catholic Church/School**

Rev. Tom McQuillen, Pastor   Mrs. Andrea Puhl, Principal   Ms. Denise Brennan, Religious Education



## Thoughtful Moments

### St. Onesimus

Born in Phrygia and employed as a slave to Philemon of Colossae, Turkey, St. Onesimus met St. Paul while



running from Philemon for robbing him. Something about St. Paul's preaching touched St. Onesimus and he converted immediately. St. Paul adopted him as a spiritual son, freeing Onesimus from slavery. After making amends, St. Onesimus became a companion and associate in St. Paul's mission to spread the Gospel — including delivering one of his epistles!

### Symbols in the Mass

Ever notice how many symbols are used in the Mass? Kneeling, shaking hands, the blessing of the water and wine, the elevation of the host. Each is an action in itself, but also has another, deeper meaning. They not only help us to experience Jesus' Last Supper but also represent the many ways God is present in our lives.

"Purification! You and I certainly do need purification. Atonement and, more than atonement, love."  
St. Josemaria Escriva



## Lent at home - renewing Faith

Lent is a season of renewal that invites us to step back from distractions and return to the heart of our faith. It's a good time to help children see how prayer, the sacraments, charity, and service reveal God at work in our lives.

**Embrace prayer.** Lent is an ideal time to strengthen prayer within the family. Rather than trying to do everything, choose one shared devotion and practice it faithfully. Praying the Stations of the Cross, reading the Gospel of the day, or praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy together can anchor daily life in God, even when time is limited.

**Prioritize the sacraments.** The sacraments are living encounters with

Christ that restore and sustain us. Renewing our commitment to Sunday Mass and making Confession a

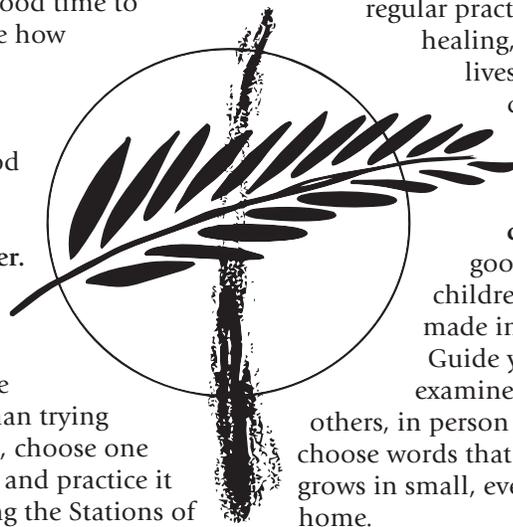
regular practice brings clarity, healing, and grace to our lives. These habits quietly shape our hearts and choices.

### Refresh

**charity.** Lent is a good time to remind children that everyone is made in God's image. Guide youngsters to

examine how they speak to others, in person and online, and choose words that build up. Charity grows in small, everyday moments at home.

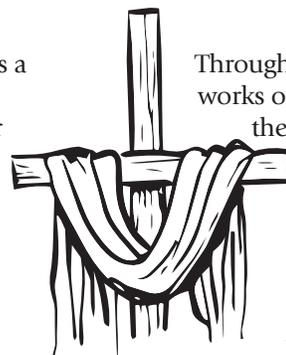
**Encourage service.** Holiness leads naturally to service. Children can learn this through simple acts: helping at home, being patient with siblings, or sharing their allowance. These small practices form generous hearts.



## Why Do Catholics Do That ?

### Why do Catholics use violet or purple in churches during Lent?

Similar to Advent, Lent is a season of preparation and hopeful expectation. Rather than anticipating Christ's birth, the Church prepares for the celebration of His Resurrection, when the saving promises announced at Christmas reach their fulfillment.



Through prayer, fasting, penance, and works of charity, the faithful unite themselves to Christ's forty days in the desert. The use of violet or purple during Lent reflects this spirit of repentance, sober reflection, and interior preparation, while also recalling Christ's kingship and sacrificial love.

## Turn conflicts into teachable moments

Listening well is a foundational skill for healthy family life, especially during moments of disagreement or high emotion. Parents play a crucial role in teaching children that conflict does not have to result in hurt feelings. When family members feel respected and understood, conversations are more likely to lead to resolution rather than resentment.

One way to teach this skill is to frame listening as “playing detective.” Children are encouraged to listen quietly, remain calm, and pay close attention in order to understand the full story before responding. When someone feels heard, they are far



more willing to listen in return.

Equally important is teaching children to confirm rather than assume. Misunderstandings often arise when we think we know what another person means or intends. Parents can model and encourage phrases such as, “Can you help me understand?” or “So what I’m hearing is...” These simple habits promote clarity, empathy, and respect.

Over time, practicing attentive listening transforms everyday conflicts into

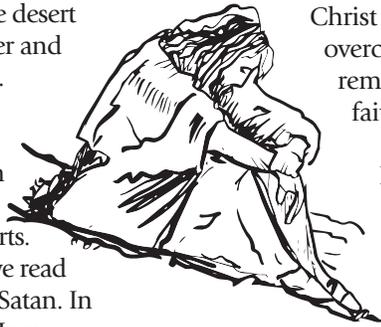
opportunities for growth, deeper trust, and stronger family relationships.

### Scripture LESSON

### Matthew 4:1-11, Following Christ in Lent

During the season of Lent, the Church accompanies Jesus into the desert through forty days of prayer and fasting, excluding Sundays. Over these weeks, we encounter temptation, particularly the temptation to grow weary or to abandon our spiritual efforts.

In this Gospel passage, we read of Jesus being tempted by Satan. In responding to these trials, Jesus confronted the temptations faced by every human heart and showed us how to resist them: choosing self-control over selfishness, serving God rather than demanding that God serve us, and remaining faithful to the Father’s plan



even when it is hard. In doing so, Christ offers a clear model for overcoming temptation and remaining steadfast in faith.

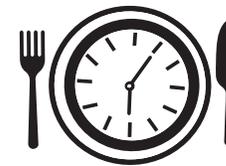
#### What can a parent do?

Encourage children to make age-appropriate Lenten offerings that help them to think, act, and love like Jesus. Encourage them

to say only kind words, save the last serving of dessert for someone else, and help around the house. When they feel tempted to misbehave, urge them to pray to be good. If they stay close to Jesus, He will lead them to victory.

### Parent TALK

In our home, family dinner a priority. It is a daily opportunity to reconnect



and be present to one another. Our oldest daughter, Kara, often struggled to arrive at the table

on time, which became a frequent source of frustration.

Rather than turning the issue into a power struggle, I explained why family dinner matters and why I expected her to be there on time. Kara said that she felt overwhelmed by homework and found it difficult to stop once she had started working. I explained that learning to manage time well is an important part of growing up, and that breaking for dinner can actually improve focus and productivity later. After reflecting, Kara proposed her own solution: she would start her homework earlier by limiting screen time after school. Then she could make dinner on time.

The conversation ended not with resentment, but with a shared plan and mutual understanding.

### Feasts & Celebrations

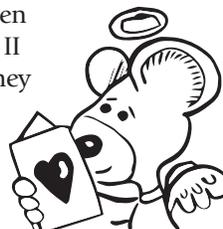
**February 2 – The Presentation of the Lord (1st Century).** Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple forty days after His birth, and Simeon praised God for revealing the Savior (Luke 2:29-32).

**February 6 – St. Paul Miki and Companions (1597).** St. Paul Miki, a Jesuit missionary in Japan, was arrested along with 25 other Catholics and forced to walk more than 300 miles to Nagasaki where they were crucified. They preached the whole journey and embraced their crosses praising God.

#### February 18 – Ash Wednesday.

Ashes of old palms are placed on the forehead as a sign of penance. This first day of Lent is a day of abstinence from meat and fasting – one regular meal and two meals that together don’t equal a full meal.

**February 19 – St. Barbatius of Benevento (682).** Born near Benevento, Italy, in 612, St. Barbatius preached against the violent pagan practices there. When Emperor Constans II besieged the city, they repented, the city was spared, and Barbatius became their bishop.



### Our Mission

To help parents raise faithful Catholic children  
Success Publishing & Media, LLC  
Publishers of Growing in Faith™ and Partners in Faith™  
(540)662-7844 (540)662-7847 fax  
<http://www.partnersinfaith.com>  
(Unless noted Bible quotes and references are from the Revised Standard Version and the New American Bible.)