

Offertory: December 24, 2015 OLM \$733, OLV \$942, COS \$3,580, Total \$5,255
December 29, 2016 OLM \$518, OLV \$764, COS \$1,099, Total \$2,381 (incl. online giving)

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, March 4, OLM 4:00 PM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
Saturday, March 4, COS 4:30 PM For Shirley Yankowski, requested by Pat Yankowski and Don Bidwell, Jr.
Sunday, March 5, OLM 8:30 AM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
Sunday, March 5, OLV 10:30 AM For Terese Heard, requested by Eleanor C. Crombie
Sunday, March 5, COS 12:30 PM For Richard Morgan, requested by Patricia Morgan
Saturday, March 11, OLM 4:00 PM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by Karen Shaw
Saturday, March 11, COS 4:30 PM For Ann Bidwell Adams, requested by her daughters, Donnie Bidwell and Pat
Sunday, March 12, OLM 8:30 AM For the Souls in Purgatory, requested by John Nappi, Jr.
Sunday, March 12, OLV 10:30 AM For Arlene Salzbrunn, requested by Lenore and Dennis Salzbrunn
Sunday, March 12, COS 12:30 PM For Nancy Delio, requested by Angela and Vincent Macri



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

March 4 & 5: Special Collection, Easter Flowers

March 8: : Pastoral Council Meeting, 7PM OLV—*cancelled*
March 10: Stations of the Cross, OLV 5 PM
March 12: Daylight Savings Time begins, turn clocks ahead one hour



At Our Lady of the Valley in Townshend, for the season of Lent, the Stations of the Cross are made every Friday at 5:00 PM. All are welcome.

Weekly Intention:

For the grace this week to face the temptations of life by relying on the love of the Lord in our lives.



GUIDELINES FOR LENT

The time of Lent is to be observed by Catholics as a special season of prayer, penance and works of charity.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, in particular, are the most important penitential days of the liturgical year. They are days of both fast and abstinence. All Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence.

The rule of **fasting** states that only one full meal a day can be taken. Two small meals, “sufficient to maintain strength”, are allowed, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals breaks the fast, but drinking liquids does not. The rule of fasting obliges all Catholics from 18 to 59.

Abstinence refers to the eating of meat. The common estimation of the community is used to determine what falls under the category of meat. The rule of abstinence binds all Catholics 14 years or older.

The **substantial** observance of the laws of fast and abstinence is a serious obligation.

Self-imposed fasting on the other weekdays of Lent is recommended. Abstinence on all Fridays of the year is also highly recommended.

Parents and teachers should see to it that, even those who are not bound by the laws of fast and abstinence because of age, are brought up in an atmosphere that is conducive to a sense of penance.



Serving the Spiritual Needs of Grieving Parents

Losing a child under any circumstance is horrific. Focusing on the spirituality of the grieving process can help tremendously. Please join us. All are welcome.

St. Anthony Shrine, Boston, MA is Offering Emmaus Ministry for Grieving Parents Lenten One-Day Spiritual Retreat March 11, 2017, 9:30am-7:30pm

Lenten One-Hour Spiritual Retreat “Death is Only the First Day of the Week” March 15, 2017 12:00pm-1:00pm

For more information, Call Diane, Mother of Paul, at (617) 542-8057 Or see www.emfgp.org

Totus Tuus camp at St Michael--This summer will be the 7th year St. Michael’s will host the Totus Tuus camp. It is scheduled for the week of July 9-14. The grade school program is open to any child who will be entering the 1st grade in September through those entering 8th grade. The day program runs from 9 AM to 3 PM, Monday-Friday. Cost is \$50.00/student or \$75.00/family. The high school program runs Sunday night-Thursday night from 7:30 PM-9:30 PM. Please contact Pete and Judith Nero at 254-4818 or neros75@comcast.net for questions about the camp or to volunteer .

From Fr. Fred:

When we are growing from children into adults, why do we obey our mother and father, or the one who is in charge of us? The experts in the field of Psychology tell us that our motives change as we grow and become more mature. We go through various stages. One of the first stages is fear of punishment if we disobey. Later it can be the hope of a reward if we do obey. After that it can be because everyone else does and it is expected of us too. Still later it can be to please someone we really respect and to make them happy. Last, and best of all, it is because we love the person who is asking and would do anything for them.

It's very similar in our spiritual growth. Jesus told us that God is like the best of all parents, and taught us to pray "Our Father". Then why do we obey God? What is our motive? When we are very young spiritually (which can be at any age) we obey because we are afraid of what will happen if we don't. We're afraid of going to hell. It's like the ultimate punishment. It can, for example, be the only reason one person goes to confession.

In the next stage, reward, we bargain with God. "If you do this for me, I will do that for you." Or we might complain: "Why did this bad thing happen to me? What did I do to deserve that?" Our motive is really our own self-interest, not God's welfare. It seems fair that if we are good to him, he will have to be good to us and give us what *we* want. It's still: "Listen Lord Your servant is speaking", not "Speak Lord. Your servant is listening."

As we grow more mature in the spiritual life we obey God because of our place in the Church or in society. It is expected of us. It is the right thing to do. If we sinned we would lose the respect of others. Peer pressure is very important to us at this stage. "What would they think of me if they found out?" It has very little to do with God or having a real



relationship with him.

In the next stage we actually begin to know God a little. We are no longer angry with him. We actually begin to wonder what God wants, what his motives are, and to believe that his plan for our welfare is a good one. We begin to accept that he loves us personally, and begin to genuinely love him back. We want to make him happy, and are less self-centered.

Wonderful things begin to happen when love becomes our primary motive for doing the right thing. The whole world opens up for us and we discover a deep happiness that we have never had before. St. Paul can say: "I no longer live for myself, but for Him." The words of people like St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross begin to make sense as we enter and begin to explore the Interior Castle. We hunger to share with others the love that we have found.

In all of this it is very important to remember that just as a good parent loves their child in every stage of their development, so too God loves us more than we can possibly imagine, just as we are, in every stage of our spiritual development. An adult can be spiritually immature and a mentally handicapped child can be spiritually advanced. God is extremely patient with us. He is eager to forgive us as often as we fail, and still believes in our potential for greatness. He is always there to encourage us, to gently guide us, and to help us to continue to grow spiritually.

Just for Fun:

Parishioner: "Why can't priests get married? Did Jesus ever say that priests can't get married?"

Priest: "Well, not exactly. But he did say that no man can serve two masters."



Quote of the week: "Talking about God isn't about imposing beliefs, but rather about sharing the joy of faith."

-Pope Francis