

First Sunday of Lent

Parish Update: February 22nd, 2026



"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4.4)

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK FEBRUARY 23RD TO MARCH 1ST

Monday, 23rd	<i>Ferial</i>	Office Closed	No Mass
Tuesday, 24th	<i>Ferial</i>	9:00 a.m.	Liv. & Dec. Members of the Vendittelli, DiFabio, Duemo & Dumont Families (C&L Vendittelli)
Wednesday, 25th	<i>Ferial</i>	9:00 a.m.	+Joe Bosco (M Pakiyanayagam)
		9:30-10:30 a.m.	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Thursday, 26th	<i>Ferial</i>	9:00 a.m.	No Mass – Clergy Lenten Day of Reflection
		6:45-8:15 p.m.	Choir Practice, Church
Friday, 27th	<i>Ferial</i>	9:00 a.m.	+Brian Armstong (C Kanas)
		9:30-10:30 a.m.	Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
		4:15 p.m.	Stations of the Cross
		5:00 p.m.	+Bernice Dann (L Dann)
Saturday, 28th		3:30-4:30 p.m.	Confession
		5:00 p.m.	Liv. & Dec. Members of the Vendittelli, DiFabio, Duemo & Dumont Families (C&L Vendittelli)
Sunday, 1st	<i>2nd Sunday of Lent</i>	9:00 a.m.	Liv. & Dec. Members of the DiFranco & DiFabio Families (N Vendittelli)
		11:00 a.m.	+Lawrence LaRoche (L Lawless)

From the Deacon's heart:

Prayer, Fasting, and Works of Mercy in the Silence of the Desert

On Ash Wednesday in 2020, Pope Francis preached about "the spiritual significance of the desert." The following are excerpts from his homily. [emphasis added]

"Jesus ... withdrew to the desert for 40 days to pray and fast, and was tempted by the devil. ... What does the desert mean spiritually for all of us?"

Let us imagine that we are in a desert. The first feeling would be that of being enveloped by a **great silence**: no sound besides the wind and our own breathing. ... detachment from the din that surrounds us. ... the absence of words to make room for ... the Word of God, that caresses our hearts like a light breeze. *cf. 1 Kings 19:12* ... the Lord loves to speak to us in the desert. ... when the people distance themselves from him, like an unfaithful wife, God says: "So I will allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart.... She shall respond there as in the days of her youth." *Hos 2:16-17* ... Jesus loved to withdraw daily to deserted places and pray. *cf. Lk 5:16* He taught us how to seek the Father who speaks to us in silence..."

"Lent is the time to give up useless words, gossip and slander ... We live in an environment that is polluted by too much verbal violence ... We are submerged by the empty words of advertising, of underhanded messages. ... we run the risk of slipping into a worldliness that sullies the heart and there is no bypass to heal this. Only silence. ... By calling us to the desert, Jesus invites us to listen to what matters, ... to the essential. Replying to the devil who tempted him [Jesus] said: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." *Mt 4:4* We need the Word of God even more than bread. We need it to speak with God: **we need to pray** ... The desert is a place of life not of death because speaking to the Lord in silence, gives us life again."

"... think of a desert again. The desert is the place of the essential. Let us look at our lives: how many useless things surround us! We chase after thousands of things that seem necessary and that in reality are not. How good it would be for us to ... rediscover what matters, to rediscover the faces of those who are beside us! **Jesus also sets us an example of this: fasting.** Fasting is knowing how to give up things that are vain and superfluous in order to reach the essential. Fasting is not only for losing weight. Fasting is actually going to the essential. It is seeking the beauty of a simpler life."

"Lastly, the desert is a place of solitude. Today too, there are many deserts near us. They are the lonely and neglected people. How many poor and elderly people are near us and live in silence, without making any noise, marginalized and discarded! Speaking about them does not increase the [media's] ratings. But the desert leads us to them, to those who were stifled and who silently ask for our help: many silent gazes that ask for our help. **The journey in the Lenten desert is a journey of charity towards the weakest.** Prayer, fasting, works of mercy. This is the path of the Lenten desert."

pax et bonum *Deacon Maurice o.f.s.*

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CWL CORNER

(Catholic Women's League)
"Blessed are the Poor"

E-transfer payments for CWL may be made to cwlstarofthesea@gmail.com. Please remember to indicate which event in the subject line.

Thank you to everyone who supported our parish Pancake Supper! It is always wonderful to collaborate with the Knights of Columbus!

Our next **CWL Executive Meeting** will take place on Tuesday, February 24 at 7:00 p.m.

Our next **CWL General Meeting** will take place on Tuesday, March 3 at 7:00 p.m.

This is an important meeting as we will be preparing for our participation at the Diocesan Members' Meeting which will take place in April.

Thank you to all members who have renewed their **membership** for 2026. If you have not yet done so, please submit your membership dues as soon as possible. It's not too late to become a member of our CWL Star of the Sea Council. The fee is \$40. We welcome you!



Feb 28/Mar 1	5 P.M.	9 A.M.	11 A.M.
Ministers of Holy Communion	Dn. Maurice	K Zacharchuk	R Eckstein
Lector	L Urquhart	K Zacharchuk	K Shakespeare-Eckstein
Hospitality Ministers	A&R Hancock D MacNeill	W Riddle C DeLuca MA Uwagba	M Mouradikian G LaRoche A Adam

Pope's Prayer Intention for the month of February

For children with incurable diseases – Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.

Star of the Sea Blanket Drive: There are over 700 people in our city that are unhoused, for whatever reason. 101 are children ages 0 to 5, 37 ages 16 to 24 and this is only an estimate. With this in mind, we are asking for your support in the donation of a new or clean gently used blanket that we will gratefully accept from now until March 7 in the church hall. They will then be delivered to Out of the Cold. When a client comes in for a hot meal, they will be offered a blanket if they wish one and they can take it with them when they leave....Who knows? One blanket could save a life!

40 Days for Life, a campaign of peaceful prayer and fasting to end abortion, runs from Feb. 18 to Mar. 29. **Star of the Sea Parish** has been designated to keep vigil on Thursday March 12 from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Please sign up with a friend for an hour outside the hospital or, make plans to offer an hour in adoration right here in the church! It is prayer that can change hearts! Can you spare an hour to help save a life? Volunteers with sign-up sheets will be at the back of the Church next Sunday. You can also visit 40daysforlife.com and click on "Niagara Falls" to sign up online

FORMED FORMED.org Join Taylor & Ben each week as they walk you through amazing content on FORMED! You'll discover all kinds of videos & audio to accompany you during the weekly liturgical calendar, Saint feast days & world events taking place. Sign up at no charge, as a parishioner, using the parish postal code L2N 5G5.

Students for Life is a pro-life club starting at Niagara College (Niagara-on-the-Lake campus). This club is dedicated to upholding the value of all human life. We will meet several times a month to discuss pro-life topics, take part in fun activities, and educate others on this cause! If you are interested in joining or have questions, please register here or email studentsforlife1@gmail.com.

PRAYER ANGELS Our ministry is set up to pray for the parish's intentions. Please send by email or phone your concerns or cares and they will be passed on to the members of this group who will daily offer up your intentions to the Lord. Prayer is powerful. Let us help ease your troubles or shower the Lord with praises. Please call or email Marg 289-214-6679 mgmartin113@gmail.com

He who prays most receives most.
St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori

WEEKLY COLLECTION CONTRIBUTIONS:

February 15 th , 2026	
Parishioner Envelopes	\$ 3,721.00
Loose Collection: CAD	\$ 519.00
USD	\$ 0.00
Total Offertory Collection:	\$ 4,240.00
February Automated Fund Transfer (AFT)	\$ 855.00
Our Special Needs	\$ 15.00

Thank you
MAY GOD BLESS YOU