

Diocese of Rochester

Lent 2023

Lenten Prayer

40 Days with the Eucharistic Lord



Ash Wednesday

God dwells in our midst, in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.

-St. Maximilian Kolbe

Communion Antiphon:

He who ponders the law of the Lord day and night / will yield fruit in due season.

This Lent, how will you make time for our Eucharistic Lord?

How can you recognize that God truly and fully does dwell in our midst?

What fruit do you hope your Lenten pondering will yield?

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

I throw myself at the foot of the Tabernacle like a dog at the foot of his master.

-St. John Vianney

Communion Antiphon:

Create a pure heart for me, O God; / renew a steadfast spirit in me.

How can you mimic St. John Vianney and put yourself at the foot of God?

What in your heart needs cleaning? What needs renewal?

Friday after Ash Wednesday

Jesus taught a new sacrifice which the Church received from the Apostles and offers throughout the whole world.

-St. Irenaeus

Communion Antiphon:

O Lord, make me know your ways, / teach me your paths.

Where did you learn about the Truths of our Church? To whom do you share them?

Where has God led you in the past? Where do you hope He leads in the future?

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

I hunger for the bread of God, the flesh of Jesus Christ....; I long to drink of his blood, the gift of unending love.

-St. Ignatius of Antioch

Communion Antiphon:

I desire mercy, not sacrifice, says the Lord, / for I did not come to call the just but sinners.

When have you desired the Eucharist?

When have you shown mercy to others?

How has your first few days of Lent been? Where do you hope to go next?

First Sunday of Lent

If we but paused for a moment to consider attentively what takes place in this Sacrament, I am sure that the thought of Chris's love for us would transform the coldness of our hearts into a fire of love and gratitude.

-St. Angela of Foligno

Communion Antiphon:

One does not live by bread alone, / but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of God.

When have you paused to recognize Christ in the Eucharist?

While we may not live by bread alone, how has the Eucharist given you life?

Weekly Challenge:

Pause to ponder the Eucharist this week. Start small if you need, but try to spend a few minutes each day just considering what takes place in the Eucharist.

Monday of the First Week of Lent

The Eucharist is the fire that inflames us, that, like lions breathing fire, we may retire from the altar being made terrible to the devil.

-St. John Chrysostom

Communion Antiphon:

Amen, I say to you: / Whatever you did for one of the least of my brethren, you did it for me, says the Lord. / Come, you blessed of my Father, / receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

When have you felt 'inflamed' by the Eucharist?

How can you do something for the least among us today?

Tuesday of the First Week of Lent

Holy Communion is the shortest and safest way to heaven.

-St. Pius X

Communion Antiphon:

When I called, the God of justice gave me answer; / from anguish you released me; / have mercy, O Lord, and hear my prayer!

What makes you desire Heaven?

Justice is about setting relationships right. With that in mind, how has God been the God of justice in your life? Does that change how you see answered vs. unanswered prayers?

Wednesday of the First Week of Lent

A Holy Hour brings Heaven's choicest blessings on those who are faithful to their Hour.

-St. Paul VI

Communion Antiphon:

All who take refuge in you shall be glad, O Lord, / and ever cry out their joy, and you shall dwell among them.

What do you think spending an hour with God must be like?
Have you ever kept a Holy Hour?

What would your cry of joy be for God dwelling among us?

Thursday of the First Week of Lent

There is nothing so great as the Eucharist. If God had something more precious, he would have given it to us..

-St. John Vianney

Communion Antiphon:

Everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; / and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

What was the best gift you've ever gotten for a holiday? How does it compare to Jesus giving himself to us?

When have you sought, but found something different? When have you knocked and had a different opportunity opened up?

Friday of the First Week of Lent

Dear young people, the happiness you are seeking, the happiness you have a right to enjoy has a name and a face: it is Jesus of Nazareth, hidden in the Eucharist

-Pope Benedict XVI

Communion Antiphon:

As I live, says the Lord, I do not desire the death of the sinner, / but rather that he turn back and live.

What do you think of Pope Benedict's quote? Have you ever thought of Jesus as being the happiness you have a right to?

Have you ever been so ashamed you wanted to hide? How did you 'turn back and live' like today's antiphon?

Saturday of the First Week of Lent

Until we have a passionate love for our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament we shall accomplish nothing

-St. Julian Eymard

Communion Antiphon:

Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect, says the Lord.

How did you learn to love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament?

We all recognize our imperfections, probably better than anyone else. But what makes you perfect in God's eyes?

Second Sunday of Lent

Know also that you will probably gain more by praying fifteen minutes before the Blessed Sacrament than by all the other spiritual exercises of the day.

-St. Alphonsus Liguori

Communion Antiphon:

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well please; / listen to him.

What spiritual exercises do you do to keep your soul fit?

Imagine how Jesus must have felt, hearing those words, “This is my beloved son...”

Weekly Challenge:

Spend fifteen minutes a day in prayer. If you can, do it in the church before the tabernacle.

Monday of the Second Week of Lent

The Eucharist is the visible manifestation of the generosity of God.

-St. Raniero Cantaloamessa

Communion Antiphon:

Be merciful, as your Father is merciful, says the Lord.

Where have you seen God's generosity this Lent? Where do you hope to see it before Easter?

How can you show mercy in small ways day-to-day?

Tuesday of the Second Week of Lent

The Eucharist becomes a microcosmic moment of belief and power in which we say we believe in the real presence of God in Jesus, in this bread, and in this wine.

-Richard Rohr

Communion Antiphon:

I will recount all your wonders. / I will rejoice in you and be glad, / and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

Richard Rohr describes the mystery of the Eucharist as a microcosmic moment. Consider and ponder how the Lord of the Universe can be found in a mere moment.

How do you praise God? How do you show the gladness God gives?

Wednesday of the Second Week of Lent

Without shame and without doubt, eat the flesh and drink the blood (of Christ), if you are desirous of true life.

-St. Gregory of Nazianzus

Communion Antiphon:

The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

How can you approach the Eucharist “without shame and without doubt?”

How does the Eucharist nourish and inspire you to serve others, even in small ways?

Thursday of the Second Week of Lent

In the Eucharist, the Son of God comes to meet us and desires to become one with us...

-Pope Benedict XVI

Communion Antiphon:

Blessed are those whose way is blameless, / who walk in the law of the Lord.

How do you meet Jesus? Do you greet him like a friend? Do you approach him like a boss? Do you acknowledge him like a stranger?

How can you walk in the law of the Lord? How can you find your way back if you fail?

Friday of the Second Week of Lent

The Eucharist is the secret of my day. It gives me strength and meaning to all my activities of service to the Church and to the whole world.

-St. John Paul II

Communion Antiphon:

God loved us, and sent his Son / as expiation for our sins.

St. John Paul II found Jesus daily in the Eucharist. Where else can you encounter Jesus on a daily basis?

God showed his love 2,000 years ago by sending his Son. He shows it today, as well, such as in the Eucharist. How do you feel God's love?

Saturday of the Second Week of Lent

Every time we look at the Blessed Sacrament our place in heaven is raised forever.

-St. Gertrude the Great

Communion Antiphon:

You must rejoice, my son, / for your brother was dead and has come to life; / he was lost and is found.

When we look at someone or something that means the world to us, we feel a connection. When can you make time to gaze upon Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament?

The joy of reconnecting with a loved one can hardly be put into words. How do you connect or reconnect with Jesus? Particularly this Lent?

Third Sunday of Lent

Without the Eucharist, the Church simply does not exist.

-Pope Benedict XVI

Communion Antiphon:

For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, / the water I shall give will become in him / a spring welling up to eternal life.

We *are* a Eucharistic People, full of thanksgiving and living in the joy of Jesus' presence. How does your experience of the Eucharist bring to life the Church and her mission?

Springs spill out abundance for those nearby. How do you share the gifts you've received from Jesus?

Weekly Challenge:

Experience the Eucharist this week, but don't let it stop at Mass. Let it inspire something else. Maybe something from the homily speaks to you, or a the parish is hosting an event that you can be a part of. Connect yourself to the Church beyond Sunday Mass this week.

Monday of the Third Week of Lent

The greatest love story of all time is contained in a tiny white host.

-Ven. Fulton Sheen

Communion Antiphon:

O praise the Lord, all you nations, / for his merciful love towards us is great.

What is your love story with Jesus?

How have you seen God's love for the world?

Tuesday of the Third Week of Lent

This is the wonderful truth, my dear friends: the Word which became flesh two thousand years ago, is present today in the Eucharist.

-St. John Paul II

Communion Antiphon:

Lord, who may abide in your tent, / and dwell on your holy mountain? / Whoever walks without fault and does what is just.

Imagine if you could talk about all that Jesus has seen over the years as our Eucharistic Lord. What would you ask him if you were to sit with him?

What have you done this Lent that is just and 'without fault'?

Wednesday of the Third Week of Lent

The earth could exist more easily without the sun than without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

-St. Padre Pio

Communion Antiphon:

You will show me the path of life, / the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord.

When was the last time you sat in the sun? Can you get that joy from sitting in front of the Eucharist?

Do we trust the path that the Lord shows us?

Thursday of the Third Week of Lent

When you have received Holy Communion close your bodily eyes so that you may open the eyes of your soul. Then look upon Jesus in the center of your heart.

-St. Teresa of Avila

Communion Antiphon:

You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept; / may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

How do you imagine Jesus entering your heart at Communion? What would it look like in a movie?

How does going to Communion or Adoration help you follow God's precepts and statutes?

Friday of the Third Week of Lent

The flesh feeds on the Body and Blood of Christ, so that the soul likewise may be filled with God.

-Tertullian

Communion Antiphon:

To love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself, / is worth more than any sacrifice.

How do you feel or know when your soul is being filled with God?

How do you show your love for God and neighbor?

Saturday of the Third Week of Lent

God in His omnipotence could not give more, in His wisdom He knew not how to give more, in His riches He had not more to give, than the Eucharist.

-St. Augustine

Communion Antiphon:

The tax collector stood at a distance, beating his breast and saying: / O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

God's gift of the Eucharist is meant to help us live the Christian life. How do you use this gift?

How is God's mercy shown to you in the Eucharist?

Fourth Sunday of Lent

We must always take care that this great meeting with Christ in the Eucharist does not become a mere habit.

-St. John Paul II

Communion Antiphon:

The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed, / I saw and I believed in God.

How do you approach each Eucharist as something special rather than a repeat of last week?

How do you see God in the quiet prayer after Communion?

Weekly Challenge:

Take some time this week to consider how you can make time with Jesus in the Eucharist that is not mundane or routine. Can you share a spiritual reading with him? Maybe you can spend time during Adoration telling him about what is happening in your life.

Monday Solemnity of St. Joseph

We should consider those moments spent before the Blessed Sacrament as the happiest of our lives.

-St. John Vianney

Communion Antiphon:

Well done, good and faithful servant. / Come, share your master's joy.

How can you share the happy moments spent with the Blessed Sacrament with others?

How does the Eucharist help you share in your master's joy?

Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Trust all things to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary Help of Christians and you will see what miracles are.

-St. John Bosco

Communion Antiphon:

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. /
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose, /
near restful waters he leads me.

What do you find easy to trust to Jesus? What do you find difficult?

When has the Lord led you to 'green pastures' or 'restful waters' in your life?

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Jesus has made himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, he is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist.

-St. Teresa of Calcutta

Communion Antiphon:

God did not send his Son into the world/ to judge the world, / but that the world might be saved through him.

How can you grow more in the virtue of love? What role might the Eucharist have in helping you?

When have you felt saved through Jesus? Is it more often than feeling judged?

Thursday of the Fourth Week of Lent

The Eucharist is essential for us: it is Christ who wishes to enter our lives and fill us with his grace.

-Pope Francis

Communion Antiphon:

I will place my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; / and I will be their God, and they shall be my people, says the Lord.

How does knowing Jesus wants to be in your life make you feel?

How has God shown you his law and written it on your heart?

Friday of the Fourth Week of Lent

When you approach the tabernacle, remember that he has been waiting for you for twenty centuries.

-St. Josemaria Escriva

Communion Antiphon:

In Christ, we have redemption by his Blood, / and forgiveness of our sins, / in accord with the riches of his grace.

When we greet an old friend it is rarely with guilt. How do you greet Jesus when going to Adoration or Mass?

Eucharist is called the first Sacrament of reconciliation. Do you feel forgiven when receiving Communion?

Saturday — The Annunciation of the Lord

The Eucharist is the supreme proof of the love of Jesus. After this, there is nothing more but Heaven itself.

-St. Peter Julian Eymard

Communion Antiphon:

Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son; / and his name will be called Emmanuel.

Consider how much love Jesus has for you to give you the gift of himself as often as you go to Communion!

Emmanuel is Hebrew for God is with us. Do you take advantage of God's presence in the Eucharist?

Fifth Sunday of Lent

What wonderful Majesty! What stupendous condescension! O sublime humility! That the Lord of the whole universe, God and the Son of God, should humble Himself like this under the form of a little bread, for our salvation.

-St. Francis of Assisi

Communion Antiphon:

Everyone who lives and believes in me / will not die for ever,
says the Lord.

How amazing is it to see all of salvation in the form of a small wafer of bread?

Death can be scary, but through Christ we are assured it is not the end. How do you show your gratitude for eternal life?

Weekly Challenge:

This week, bring Jesus into what you do, and bring what you do to Jesus. Find time to pray with Jesus (maybe even in adoration) three times a day:

morning with your hopes for the day to come,
mid-day with how your day is going, and
at night with a recap of your day.

This time with Jesus can be long or short, whatever you need.

Monday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking.

-St. Irenaeus

Communion Antiphon:

Has no one condemned you, woman? No one, Lord. / Neither shall I condemn you. From now on, sin no more.

How does your faith in the Eucharist influence how you see the world? How does your view of the world influence your experience of the Eucharist?

When have you trusted the mercy of Jesus and accepted his grace?

Tuesday of the Fifth Week of Lent

The Holy Eucharist is the perfect expression of the love of Jesus Christ for man.

-St. Maria Goretti

Communion Antiphon:

When I am lifted up from the earth, / I will draw all to myself, says the Lord.

How do you feel loved by Jesus? How do you share that with others?

When have you felt drawn to the Lord?

Wednesday of the Fifth Week of Lent

Spend as much time as possible in front of the Blessed Sacrament and He will fill you with His strength and His power.

-St. Teresa of Calcutta

Communion Antiphon:

God has brought us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, / in whom we have redemption through his Blood, / the forgiveness of sins.

What kind of power do you think Jesus fills us with when we spend time with him in Adoration?

Do you often think of redemption as forgiveness?

Thursday of the Fifth Week of Lent

The Eucharist is the never-ending sacrifice. It is the Sacrament of love, the supreme love, the act of love.

-St. Katharine Drexel

Communion Antiphon:

God did not spare his own Son, but handed him over for us all; / with him, he has given us all things.

Eucharist means thanksgiving in Greek. How do you give thanks for this great act of love?

What have you done recently with the gift of Jesus Christ?

Friday of the Fifth Week of Lent

The only time our Lord asked the Apostles for anything was the night he went into agony. Not for activity did He plead, but for an hour of companionship.

-Ven. Fulton Sheen

Communion Antiphon:

Jesus bore our sins in his own body on the cross, / so that dead to sin, we might live for righteousness. / By his wounds we have been healed.

When was the last time you gave Jesus an hour of companionship?

How have you felt healed by Jesus?

Saturday of the Fifth Week of Lent

The Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect, but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak.

-Pope Francis

Communion Antiphon:

Christ was handed over, / to gather into one the scattered children of God.

When have you needed the powerful medication that Pope Francis describes?

How can you help Christ gather the flock by showing Him to the world?

Palm Sunday

My Jesus! What a lovable contrivance this holy Sacrament was—that you would hide under the appearance of bread to make yourself loved and to be available for a visit by anyone who desires you!

-St. Alphonsus Liguori

Communion Antiphon:

Father, if this chalice cannot pass without my drinking it, your will be done.

Where else have you seen Jesus hidden in plain sight? Has a Lent of focusing on being with Jesus helped you see him more?

Do you trust God to give you a chalice you can handle?

Weekly Challenge:

This Holy Week, make time to celebrate Jesus like the people of Jerusalem when he came to town AND to remember his crucifixion. It is easy for us to quickly change from joyful followers of Jesus to an angry person ignoring his message of love. How can you hold on to the joy and leave behind the anger?

Monday of Holy Week

Smile at Jesus whom you approach at Mass, in Holy Communion and in Eucharistic Adoration.

-St. Gianna Beretta Molla

Communion Antiphon:

Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. /
Turn your ear towards me/ on the day when I call, speedily
answer me.

How do you show the joy of Jesus' presence in the Eucharist?

Do you trust that God turns his ear towards you? Are you ready to hear his reply?

Tuesday of Holy Week

Since Christ Himself has said, "This is My Body" who shall dare to doubt that it is His Body?

-St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Communion Antiphon:

God did not spare his own Son, / but handed him over for us all.

In the Eucharist we have the fullness of Truth. How do you show trust in his presence?

Jesus was willing to do what needed to be done for the good of humanity. Are you willing to go where God leads you?

Wednesday of Holy Week

In this world I cannot see the Most High Son of God with my own eyes, except for His Most Holy Body and Blood.

-St. Francis of Assisi

Communion Antiphon:

The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve/ and to give his life as a ransom for many.

How would you look at the Eucharist differently if you could see Jesus in his humanity?

How do you show a loving servitude to others?

Holy Thursday

We do not sin when we adore Christ in the Eucharist; we do sin when we do not adore Christ in the Eucharist.

-St. Augustine.

Communion Antiphon:

This is the Body that will be given us for you; / this is the Chalice of the new covenant in my Blood, says the Lord; / do this, whenever you receive it, in memory of me.

How do you greet Jesus when you arrive in his presence and when you leave it? Do you genuflect out of custom, or out of respect?

We have heard the words of Jesus at the Last Supper over and over. How often do you participate in his memory?

Good Friday

The celebration of the Holy Mass is as valuable as the death of Jesus on the cross.

-St. Thomas Aquinas

(No Communion Antiphon on Good Friday)

On Good Friday there is no Mass, no Eucharistic prayer. How does praying over the crucifixion without the prayer of the Mass change our experience of receiving Jesus in Holy Communion?

Holy Saturday

This is the Bread of everlasting life which supports the substance of our soul.

-St. Ambrose

Communion Antiphon:

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed; / therefore let us keep the feast / with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia.

When have you been supported by the Eucharist?

Eucharist is a Passover meal, a reminder that God so loves us that we are spared death. How is the Eucharistic Feast a joyful reminder of that in your life?



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