Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

Matthew 4:1
First Sunday of Lent

Reflecting on God’s Word

Twice a year the Gospels take us to the desert. John the Baptist cries out on two Sundays every Advent, and Jesus encounters Satan every Lent. What makes the desert so ideal a setting as we prepare to celebrate the two great mysteries of our faith? The desert is a place of testing, as God’s people learned when they wandered around it for forty years. With hardened hearts, they had rejected the God who had liberated them from slavery in Egypt, losing faith even while God was talking to Moses and setting down the conditions for their adoption. Up went the golden calf and out went the memory of what God had just done for them.

Even Eden wasn’t enough to keep the human heart open. Even there it was clear that we could be seduced by anything that looked good and promised more than it could deliver. But Jesus showed that one of us could measure up to the test and reveal Himself as the “beloved Son” that He had been called at His baptism (Matthew 3:17).

The desert is also for wooing. The prophet Hosea quotes God saying, “So I will allure her [Israel]; I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart” (Hosea 2:16). And when Satan left Jesus, God sent “angels [who] came and ministered to Him” (Matthew 4:11).

So we come to this Lent and the possibility that God wishes to draw us out into a quiet, lonely place to have us meet the One who made us, redeemed us, and continues to shape us into temples of the Holy Spirit.

—James A. Wallace, C.Ss.R.

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JDCCW Bishop Blanchette Scholarship

Applications for the Joliet Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (JDCCW) Bishop Blanchette Scholarship are now available to those students planning on attending a Joliet Diocesan Catholic High School for the 2020-2021 school year. Applicants can obtain a BBSF application form from their Parish CCW President (Dana Wolze dana@wolze.com). The paper application deadline is March 26, 2020. A FACTS scholarship application must be submitted online at https://online.factsmsmt.com. Request to be added to the JDCCW-BBS FACTS ID#32463. If the family has already submitted a FACTS application for the upcoming year for another award, they are still eligible for the JDCCW-BBSF scholarship. Only one application need be submitted to FACTS at their online site. If you have any questions regarding FACTS call: 1-866-441-4637. DO NOT SEND your application to the JDCCW office. There is a $35.00 fee for the FACTS application that needs to be submitted to FACTS at the time of application, along with a copy of the family’s 2019 Income Tax report.
For Teens … Catholic Heart Workcamp

Our St. Irene youth had such an amazing experience the last 2 years that we are collaborating again with St. Mike’s for this awesome mission trip!

This July 19th - 25th our 8th - 12th grade teens are invited to join 350 teens from parishes all over the U.S. at Catholic Heart Workcamp (CHWC) in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. This is a week of fun, prayer, laughter, Mass & Reconciliation, and restoring hope through service to those less fortunate.

There are still a few spots available. For more information or any questions, contact: Pamela Keating at 630-393-2400 x120 or pamela@st-irene.org.

40 Hours of Adoration Devotion – What to do?

If you haven’t been to Adoration lately, or you’ve never been to Adoration, and you’re worried you will be bored or confused, it’s understandable and you are NOT alone. But don’t worry, we have a few tips for you:

- Pray with the heart. Any conversations with God are prayers.
- Write in a prayer journal. A prayer journal is a great way to make your relationship with Jesus more tangible.
- Listen to praise and worship music. This is a great way to focus your thoughts on God. Music can also help you focus your thoughts more on your prayer.
- Read religious material that will help you build your relationship with Jesus. Reading a few lines of the Bible or a few paragraphs on one of the saints is a great way to find tips and treasures to help you build and strengthen your relationship with God.

So, don’t fret or worry that you will be bored. Sign up, or just stop by, and spend a few minutes with the Lord during our 40 Hours of Adoration Devotion which starts on Sunday, March 1st after the 10:00am Mass and ends on Tuesday, March 3rd, after the 8:15 Mass. Also, feel free to come by and spend a few minutes during our weekly Adoration on Thursdays, starting after the 7:00am Mass and ending at 8:00pm.
Whole Parish Catechesis
Readings and Questions for Faith Sharing

Reading I: Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7
♦ God formed us from the clay.

Background: The first thing God forms from the dust of the earth is a human. God does not form an individual named Adam; rather, "the Human" represents all of humanity. God creates a garden with two trees, the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Serpents were frequent symbols in Canaanite fertility cults. These cults were a source of temptation for the people of the time. In the story, the serpent is not Satan, but a clever creature of God who tempts the two humans.

Reading II: Romans 5:12-19
♦ A single righteous act has saved us!

Background: The reading from Paul's Letter to the Romans shows the development of thought about the creation story. As a consequence of the first sin, humans became subject to sin and have evil in the world. But, just as sin and death came to all through Adam, life and justification come to all through Christ.

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11
♦ Jesus was led into the desert by the Spirit.

Background: The story of Jesus’ temptation is always the Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Lent. The three temptations attack the three human faculties with which one is commanded to love God: heart, soul and strength. The rabbis interpreted the heart as the human appetite toward good or evil, the soul as life, and might as one’s wealth. The Gospel reading makes clear the difference between Jesus and Adam: the reason that Adam’s act brought death and Jesus’ act brought life.

Theme: Temptation - What would Jesus do?

Question for Adults:
When you yourself pause to be alone with God, what distracts and prevents you from dwelling in that? Busyness? The demands of life? TV? The internet?

Question for Youth:
Jesus was tempted by the devil. How are you tempted? What helps you resist these temptations?

Question for Children:
What do you plan to do during Lent this year as a way of showing you want to grow closer to Jesus?

Aurora Central Catholic High School Honor Roll
The following Aurora Central Catholic High School students are members of our parish and have made the honor roll:

High Honor Roll (GPA > 3.55):
- Senior - Lela Reid

Honor Roll (GPA = 3.00 to 3.54):
- Junior - Mary Kate O'Hare
- Freshman - Noah Herbst

CONGRATULATIONS! Good job!

Family Faith Formation
(Religious Education)

Classes meet on Tuesday, Mar. 3 (Gr. 1-6 in the classroom) 5:30-7PM and Wednesday, Mar. 4 (Gr. 7-8 in the ACL) 6:30-8PM. Parents meet their children on Tuesdays at 6:45PM in Church and Wednesdays at 7:45PM in the ACL.

Gospel Weekly Family Discussion:

Gospel of Matthew 4:1-11 - The devil challenges Jesus to prove that He is the Son of God, and offers Jesus great rewards if Jesus will worship him. Jesus resists the devil’s temptations, and sends the devil away by staying faithful to God.

Question of the Week:
♦ What sacrifice (or extra commitment) are you going to make this Lent?

Gospel Questions:
♦ What words of God do you trust?
♦ What does Jesus mean when He says people do not live on bread alone?
♦ What choices make you more like Jesus?

Life Questions:
♦ What have you learned from experience about discerning good from evil?
♦ What is the most important choice you have made today?
♦ What are some choices you will make for Lent?

Family Prayer:
♦ God, we make difficult choices every day. Help us to make loving, safe, and healthy choices. Amen.
El diablo desafía a Jesús para que pruebe que él es el Hijo de Dios y le ofrece grandes recompensas si se inclina a adorarlo. Jesús resiste las tentaciones del diablo y permanece fiel a Dios.

**Oración en familia – Señor, todos los días tomo decisiones difíciles. Ayúdame a elegir las opciones llenas de amor, seguras, y sanas. Amen.**

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**Lenten Regulations**

1. Everyone 14 years of age or over is bound to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all the Fridays of Lent.
2. All age 18 years up to the beginning of their 60th year are bound to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
3. On these two days of fast and abstinence, only one full meatless meal is allowed. Two other meatless meals, sufficient to maintain strength, may be taken according to each one’s needs, but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals is not permitted on these two days, but liquids, including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or ability to work would be seriously affected, the law does not oblige.
4. To disregard completely the law of fast and abstinence is sinful.
5. Lent is the principal season of penance in the Church year. Therefore, all of the faithful are strongly urged to develop and follow a program of voluntary self-denial. All Catholics are encouraged to support generously the charitable works of the whole Church, pray and perform works of charity and mercy.
6. Those who are sick, pregnant, or nursing, or whose health would adversely be affected by fasting or abstinence, should not consider themselves bound by these norms.

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**St. Irene CCW Woman of the Year Nominations**

Dear Parishioners,

Please help us recognize a Woman of our parish who shines the light of God through her words and actions, living her faith for us to follow. Nomination forms for Woman of the Year are located in the Narthex and need to be returned by March 1st. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and participation in this process. Sincerely, St. Irene CCW Ministry

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**St. Patrick’s/St. Joseph’s Day Lunch**

Are you 55 years old or older? Come celebrate St. Patrick’s/St. Joseph’s day with the Lunch Bunch on Thursday, March 5th in the ACL. RSVP by Monday, March 2nd, and indicate your entrée selection of corned beef or chicken to Annette Kubalanza at annette@st-irene.org or 630.393.2400 X122; or to Denise at dscagsch@comcast.net. Donation is $10.00 at the door and includes a presentation on the history and lore of Garden Gnomes.

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**Be a “Shavee” for St. Baldricks!**

Four years ago, the Edmonds Family suffered a devastating loss when their son, Vinnie, passed away from a rare form of brain cancer. Since then, they have always sought to help other families with the same diagnosis in any way they can. From the day of his diagnosis, to the day he passed and beyond, the St. Irene community has provided more support than the Edmonds’ ever could have expected and the family is grateful for it—and they are dedicated to paying it forward. This year, they are hosting a St. Baldrick’s head shaving event in the AC. Here are a few ways you can support them:

- Sign-up as a “shavee” at https://www.stbaldricks.org/register/participant/13848/2020 - “Brave the Shave”!
- Come to the event March 14th at 2:00pm in the St. Irene Activity Center. See the website for event activities https://www.stbaldricks.org/events/StIrene2020 (e.g. live DJ, silent auction, guest speakers, and of course shaving!)
- Donate at https://www.stbaldricks.org/donate/participant/1047663/2020 - The goal is $20,000 in 2020.

Every 2 minutes a new child is diagnosed with cancer. All day, every day, families are getting this diagnosis. The good news is that St. Baldrick’s is supporting groundbreaking, outside-the-box research that could really make an impact on that. If your heart calls for you to do this, please consider supporting this event. If you have any questions about the event please contact Joe Edmonds at 847-571-5916.
## This Week’s Meetings

### Sunday, March 1
- 10:10-10:45a - Children’s Liturgy of the Word (ACL)
- 11-12:30p - Rite of Christian Initiation - Adults (ACL)

### Monday, March 2
- 1-2:30p - Adult Education (ACL)
- 6:30-8:30p - Healing Horizons (Staff)
- 7-8:30p - Adult Education (ACL)

### Tuesday, March 3
- 7-9p - School Board (HF)

### Wednesday, March 4
- 12:15-3:30p - Band (ACL)
- 7-8:30p - Choir (Church)

### Thursday, March 5
- 11:30-2p - Lunch Bunch (ACL)
- 7-8:30p - CCW (ACL)

### Friday, March 6
- 12:15-3:30p Band (ACL)
- 7-10p - Lenten Soup Supper (ACL)

### Saturday, March 7
- No Meetings

### Sunday, March 8
- 7:30-12:30p - Hospitality (ACL)
- 10-10:45a - Children’s Liturgy of the Word (ACL)
- 11-12:30p - Baptism Prep 1st Session (S)

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### For Widowed Men and Women

Feeling stuck? Need something? There will be a retreat/workshop for widowed men and women on March 14 & 15 at Our Lady of The Angels, (Mt. Assisi Center Bldg.), 13820 Main St., Lemont, IL Overnight accommodations available.

To register call: 708-354-7211 or email: joyfulagain7211@gmail.com

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### Join us for Mass at Mercy Home

We have been invited to participate in the taping of Sunday Mass at Mercy Home for Boys and Girls for airing on May 3rd The Fourth Sunday of Easter and May 24th The Ascension.

We will meet on Sunday, March 8th at 11:30a.m. at Mercy Home, 1140 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago. The taping will occur between 12:30p.m.-2:00 p.m. and there will be a complimentary luncheon beforehand. There is free parking at Mercy Home and plenty of street parking is available.

We hope to have a good showing, but can accommodate no more than 20 people for the TV audience (children over 5 years old are welcome). Please let Joe Kubal know if you will be attending by March 1st.

Mercy Home is a Catholic Charity and free-will donations would be appreciated. For questions or more information please contact Joe Kubal at 630-983-6159 or SMKubal0712@aol.com.

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### K of C Eyeglass and DME Drive

Please donate your old or unwanted eyeglasses by dropping them off in the collection box in the back of church. Eyeglasses will be forwarded to the Lions Club International local chapter for renovation and reuse by those in need. The collection box will be available from February 29th through May 31st.

Also, we will be collecting used durable medical equipment (DME) such as wheelchairs, walkers, canes, bath chairs, crutches, and hearing aids. These items will be donated to appropriate healthcare facilities and/or senior organizations.

Please leave your donations in the church narthex or contact Joe Kubal at 630-983-6159 or jdrk4715@aol.com to schedule a pick-up.

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### Easter Gifts for the Children of the Parish

The Ladies of Columbus Auxiliary #6710 will be constructing our Easter gifts to the children of the parish on Monday, March 9, from 6:00-8:00pm in the ACL. We will provide the necessary items to make the gifts as well as snacks and beverages. All are invited to attend. For further information, contact Cathy Kott at 630-393-9543.
Liturgical Calendar

Monday, March 2
Julian Calendar Lent begins
7:00AM - Kathy Aranda / Aranda Family

Tuesday, March 3
St. Katharine Drexel
7:00AM - Carl Bonnan - 1st Anniversary
8:15AM - School Mass - for all those suffering during this Lenten season

Wednesday, March 4
St. Casimir
7:00AM - Juliane Paluch / St. Irene Family

Thursday, March 5
Lenten Weekday
7:00AM - For everyone on our prayer list
8:15AM - No Mass
7:00 PM - Stations of the Cross

Friday, March 6
World Day of Prayer; Abstinence; First Friday
7:00AM - For everyone on our prayer list
8:15AM - No Mass
7:00 PM - Stations of the Cross

Saturday, March 7
Ss. Perpetua & Felicity; First Saturday
5:00PM - Joan Barth 92nd birthday / Beverly & Ray

Sunday, March 8
Second Sunday of Lent
8:00AM - Cristina Ruiz de Navarro / Family
10:00AM - March Birthdays and Anniversaries

St. Irene Vocation Prayer

In every age Lord, You raise up women and men who are strong in their faith and bold in their actions to give witness to the Gospel.
Fill St. Irene Parish Community with Your Spirit and give us a burning desire to make a difference in our world.
Because of our love for You, Bless our Church with holy and courageous priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers, devoted married couples, dedicated single men and women, and enthusiastic youth.
We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Sue Lambert
Colette Malovany
Sam Vitale
Pat Wehner
Mary George
Desiree Sheppard
Erich Pavel
Marc Alleruzzo

Readings for the Week

Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18; Ps 19:8-10, 15; Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11; Ps 34:4-7, 16-19; Mt 6:7-15
Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10; Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19; Lk 11:29-32
Thursday: Est C:12, 14-16, 23-25; Ps 138:1-3, 7c-8; Mt 7:7-12
Friday: Ez 18:21-28; Ps 130:1-8; Mt 5:20-26
Saturday: Dt 26:16-19; Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8; Mt 5:43-48
Sunday: Gn 12:1-4a; Ps 33:4-5, 18-20, 22; 2 Tm 1:8b-10; Mt 17:1-9

Communion Assistance

We want to insure that every parishioner who wishes to partake in the Communion Sacrament be able to do so. In order to assist us with this process, please notify an usher prior to the start of Mass if you or someone in your party needs communion brought to you. Extraordinary Ministers will bring the Precious Body & Blood to you in your pew.

Eucharistic Adoration

- Join us on Thursdays anytime between 7:30AM-8PM. Please sign up for a 1/2 hour or an 1 hour segment by calling Cathy Kott at 630.393.9543.