

*St. Mary of the Assumption Parish
Lancaster, NY
March 1 – April 12, 2017*



Family activity

For the next six weeks, the focus of the family activities will be the season of Lent. Lent is a time of conversion, a time of change, and a time to come closer to both our true self and Jesus. This activity sheet offers ways to spend time together, as well as opportunities for prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Activity # 1 – (Preparation) Some time before Ash Wednesday, take time as a family to watch one of the following videos. Children in second grade and beyond should be able to understand at least something from each of the You Tube videos listed here:

“Lent FAQ with Joe Paprocki” (7 min 13 sec)

“Cardinal Timothy Dolan – What is Lent?” (2 min 40 sec)

“Lent – a season of repentance, prayer and fasting” (4 min 57 sec)

“The Lenten Season” (6 min 59 sec)

Journal about something you learned from the video(s).

Activity # 2 – (Beginning) St. Mary’s Parish begins Lent with an Ash Wednesday clam chowder supper. It is a simple meal during which clam chowder and tomato soup, as well as fish and grilled cheese sandwiches, are served along with beverages and desserts. Try to attend this event and during it, have a family discussion about Lent. What would you like to do during Lent to make it a special season?

Activity # 3 – At the family meal each day during Lent, choose an event in the newspaper, newscast or your own life in which healing is needed. This might be an act of violence, mistreatment of a person or a group of people, physical pain, loss or illness. Only one event is to be talked about each day. The family member whose turn it was to bring an event to the attention of the family will write in the journal about the event and how the family reacts. The entry might read: “Today we talked about the people who were killed and injured in the plane crash. We prayed for them and their families. We also talked about how we do not know what can happen at any moment, so we decided to be kinder to others.”

Activity 4 – (Prayer) Think of a person who you find difficult to get along with. It could be a person in your family, a relative you do not really like, someone at school or work or in your neighborhood or in some group that you belong. Pray for that person each day during Lent and

try to find ways of showing kindness to that person. Forgive what they have done to you and ask God to show that person special love during the season of Lent.

Try to participate in a weekend Mass during Lent and journal about something you heard in the homily that you found helpful or interesting.

And/or you may just need 10 minutes of time out each day during Lent. No reading, no computer, no phone, no people – just 10 minutes with a cup of tea – sitting in an easy chair. Allow Jesus to speak to your heart!

Activity 5 – (Fasting) There are many things we can fast from. We can fast from selfishness and give our family one evening a week for a game night and just being together. Look at the “Lenten Ideas for Children” sheet and see if you can come up with an idea that might better suit members of your family.

Activity 6 (Almsgiving) Is there a particular place for which you have thought about volunteering? Maybe you would like to collect warm weather clothing for the Nicaragua Mission. Maybe you would like to volunteer at a soup kitchen or food pantry. Talk about this as a family and make some commitment to help those less fortunate. Other almsgiving options are listed on the “Lenten Ideas for Children” handout.

You might want to offer service during the “senior prom” on March 17 for grandparents and other senior citizens. Service might mean baking for the event coming on March 17 from 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm to spend time with our senior citizens.

Holy Week – After really celebrating Lent, choose a Holy Week Church celebration you would like to participate in. Check the bulletin for days and times. May Easter 2017 be your best Easter ever because of the way you celebrated Lent!

Family Program will again be going to the Lancaster Towers on April 14, which is Good Friday, to pray the Stations of the Cross with the residents and to offer some Easter treats. This might be included as one of your Family Lenten activities.