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Third Sunday of Lent

"There once was a person who had a fig tree planted in his orchard, and when he came in search of fruit on it [he] found none." We live in a results-driven society. It can be easy to put pressure on ourselves to succeed. If we're not keeping up with the perceived "good life" of those around us, we feel anxious and disappointed. Some of the Gospel stories about fruitfulness can seem to play out in this fashion. "For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down." The message seems to be clear. Abide in God and bear fruit! Stand apart from God and be barren. But what happens when we're trying, but the growth we wanted doesn't seem to be coming our way? What if it feels like life just isn't bearing fruit.



3rd Sunday of Lent

Jesus said to them in reply, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were greater sinners than all other Galileans? By no means! But I tell you, if you do not repent, you will all perish as they did!" (Lk 13:27)

This Sunday, Jesus gives us a sign of hope. "[The gardener] said to him in reply, 'Sir, leave it for this year also? it may bear fruit in the future.'" How quick we can be to judge! Perhaps you started out Lent with high hopes and big ideas for getting closer to God. Maybe things haven't gone exactly like you thought. It can be easy to lose patience with our failures or slow growth. We shouldn't be too quick to assume that God has given up on us. He hasn't.

The same ideas apply to those around us. Perhaps we're the planter of the fig tree. We expect a certain amount of growth from someone in our life, and they just aren't measuring up. Let today's Gospel be a gentle nudge for mercy. As Lent continues to unfold, be patient with yourself and those around you. Wait for God to provide the growth.

ANNUAL DIOCESAN RESPECT FOR LIFE MASS will be celebrated by **Most Rev. Gerard Paul Bergie**, on **The Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord** Monday, March 25, 2019, 7pm, **The Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria**, 67 Church Street, St. Catharines. **Let us pray together for the protection of life in all its stages; for greater respect for God's gift of life: for those wounded by abortion. Reception to follow.**

Invest ONE HOUR to save a Lifetime! 40Days for Life – Be an active participant in this peaceful campaign through prayer and fasting during Lent, March 6th – April 14th. We ask each church to adopt **ONE DAY (For our Parish – Saturday, April 13th) from 8 am – 8 pm**, with two or more people to give public witness for one or two hours standing on Portage Street at the Niagara Falls General Hospital, holding a sign "Pray to end Abortion." This is a prayerful, silent **VIGIL**. To sign up for **Saturday, April 13th** please register at the [sign up table](#) at the back of the church or contact Karen Jankovich: kjankovich@sympatico.ca

For general inquiries and to sign up for other days during Lent, please contact Annette: loeffenlife@gmail.com, 905-325-1251, or Angela: angelabraun@live.com

Defend the Sanctity of Life! Petition of One Million – Please sign the petition at the back of the church to protect the unborn. For further information: www.petitionofonemillion.ca

ONE MILLION ROSARIES FOR UNBORN BABIES

The **One Million Rosaries for Unborn Babies** multinational pro-life prayer event is scheduled for **May 3, 4 and 5** this year. Persons participating will pray at least one Rosary for the protection of the unborn. For details and to register go to: <http://www.saintmichaelthearchangelorganization.org/>

On Saturday, April 6, 2019, in every parish church across the diocese a priest will be available from 10am – 2pm to hear individual confessions. There will also be Eucharistic Adoration during this time. No matter how long it has been, you are welcome to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, which assists us in spiritual discipline as we turn away from sin and open our hearts to reconciliation and healing or you can also simply come to pray before the Lord.

Lenten Food Drive: Baskets have been placed at the church entrance. Donations of nonperishable food items would be appreciated and will be forwarded to Pelham Cares. **Items most needed include:** Food items: stews, chili, jams, tea and coffee. Baking supplies of any kind are also welcome and gift cards. At this time, there is an abundance of pastas and sauces and peanut butter. Other items: Diapers sizes 4-6 (all ages), pull ups size 3T and up.

Migrant Ministry: Once again, our parish will be welcoming the seasonal agriculture workers as they return to our community during the month of March. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul will be collecting warm clothing for the men, as they will arrive during the cooler weather and may be unprepared for the colder climate. Items most in need are socks, warm gloves, and toques. We are also accepting donations of gently used men's sweaters and coats, as well as new toiletries. If you have any items to donate, please leave them in the church basement, with a note indicating that they are for the seasonal agriculture workers. Thank you for your continued support.

ATTENTION LECTORS: If you have been scheduled to read on **Palm Sunday (April 13/14) or Good Friday (April 19)**, your binders will be available for you **next weekend** at the back of the church, with your name on it. Two readers are scheduled. Please contact each other and assign yourselves the parts for the long gospel reading (**Luke—for Palm Sunday**) as well as the first & second readings and the petitions (petitions for Palm Sunday only). **A reminder that during Mass you are required to use the Passion Narrative Lectionaries which will be placed on both lecterns for you. The binders are for practice reading only.** On your reading date, please bring the binders with you and leave them at the back of the church. **Thank you.**

Easter Flower Memorial: The beautiful Easter lilies and spring flowers that adorn our altar and sanctuary are a special part of the celebration of Easter in our parish. We invite all parishioners to share in the experience through a memorial or thanksgiving gift by using the **Easter Flowers Memorial Envelopes found in your offertory boxes dated March 24th. If you do not have envelopes but would like to donate, you may use a plain envelope with your contact information listed.** These donations, made in memory or honour of your family members and friends help cover the cost of Easter flowers. This is a wonderful way to remember loved ones, honour friends, and offer thanksgiving to God for prayers answered and blessings received. Please place your envelopes in the collection basket, or bring to the parish office on or before the weekend of April 13/14. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. The names of all those for whom our Easter flowers are in memory of will be printed in the parish bulletin on Easter Sunday.

SEPARATED AND DIVORCED HEALING MINISTRY. March topics "Facing Fear" (March 25). Meetings are 7 to 9 pm at Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, 7020 Stanley Ave, Niagara Falls. Pre-registration is not required. 356-4113 or 905-684-0154.

Parish Calendar

- March.....
- March 25th..... **Holy Hour Cancelled**
- April
- April 5th..... First Friday Holy Communion to sick and homebound. Phone the office to arrange a visit.
- April 6th..... Diocesan Sacrament of Penance in all parishes from 10am –2pm
- April 7th..... Solidarity Sunday
- April 10th..... Finance meeting 6:30pm
- April 14th..... Palm Sunday
- April 16th..... Chrism Mass, 7:30pm St. Alfred's Parish
- April 18th..... Holy Thursday—Mass of the Lord's Supper 7pm (Bingo cancelled)
- April 19th..... Good Friday
Confessions 9-11am
Passion of Our Lord—3pm
Stations of the Cross 7pm
- April 20th..... Holy Saturday
Confessions 9-10am
Blessing of Easter Baskets Noon
Confessions 4-5pm
Vigil 8:30pm
- April 21st.... Easter Sunday, Masses 9:30 & 11am
- April 24th.... Confirmation meeting 5:30pm
- April 24th..... St. Ann School Easter Mass 9:30am
- April 28th..... Divine Mercy Sunday

The Way of the Cross: For Roman Catholics throughout the world, the **Stations of the Cross** are synonymous with Lent, Holy Week and, especially, Good Friday. This devotion is also known as the "Way of the Cross", the "Via Crucis", and the "Via Dolorosa." It commemorates 14 key events on day of Christ's crucifixion. **A Plenary indulgence is granted to the faithful who make a good confession before the pious devotion of the Stations of the Cross.** Please join with us as we gather to walk with Jesus this holy season of Lent.

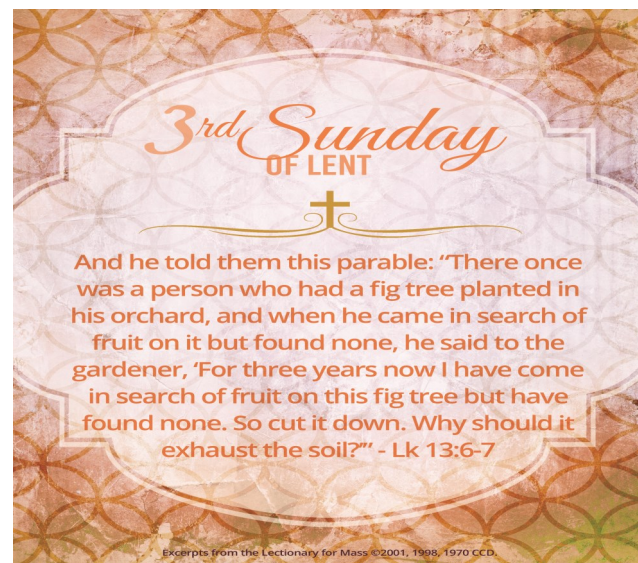


Share the journey with the Rohingyas of Myanmar
 Facing persecution and violence, 723,000 Rohingyas have fled Myanmar since August 2017 and

taken refuge across the border, in neighbouring Bangladesh. Development and Peace's long-time partner Caritas Bangladesh is working hard to restore some dignity to these people who simply yearn to live in peace. Thanks to your donations, Caritas Bangladesh has been able to provide temporary shelters, access to clean water, safe latrines and showers for women and girls, and hygiene kits, and to raise awareness among refugees about safety issues. Your generosity makes a difference in the lives of the Rohingya! devp.org/give **Solidarity Sunday is April 7th.**

Strawberry Fair Volunteer Committee Needed: Volunteers are needed to co-ordinate this annual event which takes place in June. Ideally, two or three persons would organize and co-ordinate and other volunteers would assist on the day of the event and oversee the various venues for the day. Past committee members will be available to help guide you through the process and volunteer to assist during the day. There are comprehensive notes to help with preparation. New ideas and venues would be welcome. You can pick a date in June—no earlier than the 9th (to ensure that the berries are ready). Planning must begin early—late April would be best to begin with the first planning meeting.

Sunday, March 24th, 2019



Sat. Mar 23	9-10am	Confession
	4 -4:45pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confession
	5:00pm	✠ Harry Atkins (Wendy Atkins)
Sun. Mar 24	9:30am	Missa Pro Populo
	11:00am	✠ Gerry Berkhout (Joan & Tim Crowther)
Mon. Mar 25	9:30am	40th Anniversary Blessings for Jack & Bernadette Goold (Delores & Gerry Kennedy)
	7-8pm	Holy Hour CANCELLED
Tues. Mar 26	9:30am	✠ Isaiah (Magazzeni Family)
Wed. Mar 27	9:30am	✠ Wally & Sophie Paterak (Christine Meyo & Family)
Thurs. Mar 28	9:30am	Special Intention (Teresa Walters)
Fri. Mar 29	9:30am	✠ Marion Mullin (Teresa Walters)
Sat. Mar 30	4 -4:45pm	Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament & Confession
	5:00pm	Missa Pro Populo
Sun. Mar 31	9:30am	✠ Cornelius Vanderlee (Tina Vanderlee)
	11:00am	Special Intention for the unborn Children and their mothers (Jankovich Family)

Reconciliation from 9-9:20am before all weekday Masses. Offertory March 16th & 17th, 2019

79 Envelopes	\$1, 814.35
Loose Collection	\$ 53.00
Total Offertory	\$1, 867.35

Please remember in your prayers the soul of ✠**Sam Lopinski** who passed away on March 22nd. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

