



ST. BERNARD'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

3100 HEMPSTEAD TURNPIKE • LEVITTOWN, NEW YORK 11756

A COMMUNITY OF FAITH  HOPE  AND LOVE 

YOUR GUIDE TO LENT 2017 AND BEYOND



IN LEVITTOWN & BEYOND

Ash Wednesday • 2017

2.



516-731-4220 Phone

516-731-4355 Fax

Email: Parish@StBernardChurch.org

Website: www.StBernardChurch.org

PASTORAL TEAM

Father Ralph Sommer, Pastor

Shepherd@StBernardChurch.org

ext. 130

Father Joe Nohs, Associate Pastor

FrNohsBest@StBernardChurch.org

ext. 128

Father Innocent Duru, In Residence

onyeduru@yahoo.com

Father Innocent Mbaegbu, In Residence

ebere1212@yahoo.com

Deacon John Blakeney

DeaconJohn@StBernardChurch.org

Deacon James Flannery

Aquinas69@gmail.com

Mrs. Susan Martin,

Director of Religious Education

RelEd@StBernardChurch.org

516-731-8511 Phone/516-731-7860 Fax

Sr. Christine Sammons, O.P.,

Coordinator of Parish Social Ministry

PSM@StBernardChurch.org

516-731-6074

Ms. Sarah Kropac,

Coordinator of Youth Ministry

skropac@stbernardchurch.org

Mrs. Mary Jane Witte,

Director of Liturgical Music

MJWitte@StBernardChurch.org

ext. 142

Ms. Diane Vella, Pastoral Associate

DVella@StBernardChurch.org

ext. 143

WHAT CAN YOU FIND ON OUR PARISH WEBSITE?



The latest news of what's happening. And if there's any more snow this winter, we'll let you know what's open or closed here.

A constantly updated calendar of events. If you're the parent of someone in our Religious Education Program, visit the Religiopus Ed site to remember important dates and meetings.



We have almost 600 people subscribed to our weekly blog. Sign up for free! (And you'll be the first to be sent any fast-breaking news.)



Don't wait til Sundays to find out who died. We post funeral information, with families' permission, throughout the week as funerals are scheduled.



Watch parish videos on any of your devices. There are weekly reflections by kids each week during the school year. And much more!



Want to give up collection envelopes for Lent? Now you can join hundreds of parishioners who give electronically instead. Just click on the Faith Direct logo. Or go directly to: <https://membership.faithdirect.net/NY272>





DATING GOD THIS LENT

E-mail Father Ralph: shepherd@stbernardchurch.org

Awakening Faith

Each fall and spring a small group of parishioners meets together once a week for four Saturday mornings to experience a little program called “Awakening Faith.” Led by our Pastoral Associate, Diane Vella, it’s a chance to discover more about our faith. Are you a spiritual person (or would you like to be)? This program considers ways of growing in spirituality.

The topics include:

[Does Jesus Matter?](#)

[Does the Mass Matter?](#)

[Does the Church Matter?](#)

And there is always time built in for any questions or topics the participants

bring. The program is designed for adults in their 20’s-40’s looking to connect more deeply with their Catholic faith.

This Spring the sessions are Saturdays, March 18,

25, April 1, & 8. The

group meets in the Youth Ministry Room off the

lobby of the school from 9am -10:15am. For more

information, call Diane at 731-4220 or e-mail her at

[dvella@](mailto:dvella@stbernardchurch.org)

stbernardchurch.org

Are you excited for Lent to start? I am. Years ago I shuddered at Lent’s approach because I was focused on “giving up” rather than renewal. These days I’m much more optimistic about the dynamic power of Lent because I’ve had some great experiences over recent years which led to a deepening of my relationship with Jesus.

When you think about it, isn’t that what Lent really ought to be about? I think that it was easy in past times to turn Lent into some kind of self-improvement program where we hoped that our attempts at “giving up” would yield some kind of weight loss or at least we’d show God how “good” we were by whatever discipline we promised to follow. (Of course, if we ever broke our Lenten resolutions, we slinked away from God in spiritual embarrassment.)

So why not consider Lent as a time to date God? When people date one another, they do the Lent things: giving up, good works and prayer. **Giving up:** when people date they give up their time to be with the other; they might give up a behavior that the other finds uncomfortable (smoking, speeding while driving, cursing, etc.) **Good works:** when people date they do good things for the other (offer to pick up dry cleaning, make a nice dinner, shovel snow for them, etc.) And they spend money on the person they’re dating. **Prayer:** People talk and listen when they’re dating. A really successful date is when there is more listening than talking.

Lent can be a time to date God. We’ll give up things that annoy God. We’ll do the kind and loving things that Jesus would. And we spend money in charitable donations (it’s called “almsgiving.”) And we’ll pray -- that is, listen to and talk to and listen to God. (Notice that I mentioned listen twice?)

Why not consider Mass this weekend your “first date”? Even if you come regularly, try to experience each prayer, each song, each reading, and each person around you as if it’s a new experience. (And if you get here and find someone in “your seat” just smile and move up a bit closer.) I’ll bet that everyone who tries to “date God” at Mass will find it to be a new, richer experience than the last time you were at Mass.

See you in church and gave a great Lent!

Father Ralph

4. ESSENTIALS

for your faith life

MASS

Weekend:

Saturday vigil Mass: 5pm

Sundays 7:30 am, 9:00 am (Family Mass),

10:30 am, 12 Noon, 5:30 pm

Weekdays: 8:00 am

NUEVO!! Mass in Spanish every second Saturday
*Misa en Español el segundo Sabado
cada mes a las 7:30pm.*

The most important thing you can do to grow in your relationship with Jesus is to come to Mass every weekend. Our new Bishop, John Barres, has encouraged every Catholic to come to church with someone else -- so if you're a "regular", invite someone to attend with you. If it's been a while, get some friends to come with you.

AND MORE...

Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions)

Saturdays: 4:00 - 4:45 pm.

Weekdays: After the 8:00 am Mass

Reconciliation Monday: April 10th

3pm - 6:30pm; Penance Service at 7:30pm

Lenten Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Every Friday from noon to 1pm

Stations of the Cross in English

Every Friday at 7:30pm

Via Crucis en español

Cada viernes a las 8:15pm

YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO!

Belong more deeply! If you need some help getting back to a more connected life in the church and need some guidance, since Pope Francis is busy, call or e-mail Father Ralph or Father Joe or Diane Vella or any of our staff. Today would be a good day to do this.

NEXT WEEK



Parish Mission

Deacon Kevin McCormack, principal of Xaverian High School in Brooklyn is our presenter. He'll be speaking at all the Masses and offering a family-friendly mission on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday night starting at 7:30. While that might be late for the little ones, middle school and high schoolers will find that joining the adults in our parish will make for a lively and inspiring start to Lent. (He's pictured above proclaiming the gospel at Detective Steven McDonald's Funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral.)

Add this to your calendar!

Wednesday

6pm • Join the Catholic Daughters in the Gym for their annual **Soup and Bread Supper**. Guest presenter will be Marianne Sheridan, Coordinator of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry for the Diocese of Rockville Centre. Good will offering accepted.

7pm • **Important Levittown Community Meeting** • See Page 6

LENT: TIME FOR EXTRA CHARITY



A Well for Ochagbe

When Father Patrick headed back to Nigeria after serving us and Nassau University Medical Center for the past year, he went to his hometown where the nearest water supply was a two-hour walk away. On Super Bowl Sunday, the Charitable Kidz of St. Bernard's invited the community to contribute to the drilling of a well in Ochagbe. Over \$13,000 was raised in their "Souper Bowl of Caring" campaign. We're happy to announce that the well has been drilled! The job will be complete when a tank structure is built, and that is on the way!



How will you be generous this Lent with your time, talent & treasure?

Charity beginning at home.

When Samantha Rodrigues heard that St. Bernard's church was broken into and things were stolen, she and her classmates who attend Northside Elementary school started making wristbands and sold them to raise funds to help pay for the damage. Thanks to Samantha and James Ganga, Tara O'Regan Brianna Davneiro, Ania McCarthy, Isabella Alix, Alice Suh, Avneek Kaur, Natalie Guzman, and Hassan Edris who raised over \$260. Thanks too to their school principal, Mr. Frank Mortillaro who came to the Family Mass when some of the girls presented their gift.



Souper Bowl Collection



*Dear Parishioners,
On behalf of Devin O'Rourke and Family, we want to express our heart felt thanks to our friends in the parish community for their overwhelming support during our difficult time while Devin was hospitalized. He is now home and will be returning*

to school shortly. The cards and prayers we received helped us more than you will ever know. To everyone who sent food and made a donation, your generosity was just overwhelming. We love you all and may God watch over you and your families always. -- Eileen O'Rourke

6. BUILDING PROJECT UPDATE

Ninety-one percent of respondents to our building project mailing agreed that we should proceed with project as outlined -- most of the other 9% liked certain parts of the proposal. Eighty-five percent said that they would and could support the project financially. Most of the other 15% noted that they were not in a financial position to help at this time, though they liked the ideas proposed.



Father Ralph has now written to the Diocese of Rockville Centre with this input, requesting permission to conduct a feasibility study to see if it is likely that we can afford all or some of the project as outlined. We are awaiting a response. We'll continue to post updates online and in future bulletins as things develop.

Thank you to all who participated in the survey.

Levittown

IN NEED OF A NEW HEALING

Lent means looking at what is broken in our lives and together working to fix it.

Do you know what's happening on your block, in your school, among your neighbors and fellow parishioners? Drug sales, drug use -- including prescription drugs -- is making our community sick. In the past three years, St. Bernard's has buried 18 people who died from overdoses -- 14 of them were parents. Our school district is concerned about its students' use of alcohol and drugs. When the police commissioner was asked about the number-one police concern in Levittown, he said, "Heroin." Father Ralph will be part of a panel of educators, police, elected officials, and addiction specialists which is hosting a community listening session

on **Wednesday, March 8th from 7pm - 9pm**
at the **Levittown Memorial Education Center**

(behind Abbey Lane School) **Add this to your calendar!**

If you've got something to say or you want to hear what's going on, please attend. We can make things better together.



LENT: TIME FOR EXERCISE



Walking the Turnpike Stations

Add this to your calendar!



Last year several hundred people of all ages from around Levittown joined in praying the outdoor Stations of Cross to ask God to bless and protect travellers to and through Levittown along one of the most dangerous roads in the county. Once again we make this prayerful walk on

Saturday, April 1st at 12 noon

starting at Levittown Veteran's Memorial Park
(across from the Library)

as we ask God to bless our community. Parents with strollers, folks in wheelchairs, and those on foot will walk with scouts, firefighters, ambulance corps, police and others who protect us on our journey.

(Note: Cars are not permitted in the procession.)



And don't forget the SPIRITUAL Exercise!

Lenten Wednesday Evening Prayer

Every Wednesday in Lent, starting on March 15 we gather for a quiet evening of music, candles, incense, chant, and guest preachers -- some of the beloved pastors from surrounding parishes and beyond. You'll really like this way of spiritually exercising -- and you won't need ibuprofen afterwards to soothe the sore muscles!

Add these to your calendar!



Fr Gerard Gentleman
March 15th



Fr Jim Mannion
March 22nd



Fr John Derasmo
March 29th



Fr Bob Smith
April 5th

8.

POPE FRANCIS'S 10 TIPS FOR A FABULOUS LENT



1. Get rid of the lazy addiction to evil

“[Lent] is a ‘powerful’ season, a turning point that can foster change and conversion in each of us. We all need to improve, to change for the better. Lent helps us and thus we leave behind old habits and the lazy addiction to the evil that deceives and ensnares us.”

– *General Audience, March 5, 2014*

2. Do something that hurts

“Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt.”

– *Lenten Message, 2014*

3. Don't remain indifferent

“Indifference to our neighbor and to God also represents a real temptation for us Christians. Each year during Lent we need to hear once more the voice of the prophets who cry out and trouble our conscience. God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation.” – *Lenten Message, 2015*

4. Pray: Make our hearts like yours, Jesus!

“During this Lent, then, brothers and sisters, let us all ask the Lord: Make our hearts like yours (Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus). In this way we will receive a heart which is firm and merciful, attentive and generous, a heart which is not closed, indifferent or prey to the globalization of indifference.” – *Lenten Message, 2015*

5. Take part in the sacraments

“Lent is a favorable time for letting Christ serve us so that we in turn may become more like him. This happens whenever we hear the word of God and receive the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. There we become what we receive: the Body of Christ.”

– *Lenten Message, 2015*

6. Prayer

“In the face of so many wounds that hurt us and could harden our hearts, we are called to dive into the sea of prayer, which is the sea of God's boundless love, to taste his tenderness. Lent is a time of prayer, of more intense prayer, more prolonged, more assiduous, more able to take on the needs of the brethren; intercessory prayer, to intercede before God for the many situations of poverty and suffering.” – *Homily, March 5, 2014*

7. Fasting

“We must be careful not to practice a formal fast, or one which in truth ‘satisfies’ us because it makes us feel good about ourselves. Fasting makes sense if it questions our security, and if it also leads to some benefit for others, if it helps us to cultivate the style of the Good Samaritan, who bends down to his brother in need and takes care of him.” – *Homily, March 5, 2014*

8. Almsgiving

“Today gratuitousness is often not part of daily life where everything is bought and sold. Everything is calculated and measured. Almsgiving helps us to experience giving freely, which leads to freedom from the obsession of possessing, from the fear of losing what we have, from the sadness of one who does not wish to share his wealth with others.”

– *Homily, March 5, 2014*

9. Help the Poor

“In the poor and outcast we see Christ's face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ. Our efforts are also directed to ending violations of human dignity, discrimination and abuse in the world, for these are so often the cause of destitution. When power, luxury and money become idols, they take priority over the need for a fair distribution of wealth. Our consciences thus need to be converted to justice, equality, simplicity and sharing.”

– *Lenten Message, 2014*

10. Evangelize

“The Lord asks us to be joyous heralds of this message of mercy and hope! It is thrilling to experience the joy of spreading this good news, sharing the treasure entrusted to us, consoling broken hearts and offering hope to our brothers and sisters experiencing darkness.”

– *Lenten Message, 2014*