

Religious Education

Give your child the gift of faith!



CCD Family Newsletter

February 25, 2026 - March 4, 2026



Lenten Lessons

Ugh! Snow is always such a complication! We hope you have managed to fully shovel out from our recent blizzard and that your back isn't too sore. We hated cancelling CCD on both Monday and Tuesday this week, but, as I often tell my kids, safety first!

We were supposed to cover the topic of Lent and pass out the resources for our Lenten initiatives at CCD this week. I will introduce the season briefly during next week's Opening Prayer Services, but we will not be able to devote an entire class to this important topic as initially planned. As such, please follow up by talking to your children about this beautiful penitential season. If you need help, click [HERE](#) for links to a variety of Lenten resources.

Mrs. McDonald will be posting assignments for Lesson 24 to all student *Christ in Us* online portals. Completion is not mandatory, but highly encouraged. You will be able to view a version of the at-home guide through your parent account in the event that you would like to work with your children.

Prayer bags and Catholic Relief Service collection boxes will be distributed next week (barring more snow!).

OLS Lenten Calendar of Events

If you haven't done so already, be sure to review the calendar of Lenten events here at OLS and try to commit to trying something new this Lent. There are a lot of offerings spread throughout the week aimed at helping you enrich your life of faith and strengthen your ties to the OLS community. If you aren't a regular Sunday Mass attendee, that's the perfect place to start!

CHECK OUR BULLETIN AND WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS

JOIN US THIS LENT

IN PRAYER, FASTING, AND ALMSGIVING

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to Me with all your heart". - Joel 2:22

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Wednesday February 18th</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">ASH WEDNESDAY</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Mass Times: 7:00am 9:30am (School Mass) 12:00 noon and 7:00pm</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">+ Every Day + Holy Mass +</p> <p style="margin: 0;">MONDAY- FRIDAY: 7:00am and 12:00pm SATURDAY: 8:30am and 12:00pm</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">SUNDAY OBLIGATION: 5:30pm Saturday Vigil 8:00 am, 10:00am, 11:30am</p>	
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">TUESDAYS</p> <p style="margin: 0;">February 24th - March 31st</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Afternoon Guided Scripture Reflection</p> <p style="margin: 0;">12:45-1:45pm in the Katterli Room</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">RSVP to lent@olschurch.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">WEDNESDAYS</p> <p style="margin: 0;">February 25th - March 25th</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">BACK TO BASICS Lenten Dinner Series 6:30pm-8pm</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">*Open-Door Dinner 7:00pm Talk and Discussion 8:00pm Song, Praying, Prayer</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">RSVP: basics@olschurch.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">FRIDAYS</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Starting February 20th</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Pray the Stations of the Cross</p> <p style="margin: 0;">7:00pm - 7:45pm in the Upper Church</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">No RSVP needed</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Friday March 6th</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Family Stations of the Cross and Pasta Dinner</p> <p style="margin: 0;">6:00pm Dinner 7:00 pm Stations</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">See bulletin for RSVP info</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Saturday March 14th</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Saint Patrick's Day Evening Celebration (A Lenten Rejoice!)</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">See website for more info and to RSVP!</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Wednesday March 25th</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Night of Penance and Adoration</p> <p style="margin: 0;">starts at 7:00pm in the Upper Church</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">No RSVP needed</p>

Back to Basics
 Join our Lenten series at Our Lady of Sorrows
 and return to what is essential for your faith!
 ~ Wednesday evenings, starting February 25th ~

Are you busy or overwhelmed? Feeling distant from God? Then join us this Lent to reconnect with your faith! **Back to Basics** is a simple weekly gathering focused on the essentials that gave life to the early Church — community, sung prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

So, what does Back to Basics look like?
 On Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00pm, we'll share a meal in community, view a video teaching from Father Columbo CFR that dives into Lent's core pillars, share conversation, and end the night anchored in sung Evening Prayer.

We will gather February 25th, March 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th. Our time together on March 25th will include Confessions in lieu of table conversation to prepare our hearts for The Triduum.

Our Wednesday Flow:
 6:30 PM — Start with a Soup Supper
 A continental meal in the colors of Lent and conversation. (Soup will be served until 7:30, and you're welcome to stay till 8:00.)
 7:00-7:15 PM — Short Teaching
 A focused video teaching with Fr. Columbo, Jordan CFR, and the spiritual disciplines he outlines: take prayer, sing, fast, and evenly almsgiving.
 7:15-7:45 PM — Small Group Conversation
 Guided discussion on each topic to help you connect the week's teaching to your own life.
 7:45-8:00 PM — Sung Evening Prayer
 We end the night with the beauty of the Church's liturgical prayer — renewed and deeply grounded.

Common Questions & RSVP:
 Q: Who is this for, exactly?
 A: Anyone! If you're interested, if you're a "beginner" or you don't know another soul at the church, and if you're here, you.
 Q: Do I have to come every Wednesday?
 A: You're not required if it's just for you, but we know how to help with the weekly commitment. Check in with your pastor.
 Q: How do I register?
 A: Text us at 408-268-3668, email basics@stjohnchurch.com, or scan this code: 

Lenten Back to Basics Begins Tonight - Join Us!

Are you looking for something new to help you enrich your faith life this Lent? Well, look no further! OLS' Back to Basics series is for you. Join us on Wednesday evenings, beginning tonight, for a light supper, a short video, some small group conversation and evening prayer. Come to all five or as many as you can. I mean, supper is included - how great is that!?!

Pasta Dinner & Family Stations of the Cross

Friday, March 6, 2026

- Pasta Dinner (no meat) served at 6:00 pm in St. Joseph's Hall
- Followed by Stations of the Cross in the Main Church at 7:00 pm

Speaking youth members. All are welcome.

No charge. Donations welcomed.

To help manage head count, please RSVP to Council4086@gmail with number attending.

Dear Jesus, what have we done to deserve
 so much of your love?

You gave yourself totally to us and died on a Cross because you love us. Through our sufferings with our families, help us to come closer to you. We offer you this prayer by reflecting on the Stations of the Cross, and especially praying for our family and all families around the world.



Sponsored by:
 Knights of Columbus, Council 4086, Regina Plaza
 Council4086@gmail.com



Lenten Calendar Addition Pasta Dinner and Stations of the Cross

The OLS council of the Knights of Columbus will be hosting a (meatless, of course) pasta dinner at 6:00 pm before the Friday Stations of the Cross in the church. This is also an opportunity for your child to show off their reading skills by doing the reading at one of the stations. Please RSVP to the Knights if you or your family is interested in participating in any way.

Dear Families,

The season of Lent presents us with an opportunity for reflection, repentance and renewal in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

Our CCD community will participate in CRS Rice Bowl as a way to share our Lenten prayers, fasting and almsgiving with our sisters and brothers in need both in our local community and in communities around the world.

Throughout these 40 days, we will encounter families in Ghana, Guatemala and Timor-Leste who are building resilience in the face of adversity and helping their communities to thrive. Our donations of Lenten alms to CRS Rice Bowl help make these stories of hope possible. We also help families in our local community as 25% of every donation stays in our diocese to fight hunger and poverty.

CRS Rice Bowl provides resources for daily reflection throughout the liturgical season. Next week, your children will receive their CRS Rice Bowl and calendar. Consider using your CRS collection box and Lenten Calendar each day to guide your prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Our newsletter will also provide you with weekly Stories of Hope and simple, meatless recipes to help you share in solidarity with our global family.

CRS Rice Bowl is one way we can answer Jesus' invitation to share bread for life with others. During this holy season, may your Lenten journey be a transformative and enriching experience as you put your faith into action for our sisters and brothers experiencing the greatest need. I hope your family will join us!



Catholic Relief Service Project

Ghana

Each week during Lent we'll be highlighting some of the amazing work done around the globe through the Catholic Relief Service (CRS). Our CCD program will be working to educate students and their families about the work CRS does and help to raise funds

for it this Lent. This week's focus project comes to you from the country of Ghana. Please share these stories of hope with your children. Together we can be Jesus' hands in the world to help build the Kingdom of God.

Empowering Growth in Ghana 1-Minute Video

CRS RICE BOWL

WEEK 2: GHANA
CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

Humans are social by nature. We need each other. In the many disciplines, we are called to come together and give as a community—in our classrooms, church and homes.

A STORY OF HOPE FROM GHANA
One thousand miles from continents to another, across nations, across the world, we are united by a common goal: to help and to be helped. We are called to work together, across the globe, to make our world a better one.

In Ghana, the United Nations and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are working together to help improve the lives of children and their families. Through a partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), we are working to improve the lives of children and their families. Through a partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), we are working to improve the lives of children and their families.

FACTS TO CONSIDER

- In Ghana, the United Nations and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are working together to help improve the lives of children and their families.
- In Ghana, the United Nations and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are working together to help improve the lives of children and their families.
- In Ghana, the United Nations and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are working together to help improve the lives of children and their families.

The 1,200 Rice Bowl children are a real blessing to their families. For more information, visit www.crs.org/ricebowl.

For distribution details, visit www.crs.org/ricebowl.

CRS Prayer Petitions for the 2nd Sunday of Lent

Please remember the following in your prayers this week:

For Georgina and her family—whom we meet through CRS Rice Bowl—and for all mothers and caregivers worldwide who provide nutrition and educational opportunities for their young children to thrive. We pray to the Lord...

For our community, that we may support early childhood development opportunities in communities locally and around the world. We pray to the Lord ...

Red Red Bean Stew - Ghana

“Red Red” is a beloved Ghanaian dish of black-eyed peas cooked in a red sauce and often served with fried plantains. This hearty and protein-rich meal is popular not just for its taste but also for its affordability and nutritional benefits.

This dish requires soaking dried black-eyed peas overnight. You can substitute canned black-eyed peas or another canned variety, like garbanzo beans, to



decrease the preparation and cook time.

Red Red Bean Stew is a great meatless option for your Friday dinner and a wonderful introduction to the taste of Ghana. Click [HERE](#) for the recipe.



CCD in March

Mondays

March 2nd - Lesson: 14

March 9th - Lesson: 15

March 16th - Lesson: 16

March 23rd - Lessons 25/26 & Reconciliation

March 30th - NO CCD: Easter Break

Tuesdays

March 3rd - Lesson: 14

March 10th - Lesson: 15

March 17th - Lesson: 16

March 24th - Lessons: 25/26 & Reconciliation

March 31st - No CCD: Easter Break



This Week's Essential Question:

Lesson 14: *What Turns Us Away From God's Love?*

This week students from both of our in-person days will all be studying the same essential question: What turns us away from God's love? After CCD, please ask

your children if they can answer this essential question of our faith. You should hear something like the following back: *We distance ourselves from God when we avoid asking him for forgiveness and make a habit of committing sins. Sin can damage or destroy our ability to love God, ourselves, and others. Sin may take us away from God, but his love and mercy always invite us back to him. No sin is too large for God to forgive if the repentant person is truly sorry and intends to change his or her life. God's immense mercy has the power to restore, in Jesus Christ, what we have lost.*

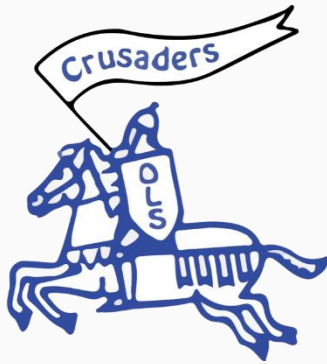


Homeschooling Connection

Week of March 1st

Lesson 16

If you have not done so already, **please stop by our office after you attend Mass in the coming weeks to pick up your children's Mini-Jesus Bag and a Catholic Relief Service "Rice Bowl" box** so that they can join their CCD peers in our prayer and alms-giving initiatives. (You remember, where you got your books for homeschooling.) Participating in our various CCD initiatives is an important way for your children to stay connected to our CCD program even while homeschooling!



February Frenzy Fun

It has been a joy to watch our CCD students playing alongside their OLS School counterparts in this year's February Frenzy basketball tournament. What an exciting way to build community! Good luck to the Crusader's JV Girls who will be playing for first place on Sunday evening at 6:30 if you want to go and cheer them on.



March Family Mass Helpers Needed

March 8th

March 22nd

Check your family calendars and then let us know if your children would like to help at one of OLS's upcoming Family Masses. This is a great opportunity for your children to share their gifts with the parish. Nothing makes us happier than seeing you and your kids at Mass - unless it's your kids also helping out! Hope to see you on the 8th and 22nd - if not the other Sundays as well!



Please Don't Overlook This!

Empowering God's Children Lessons

There's still a little over a month to be counted among those parents who have had the important conversations with their kids about this year's Empowering God's Children lessons: *Boundaries: You Have Rights!*, and *Secrets, Surprises and Promises*. If you haven't done so already, please talk to your children about these critical topics. You can access this year's two lessons at the links below:

Lesson 3 - Boundaries: You Have Rights!

[Grades K-2 Lesson Three](#)

[Grades 3-5 Lesson Three](#)

[Grades 6-8 Lesson Three](#)

Lesson 4 - Secrets, Surprises and Promises

[Grades K-2 Lesson Four](#)

[Grades 3-5 Lesson Four](#)

[Grades 6-8 Lesson Four](#)

After you have talked with your kids in whichever way that you feel is most appropriate given your family's individual dynamics and circumstances, please let us know that you've participated in this important mission by completing this simple, 3-question survey by April 1st: [Empowering God's Children Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Google Form](#). Thank you!



Saint / Feast of the Week

St. Katharine Drexel

Feast Day: March 3rd

Patron of: Racial Justice and Philanthropists

St. Katharine Drexel was born in 1858 into a wealthy and faithful family in Philadelphia. Although she grew up surrounded by privilege, her parents taught her that their wealth was a gift to be shared, not stored away. From a young age, Katharine saw her family open their home to the poor, quietly give financial assistance to those in need, and place their Catholic faith at the center of daily life. As an adult, she chose to give up her inheritance, founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, and dedicated her life to serving Native American and African American communities who were facing injustice and poverty.

For families, St. Katharine's life is a powerful reminder that holiness begins at home. She first learned generosity, prayer, and compassion by watching her parents live their faith in ordinary ways. During Lent, families can follow her example by looking at what "wealth" God has given them—time, talents, resources—and asking how they might share it more intentionally. Perhaps it means choosing a family almsgiving project, volunteering together, or setting aside money saved from small sacrifices to help someone in need.

Lent is also about trusting God enough to let go. St. Katharine let go of comfort and control in order to follow Christ more closely. Families can model this spirit by embracing the three pillars of Lent—prayer, fasting, and almsgiving—not as burdens, but as opportunities to grow in freedom and love. When parents show their children that sacrifices are made out of love for God and neighbor, they are

forming hearts that understand what St. Katharine discovered: true joy is found not in what we keep, but in what we give.



In the Liturgy of the Word, the Church feeds the people of God from the table of his Word. Previewing the readings before Mass is then a bit like looking over the menu before you get to a restaurant: you have a better idea of what you can expect so that you can enter into the experience more fully prepared. And like a good discussion during a meal, discussing the readings and how they can be applied to your family's daily life helps your family to truly go out and proclaim the gospel after leaving the church.

Here are a few resources to help your family delve deeper into the Liturgy of the Word:

[Second Sunday of Lent](#)

[Loyola Press: Sunday Connection](#)

[Sadlier: This Week's Liturgy](#)

Catholic Trivia

Question: Why is Lent traditionally 40 days long, even though there are actually 46 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday?

- A) Because Sundays don't count as days of fasting
- B) Because the Church shortened Lent in the Middle Ages
- C) Because the number 40 was chosen randomly
- D) Because Lent used to begin on the First Sunday of Lent

Correct Answer: A

Although there are 46 calendar days from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday, the six Sundays during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of fasting. Each Sunday is considered a "little Easter," a celebration of the Resurrection, even during the penitential season.

The 40-day length reflects the biblical significance of the number 40: a significant period of time during which a person's faithfulness is tested and can be judged or determined. The number forty occurs nearly two hundred times in the Bible. We heard the number 40 proclaimed most recently during last Sunday's Gospel when Jesus was in the desert for 40 days and faced temptation by Satan.



Joke of the Week



Jen Noll
Catechetical Coordinator
jnoll@olschurch.com
973-763-5454 x235

Colleen McDonald
Religious Education Assistant
cmcdonald@olschurch.com
973-763-5454 x285

[Our Lady of Sorrows Website](#)