



Journey Through Lent in the Home

In his Apostolic Letter, Patris Corde, "With a Father's Heart", Pope Francis describes St. Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

The letter marks the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St. Joseph as a Patron of the Universal Church. To celebrate the anniversary, Pope Francis has proclaimed a special "Year of St. Joseph," which began on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception in 2020 and will continue to the same feast in 2021. ~ Vatican News

Did you know St. Joseph is also the patron saint of the home? Let us celebrate this "Year of St. Joseph" together and journey through Lent as a parish community. All parishioners are invited to participate in and pray the blessings and devotions for each week in their own homes:



Week 1: Ash Wednesday Blessing of the Season and a Place of Prayer



Week 2: A Table Blessing During the Days of Lent



Week 3: Lenten Pretzel Devotion



Week 4: Stations of the Cross Devotion



Week 5: St. Joseph's Bread Blessing



Week 6: Blessing in Times of Penance and Reconciliation



Week 7: Passion Sunday (Placing of Palm Branches in the Home)

* Remember to take pictures of your places of prayer, pretzels, bread, and palm branches and share on social media tagging St. Barnabas. Or send them to jsheehan@stbindy.org to be placed on our Facebook page.



Ash Wednesday Blessing of the Season and a Place of Prayer

From Ash Wednesday to Pentecost, a place in the home is set aside for prayer. The family's Bible is placed there with a cross and candle, which is lighted when all have gathered.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins

Leader: The Lord calls us to days of penance and mercy. Blessed be the name of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Now and forever.

Leader: Remember that we are but dust and ashes, yet by God's grace we have died in baptism and have put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Each year we keep these Forty Days with prayer and penance and the practice of charity so that we may come to the Easter festival ready to renew once more the life-giving commitment of our baptism. Through this Lent we shall gather here to read the Scriptures and ponder them and to intercede with God for the needs of the world.

Reader: A reading from the Prophet Isaiah

Is this the manner of fasting I wish, of keeping a day of penance: That a man bow his head like a reed, and lie in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD? This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.

The Word of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Thanks be to God

After a time of silence, members of the household offer prayers of intercession for the world.

Leader: Let us kneel and ask God's blessing on us and on this holy season. Merciful God, you called us forth from the dust of the earth; you claimed us for Christ in the waters of Baptism. Look upon us as we enter these Forty Days bearing the mark of ashes, and bless our journey through the desert of Lent to the font of rebirth. May our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts. All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus, for in his cross you proclaim your love forever and ever.

All Respond (R.): Amen

Each person then kisses the cross and then all stand as the leader concludes:

Leader: All through these days let us be quiet and prayerful, pondering the mysteries told in the Scriptures. In the cross, we have been claimed for Christ. In Christ, we make the prayer that fills these days of mercy:

Our Father...

Let us bless the Lord

All respond, making the sign of the cross

All Respond (R.): Thanks be to God



Blessing in Times of Penance and Reconciliation

On Fridays, on various other days appointed throughout the year, and especially during the season of Lent, the whole Church is called to penance: to turn away from evil and to seek reconciliation with God and one another in prayer and deeds. Though it does not replace the abundant grace and mercy made available to us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the following may be used when the household needs to express sorrow over past deeds and to make peace with one another. Works of kindness and of justice should accompany such a prayer.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins

Leader: Let us come with confidence before the throne of grace to receive God's mercy, and we shall find pardon and strength in our time of need. Blessed be God forever.

All Respond (R.): Blessed be God forever

Reader: A reading from the First Letter of St. John

If we say, "We have fellowship with [God]," while we continue to walk in darkness, we lie and so not act in truth. My children, I am writing this to you so that you may not commit sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. He is expiation for our sins, and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world.

The Word of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Thanks be to God

After a time of silence, all kneel

Leader: Let us now call to mind the wrongs we have done and the good we have not done. Let us ask forgiveness of one another, of others, and of God.

All may join in the Confiteor or the Act of Contrition

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do; through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

All stand and join hands for the Lord's prayer

All: Our Father...

Leader: Loving God, our source of life, you know our weakness. May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand and walk more readily in your ways. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Respond (R.): Amen

All make the sign of the cross as the leader concludes:

Leader: May God, who frees us from sin, bless us and keep us always in peace.

All Respond (R.): Amen

The blessing may conclude with the exchange of peace



Lenten Pretzel Devotion

Lent is a period of fasting, self-denial and prayer, in imitation of our Lord's fasting, forty days and forty nights, and in preparation for the feast of Easter. It comprises forty days, not including Sundays, from Ash Wednesday to the beginning of the Holy Triduum. The term penance means a "change of heart," a victory over sin and a striving for holiness. The sacrifices of fasting and self-denial are only means and signs of this spiritual penance.

Soft Pretzel Recipe

- 1 package of yeast
- 1 ¹/₂ cups of warm water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 cups of flour
- 1 egg (optional)
- Extra salt for the tops

Directions: Mix yeast, water, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Stir in the flour, and knead until the dough is smooth. Shape into the form of arms crossed in prayer and place it on a baking sheet. Brush the dough with a beaten egg to give it a shiny finish (optional). Sprinkle the top with salt, and bake in an oven preheated to 425 degrees for 15 minutes.

Ceremony of the Pretzel

1. The origin of the holy pretzel is explained so that all will understand its significance.
2. The pretzel is served on each plate for the evening meal.
3. The "Pretzel Prayer" is added to the family's pre-meal prayer.

Leader: The pretzel has a deep spiritual meaning for Lent. In fact, it was the ancient Christian Lenten bread as far back as the fourth century. In the old Roman Empire, the faithful kept a very strict fast all through Lent: no milk, no butter, no cheese, no eggs, no cream and no meat. They made small breads of water, flour and salt to remind themselves that Lent was a time of prayer. They shaped these breads in the form of crossed arms for in those days they crossed their arms over the breast while praying. Therefore, they called the breads "little arms" (*bracellae*). From this Latin word, the Germanic people later coined the term "pretzel." Thus the pretzel is the most appropriate food symbol in Lent.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins

Leader: The Lord calls us to days of penance and mercy. Blessed be the name of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Now and forever.

Leader: We beg you, O Lord, to bless these breads which are to remind us that Lent is a sacred season of penance and prayer. For this very reason, the early Christians started the custom of making these breads in the form of arms crossed in prayer. Thus they kept the holy purpose of Lent alive in their hearts from day to day, and increased in their souls the love of Christ, even unto death, if necessary. Grant us, we pray, that we too, may be reminded by the daily sight of these pretzels to observe the holy season of Lent with true devotion and great spiritual fruit. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Respond (R.): Amen



Passion Sunday: Placing of Palm Branches in the Home

The branches that are blessed and brought home on Palm Sunday are placed near the cross and family Bible. They remind us that Lent is the slow coming of spring to the earth, the renewal of life. They are like the great "Hosanna" with which we hail the crucified and risen Lord. After dinner or at another time on Palm Sunday, the household gathers where the palms have been placed.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins

Leader: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

All Respond (R.): Hosanna in the highest!

Leader: We have come to the last days of Lent. Today we heard the reading of the Passion. That story will remain with us as we leave Lent behind on Holy Thursday and enter into the three days when we celebrate the mystery of Christ passing through the suffering and death to life at God's right hand.

Reader: A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

[We are] always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being given up to death for the sake of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

The Word of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Thanks be to God

After a time of silence, members of the household join in prayers of intercession

Leader: Let us pray, Blessed are you, God of Israel, so rich in love and mercy. Let these branches ever remind us of Christ's triumph. May we who bear them rejoice in his cross and sing your praises forever and ever.

All Respond (R.): Amen

Together all take the palms to the place where they will be kept through the coming year.

While doing so all may recite or sing the following hymn:

O Sun of justice, Jesus Christ,
Dispel the darkness of our hearts,
Till your blest light makes nighttime flee
And brings the joys your day imparts.
The day, your day, in beauty dawns
When in your light earth blooms anew;
Led back again to life's true way,
May we, forgiv'n, rejoice in you.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord

All respond, making the sign of the cross:

All Respond (R.): Thanks be to God



St. Joseph's Bread Blessing

March 19th marks the Solemnity of St. Joseph, and on this day it is the custom in some places to bless bread, pastries, and other food and give a large portion of it to the poor. The faithful should also be encouraged to participate in the celebration of the Mass on the Solemnity of St. Joseph.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins

Leader: Praise be God, who gives us saints as models and examples. Blessed be God forever.

All Respond (R.): Blessed be God forever

Leader: Today, we honor the memory of St. Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary and patron of the universal Church. We rejoice at this table, which is a sign of God's generous blessings and of our call to serve the poor and hungry. We pray that through the intercession of St. Joseph we too might join the saints at the banquet of the Lord in the heavenly kingdom.

Reader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew

Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the holy Spirit. Joseph her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins. When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.

The Gospel of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

The intercessions are then prayed. Other intentions may also be used as well.

Leader: Let us call upon the name of the Lord through the intercession of St. Joseph

Reader:

That we who have listened to the word of God may do God's will, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

That we who have experienced doubt and fear may be helped in times of difficulty, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

That we may hunger for justice and mercy, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

That we who seek God's way may contemplate our journey to God's kingdom, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

That we who follow the example of St. Joseph, patron of homes and the universal church, may strive always to build up the body of Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

All: Our Father...

With hands joined, the leader prays:

Leader: All-provident God, the good things that grace this table remind us of your many good gifts. Bless this food, and may the prayers of St. Joseph, who provided bread for your Son and food for the poor, sustain us and all our brothers and sisters on our journey towards your heavenly kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Respond (R.): Amen

Making the sign of the cross

Leader: May almighty God, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and protect us.

All Respond (R.): Amen

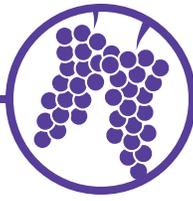


Table Blessing During the Days of Lent

The table blessing suggest a very simple order. It is an order that we know something about from Sunday Mass, an order that should be as much at home within the family as it is with the larger assembly on Sunday. The notion of blessing is bound up with praising God and giving thanks to God; bound up with our way of seeing, understanding, and being in this world and in the human community. When we join in a blessing we are proclaiming the good news of God's love and reign.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader begins

Leader: I was hungry

All Respond (R.): And you gave me food

Leader: I was thirsty

All Respond (R.): And you gave me drink

Leader: I was a stranger

All Respond (R.): And you welcomed me

Leader: I was naked

All Respond (R.): And you clothed me

Leader: I was ill

All Respond (R.): And you comforted me

Leader: I was in jail

All Respond (R.): And you came to see me

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, may our Lenten fasting turn us toward all our brothers and sisters who are in need. Bless this table, our good food, and ourselves. Send us through Lent with good cheer, and bring us to the fullness of your Passover.

All Respond (R.): Amen

Reader: A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

I urge you therefore, brothers [and sisters], by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

The Word of the Lord

All Respond (R.): Thanks be to God

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All Respond (R.): We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: We thank you, O Lord, who give us this food to eat. We pray that you may also provide food for those who are hungry and gather us all together at the table of your heavenly kingdom. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All Respond (R.): Amen