

Lent – Prayer

When you say “Lent” – many people immediately think of ashes on their foreheads, not eating meat on Fridays, or “giving something up.” These are all good things, but they are not what the Church asks us to focus on.

The three traditions of our Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. We might pray for the grace to live out our baptismal promises more fully and for those Elect who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil.

While personal prayer is always encouraged, we need to pray as a community as well. Outside of the Mass, we are encouraged to join the whole church in praying the Liturgy of the Hours. While some still think of this as prayers a priest is required to say, or the communal prayer of a monastery or convent, the Church encourages all of us to celebrate this form of prayer at many hours of the day; for when we do this, we:

“represent in some degree the visible Church established throughout the world. Hence, when the people are invited to the liturgy of the hours and come together in unity of heart and voice, they show forth the Church in its celebration of the mystery of Christ.”
(General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, #21 & 22)

Here at St. Thomas More, we offer several communal prayer opportunities during the Lenten season.

Once a week, we come together for a combination of prayer and education, called “Vespers”, a sung evening prayer based on the Liturgy of the Hours. With imaginative music and poetic language, we give thanks to God at the close of the day. We wrap our prayer around a guest speaker who challenges us with scripture and teachings of the Church. Many people find this a calming way to transition from the hectic workday into their evening preparation for rest.

Every Friday at 6:30pm, we commemorate the journey of Christ in the Way of the Cross. Our Stations of the Cross are another way to pray as a community, and celebrate “the mystery of Christ.”

Steve Raml
Director of Liturgy & Music

