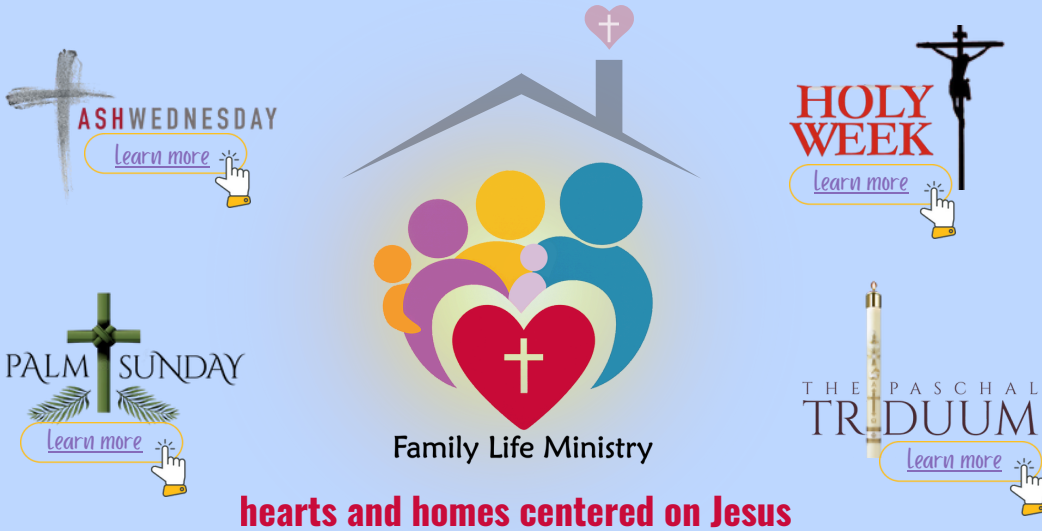


HAPPY, HEALTHY, & HOLY FAMILIES

A faith-filled family life resource from the Office for Family Life Ministry



LENT / HOLY WEEK 2026

Spring. Training. Two words that make the hearts of die-hard baseball fans skip an extra beat. It's a time of great anticipation and promise as our favorite teams begin to prepare for the long season ahead. Players abandon off-season comforts and submit themselves to demanding, disciplined routines—early mornings, repetitive drills, and honest evaluations of their strengths and weaknesses—knowing that these sacrifices shape major league endurance and focus. For us, **Lent is our spring training.** Just as athletes condition their minds and bodies, Lent invites us into a time of self-examination and discipline through prayer, fasting, and charity to strengthen our hearts and homes as vessels of God's love. Both Lent and spring training emphasize patience, humility, and intentional hard work. A successful baseball season depends upon dedication to spring training. Similarly, the joy of Easter comes from dedication to the sacrificial journey of Lent, where growth comes through God's grace and our commitment to self-control. Lent challenges us to master excess and distraction through practices of self-denial, patience, and trust in God, redirecting our hearts toward what truly matters. Not baseball, but *hearts and homes centered on Jesus*. Our all-star team has lovingly created this newsletter for you and your family. Click on the links found throughout this resource for ideas on how to have the best Lent ever!

Joanne DePasquale-Parent, Director, Office for Family Life Ministry

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upcoming events (click on the linked text below for details)

- **Marriage Preparation for Engaged Couples** - Online & In-Person in English & Spanish
- **How to Start a Parish Mental Health Ministry** - February/March 2026
- **National Marriage Week** (Feb. 7-14) and **World Marriage Day** Feb. 8th
- **Bereavement Ministry Facilitator Training** - February/March 2026
- **Couples Retreat in Spanish** - March 7, 2026
- **Anniversary Mass** - Celebrating 60, 50, 25, or 5 years of Catholic marriage - May 3, 2026



SCAN HERE

OR **CLICK HERE FOR**
MORE UPCOMING EVENTS

marriage preparation and enrichment

Jenn Ferraioli, Associate Director for Marriage Preparation

Lent is my favorite church season...a chance to reflect and spend time in prayer. It forces me to slow down, which seems difficult to do these days. For couples, Lent offers the opportunity to grow closer to Christ, as well as to our spouse or fiancé. It is a perfect time to pray together and for each other, pick a Scripture reading and reflect on it, have a "marriage check in" each week and share the "good things", as well as the struggles, keep a couple's Lenten journal and write about how you see Christ in your fiancé/spouse and intentions to pray for as a couple. Lent is a beautiful time to refocus our hearts on what matters most... love rooted in sacrifice, mercy and grace.

Click on the linked resources below for more Lenten ideas. Praying for a beautiful and blessed Lenten season!

*** *A Couple's Prayer for Lent*** - Downloadable Prayer Card!

*** *Lenten Resolutions for Married Couples, Inspired by Pope Francis***

*** *10 Ways to Grow Together as a Couple this Lent***

*** *10 Ideas for Couples to Do Together During Lent***

*** *What Catholic couples can do during Holy Week***

Follow Me....

family life



Deacon Oswaldo Sanchez, Associate Director for Hispanic Family Life

As we begin this season of Lent, the Church invites us on a journey of conversion, prayer, and reconciliation. For families, it is an opportunity to strengthen the love that unites them, placing Christ at the center of their hearts and homes. It is a time to renew relationships and heal wounds, remembering that true love is nourished by forgiveness and self-giving. As a faith community, we carry in our hearts traditions that enrich this season: the Stations of the Cross, processions, family prayers, and solidarity with those most in need. These customs remind us that faith is lived as a family and that our cultural roots are a bridge to encounter Christ. May every gesture, every prayer, and every sacrifice be an expression of love that strengthens your union and your family.

May each of the links below serve as spiritual support and practical resources for living out prayer, fasting, and charity, and participating in devotions that enrich our faith during Lent.

*** *Lenten Family Calendar***

*** *Lent in the Catholic Home***

*** *Preparing for Lent in the Catholic Home***

*** *Build a Sacred Space in Your Home This Lent***

*** *Lent at Home - Activities for Busy Catholic Families***

*** *The Complete Guide to the Catholic Season of Lent***

*** *The Stations of the Cross (The Way of the Cross) for Families***

*** *Learn by Doing: Praying the Stations of the Cross with Your Family***

*** *Journey the Stations of the Cross: A Path to Reflection & Grace***

ministry of loss and healing

Lauren Tamara, Coordinator, Healing & Loss Ministry

As we enter the holy season of Lent and Holy Week, we walk with Christ from the desert of temptation to the agony of the cross and, ultimately, the joy of the Resurrection. For many families, this sacred journey also intersects deeply with personal struggles – whether through the pain of grief and loss, ongoing challenges with addiction, or difficulties with mental and emotional health. Lent invites us not simply to "give up" something, but to open our hearts with honesty and courage, offering our wounds to God's mercy and allowing Christ's Paschal Mystery to transform suffering into hope and healing. Below are trusted Catholic resources to support families seeking spiritual strength, healing, and holiness in this season of renewal.

*** *Attend a Parish Bereavement Support Group*** starting *March 5th in Union, NJ*

*** *Read The Six Needs of Mourning*** by Alan Wolfelt, PhD

*** *Lent & Grief for the Church*** article

*** *Lenten Resolutions for your Mental Health***

*** *Navigating Disordered Eating & Lenten Fasting***

*** *How to Draw Closer to God this Lent***

*** *In the Desert: Coping with Grief During Lent***

*** *Revival, A Grieving Mother's Retreat***

*** *Entering the Room of Grief During Lent***



Mass of Hope and Remembrance

for parents who've lost a child of any age.
June 4, 2026 at 7 pm. [Email Lauren](#) for details