5 “Fun Facts” about Lent

Because there’s no harm in educating with joy

There’s a deeper meaning to the holy season of Lent than giving up chocolate or coffee. One of our Youth Ministry leaders described it to our teens as a sort of “spiritual boot camp,” where you’re more intentionally training yourself in the disciplines of a life in Christ. Here are a few fun facts about Lent to help round out the image of the season:

1. Lent is the 40 non-Sundays from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday. The number 40 is significant: Jesus’ 40 days in the desert, Noah’s 40 days of floating; Moses’ 40 years in the wilderness.

2. Violet is the official liturgical color of Lent. This represents mourning for Jesus’ death on the cross, and also honors His royalty.

3. The timing for the season of Lent is determined by the moon—since 325 AD, the date for Easter is always the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox. Count backward 46 days (including Sundays), and you know when Ash Wednesday is!

4. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the three pillars of Lent for Catholics. Be intentional about daily prayer, practicing the self-discipline of fasting, and the charity of almsgiving of your money and time this season.

5. We’re given this season to heal and train—”the Church is not a museum for saints, it’s a hospital for sinners.” Take the opportunities this season for reconciliation, healing, and taking the practice of our faith more seriously.
To get involved with Pastoral Care Ministry at Senior Village, contact Sr. Magdalene at sistermn@smparish.org. For more information on the Fil-Am group, contact Deacon Rey at dcnrey@smparish.org.

The Alpha kickoff is this Wednesday! It’s not too late to sign up or join in our prayer campaign.

Even if you’re not participating in Alpha, we want you to be a part of helping make it a success at Santa Maria with your prayers.

Inspired by Jesus’ prayer found in Luke 11:02 (look it up!), here’s how it works:

1) Write down the names of three friends or family members you want to try Alpha.

2) Set an alarm for 11:02 (am or pm!) for the next two weeks as a reminder to pray for your three people and for Orinda:

   Heavenly Father, let Your Kingdom come and Your will be done in my heart, in my life, and across this city. Holy Spirit, come fill me

3) As the days progress, be open to how God might use you. Personally invite those three people and watch the effect this focused prayer has!

Sign-ups for the March 4 first session of Alpha are available now on the Parish Website! Sign up now!

Collection reporting updates

Beginning at the end of March, we will be changing the frequency and manner of reporting our Sunday collection income, because the weekly income reports are no longer giving a meaningful picture.

This is due to several factors: more people are using Faith Direct and making their contributions on a monthly basis, and others contribute monthly, bi-annually, or even annually to the Sunday plate. Our weekly reports are showing extreme

Parishioner awarded the Diocesan Medal of Honor

This past Monday at the Orinda Senior Village Mass, parishioner Isabel Golez was awarded the Diocesan Medal of Honor by Father George.

Isabel has been an outstanding parishioner, giving of her time and talent to a whole host of ministries both at Senior Village, by organizing and providing for the spiritual needs of our parishioners living there, and as an active member of our parish Fil-Am Community. All of this has been done with humility, grace, and poise.

Thank you, Isabel, for your ministry and “behind-the-scenes” goodness!
swings in income because of these factors, such that they no longer give a useful picture of the state of the plate.

Going forward, we will try a monthly report that will hopefully help smooth out some of those swings to give everyone a more useful picture of our income.

**Baptismal Process**

If you have child that you would like to be baptized over the next two months the first of two required parent classes will begin soon. Dates of both classes are: March 11th and 18th – both start at 7:00 pm. Please contact the parish office for more information about the baptismal process or if you would like to register. 254.2426

**The Rite of Sending**

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Today your fellow parishioners, who have been journeying through the RCIA Period of Catechumenate, will celebrate the Rite of Sending for Election with our catechumens (Adrienne Wong & Tim Reynolds) and the Rite of Sending for the Call to Continuing Conversion with those already baptized (Tom Balogh). After demonstrating that they are ready to begin their final weeks we send them forth to Bishop Barber to celebrate the rite of Election and Rite to Continuing Conversion.

Please continue to pray for them as they continue their journey to their initiation at the Great Easter Vigil liturgy on April 11th.

**We’re hosting—keep the elections in your prayers!**

Our parish is doing its civic duty this Tuesday as once again we host the elections!

Please keep all voters and our country in your prayers, that this round of elections is carried out with graciousness and integrity.

**Flowers for a Friendly Manor**

The annual daffodil sale to benefit A Friendly Manor will be held after all Masses next weekend (March 7-8). As in the past, the cost is $12 for a pot of beautiful yellow daffodils. The proceeds help with costs to run the day center for homeless women in Oakland. Please support this wonderful organization, and take home a bit of spring in the process!

**“Rebuild my Church” begins next weekend!**

Next week, we will hear about the good that is made possible with the annual Bishop’s Appeal. Come with mind and heart open to what God can accomplish through our Diocese!

Imagine what can be done in the name of God if every parishioner were inspired to “Rebuild my Church” and participate!

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**Lenten Regulations**

Lent is a time of prayer and penance. Our Church has a few ways of practicing these things during Lent:

**Fasting**

Catholics aged 18-59 are bound to fast on both Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. This means consuming at most one full meal that day, while taking other smaller quantities of food at the other customary mealtimes is permitted. Food and drink between meals (excepting water and medicine) is not permitted on fast days.

**Abstinence from Meat**

Catholics aged 14 and up are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday. This means refraining from eating meat products, although eggs, milk, and fish and shellfish are permitted.

**Lenten Practices**

All the faithful are encouraged to receive Holy Communion, participate in penance services, take part in public and private exercises of piety, give generously to works of religion and charity, perform acts of kindness toward the sick, aged, and poor, and to pray more fervently. All of these practices will help you have a more fruitful and holy Lent!
We encourage you to register in the parish so that you can receive regular communication via both email and regular mail. Registration information is essential for responding to requests to be sponsors/godparents and other ministries. Please register at www.santamariaorinda.com/registration.
Thank you for supporting our Youth Ministries!

We’re so grateful for the generous merchants, businesses, and friends who contributed to the 2020 Parish Crab Feed!

Casa Orinda
CVS Orinda
Entourage Spa on Brookwood
Europa Hof Brau
Fourth Bore Tap Room & Grill
Geppetto’s Cafe
LaPiazza Restaurant
McDonnell Nursery
Morrison Jewelers
Orinda Books
Orinda Hardware
Orinda Motors
Orinda Village Antiques
Parker Thatch Orinda
Reem’s Steaks
Safeway Orinda
Saffron Indian Restaurant
Sanvitalia Home & Garden
Siam Orchid
Starbucks Theater Square
Taverna Pellegrini
Zamboni’s Pizza