As we celebrate this first Sunday of Lent we should all be asking ourselves one question throughout the remainder of these forty days, “what do I hold on to most?” The season is one part penitential, yet also anticipation and preparation for the great celebration of Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. A little over a month for us to reflect upon what we hold onto most in our lives that we should just let go of once and for all. Each of us has something different that we have let into our lives that stands between us and the Lord, with or without or awareness. This can be something that changed overnight for us or something that has more likely creeped its way in more and more to the point that we justify it, feel that we would be lost without it or fail to see how that could come between us and grow in our relationship and proximity to God. In the gospel last week, the leper dropping to his hands and knees stated, “if you wish, you can make me clean.” To which Jesus reminds, “I do will it. Be made clean.” In our responsorial psalm for today, we hear, “Good and upright is the LORD, thus he shows sinners the way. He guides the humble to justice, and he teaches the humble his way.” Jesus shows us the way, for He is the way, the truth, and the light. He guides us to let go of that one thing that stands between us and him if we approach Him with humility and contrition in our hearts. He shows us the way which is better for us, the path we should follow, the way to everlasting life and the greatest that life has to offer us here and now if we but drop everything and follow His way. As we make our journey through these forty days, let us be open to the path that Jesus lays out before us. The way that leads us closer to Him, the way that removes all that stands between us and growing closer to Him, so that we can approach and celebrate with pure and clean hearts the holiest of days of our faith, that beautiful morning of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God. - Mk 1:14
St. Ambrose Church, Latham, New York

Mass Intentions

4:30 PM  Saturday, February 17
Pauline DeVoe by Richard & Debbie DeVoe
John A. Ouimet by Gail
Lean Minello by Karen & Ron Blair

7:30 AM  Sunday, February 18
Raphael Mastroianni by Clara Aliberti

9:00 AM  Sunday, February 18
Daniel W. Grady Sr. by Judy
Arthur Quinn by Wife
Margaret Dufort McNamara by Donna Sabatino

11:30 AM  Sunday, February 18
Anthony Schmitz by Andy and Justina Treventi
Ruth C. Lapierre by Albany Chapter of Magnificat

5:30 PM  Sunday, February 18
Elsa Ross by Ron McLean

9:00 AM  Monday, February 19
Cecelia Craven by Erin Craven

9:00 AM  Tuesday, February 20
Betty O'Keeffe by Andy & Justina Treventi
Sharon Brunick by Clara Aliberti

6:30 AM  Wednesday, February 21
People of St. Ambrose

9:00 AM  Thursday, February 22
Sharon Brunick by Tracey
Ruth C. Lapierre by St. Ambrose Parish
Jean R. Mooney by St. Ambrose Parish

6:30 AM  Friday, February 23
Communion Service

4:30 PM  Saturday, February 24
Angeline Sabatino by Donna Sabatino
Leo & Lucina Charbonneau by Jean Minnick
Ella & Wilfred Grignon by Janet Grignon
Phyllis Sorrentino (2nd Anniversary) by Family

7:30 AM  Sunday, February 25
Vincent Popolizio by Clara Aliberti
Patrick Sullivan by Battisti Family

9:00 AM  Sunday, February 25
Margaret Dufort McNamara by Trzcinski Family
Joyce Doremus by Maria Chilinski
Sharon Brunick by Eileen & Rich Zmijewski

11:30 AM  Sunday, February 25
Sarah Nash by Mom, Dad & Sister
Chickie Sorrentino by Frank Sorrentino

5:30 PM  Sunday, February 25
Ruth C. Lapierre by Jan & Michael Rayball

On Tuesday, Feb 13th, 67 of our faith formation and school students celebrated their first reconciliation. Please keep them in your prayers as they continue to prepare to receive their first Holy Communion on May 5th.

Ways to Participate at Mass

1. Arrive early
   It helps us prepare our hearts for the Eucharist

2. Turn off your cell phone
   The only one we should be talking to is God

3. Pray and sing along
   Keep a spirit of prayer during the ceremony

4. Pay attention to what is said
   Listen to the readings and everything the priest says

5. Receive Communion with devotion
   It is important that we pray before and after we receive Christ

6. Give thanks afterwards
   After the final blessing, give thanks to God

“I am the bread of life” (JN 6:35)

Parish Support

We are a tithing parish following God’s plan for giving
February 4, 2017  $15,398.47
February 5, 2018  $18,483.18

Deepest thanks for your continued and generous support for our parish. Your gifts enable so much to be done in so many ways.

This Lent We Will Be Having Special Weekly Screenings of Robert Barron’s Catholicism:

The Pivotal Players

Every Tuesday at 7pm we will encounter people who made our faith come alive and can inspire us to do the same today.
Feb. 20, Feb. 27, March 6, March 13, March 20 and March 27
**Financial Peace University**

Begins Wednesday, February 28, 2018 at 6:30 pm
St. Mary’s Parish Hall, Crescent
What if you could be debt-free with an emergency fund of 3-6 months of expenses saved, all while investing for retirement and planning for your family’s future? Sound impossible? It’s not! With Dave Ramsey’s class Financial Peace University, you CAN take control of your money. If you’re interested in learning more about the class reach out to Stephanie at St. Mary’s, Crescent at (518) 371-9632 or via email at smcsec@nycap.rr.com!

Financial Peace University is a 9 week event led by nationally known Dave Ramsey held at St. Mary’s, Crescent (86 Church Hill Road, Waterford, NY) for nine consecutive Wednesdays from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Using DVD Presentations made by Dave Ramsey himself and led by Ramsey trained FPU Certified Coach, Veronica Diver, this could really could change your financial life for the better.
There is an $85 fee for materials, which many who have participated in the Financial Peace University process have said was the best money they’ve ever spent.

**Healing Pathways**

A SUPPORT MINISTRY FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED OR ARE EXPERIENCING DIVORCE.

The group will meet for ten Tuesdays, starting March 6, 2018 from 6:45pm to 8:45pm at the Diocesan Pastoral Center at 40 North Main Ave. Albany. Facilitated by an LCSW experienced in family counseling and a family law attorney, the program’s objective is to help gain insight into and heal from the emotional challenges of loss, anger, guilt, fear and loneliness. Participants share insights, learn coping mechanisms, feel the support of others, and renew their faith. For more information and registration please contact mary.fay@rcda.org or call 518-453-6644
The ministry is sponsored by the Office of Lay Ministry Formation

**Walking to Santiago Pilgrimage**

Join Father Marty Fisher's Pilgrimage “Walking to Santiago”
The Portuguese Way-Walking of the Camino
August 20-30, 2018
Tui, Portugal to Santiago, Spain
$2970 per person double occupancy
Arrangements through Heber Travel
Call Stacie at 518-306-3736 for more information and reservations
(Reservations must be made by March 1st)

**40 Days for Life Campaign Has Begun**

Wednesday, Feb. 14 to Sunday, March 25
40 Days for Life Campaign is a community effort of a period of 40 days of prayer, fasting, community outreach and peaceful prayer vigil at the Planned Parenthood right of way, 1040 State Street, Schenectady, from 7 AM – 7 PM. In the Spirit of Christ, we peacefully and lovingly, pray, educate and witness to our community in order to bring an end to abortion and to provide hope and help for women in crisis pregnancies. Come join Christian from around the Capital Region and be a witness of God’s love and mercy to the mothers and fathers who find themselves in an unexpected pregnancy, the Planned Parenthood employees and passersby by your prayerful presence at our prayer vigil. We need you to pray and discern to commit one hour per week. This Lent, make a commitment to pray daily for an end to abortion. To see when Bishop Scharfenberger is coming to pray with us or other special prayer vigil events, go to rcda.org under events; Facebook: diocese of albany respect life; or 40daysforlife.com/Schenectady. Contact: Viviane: 384-0699, Sarah: sch40days@gmail.com, www.40daysforlife.com/schenectady
**PARISH STAFF**

Reverend Brian Kelly  
_Pastor x301  Brian.Kelly@rcda.org_
Deacon Andrew Grebe  
_P.A. for Business & Admin. X304  Andrew.Grebe@rcda.org_
Deacon Helmut Neurohr  
_Permanent Deacon_
Deacon Frank Garceau  
_Permanent Deacon  Frank.Garceau@rcda.org_
Thomas Green  
_Parish Music Director  Tom.Green@rcda.org_
Tom Acemoglu  
_P.A. for Evangelization & Catechesis x307  Thomas.Acemoglu@rcda.org_
Justina Treventi  
_Faith Formation Admin. Asst. x303  Justina.Treventi@rcda.org_
Joan Welch  
_Parish Secretary x321 Joan.Welch@rcda.org_
PARISH TRUSTEES  
Mary Stewart / Stephen Green
St. Ambrose School  518-785-6453
Website:  www.stambroselatham.org  
E-Mail:  principal@stambroselatham.com  
Ernest Casile,  Principal  
Kelly Sano,  Secretary

**MASS SCHEDULE**

Saturday Vigil:  4:30pm  
Sunday:  7:30, 9:00, 11:30am & 5:30pm  
Daily:  Monday & Wednesday 6:30am  
Tuesday & Thursday 9:00am  
Communion Service:  Friday 6:30am  
Holy Days and Holidays subject to change

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS**

Monday—Thursday  9:00 am—4:00 pm  
Friday  9:00 am—noon

Chapel is open M-Th from 6 AM to 9 PM  
*Fridays we have Eucharistic Adoration until midnight

**FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT**

**FR. BRIAN KELLY, PASTOR**

**PARISHIONER REGISTRATION/UPDATE**

Name:_________________________
Street:_________________________
City:___________________________
Zip:___________________________
Phone No:_____________________

Please Check

- New Registration
- Change of Address
- Moving out of Parish
- Want Envelopes
- Would like information on e-giving
- Name Change  (Please contact Parish Secretary)

Please cut out and drop it in the Collection Basket or mail to the Parish Office.

**THE EVANGELIST SUBSCRIPTION**

☐Add my name to the subscription list, here is my $18.00/year  
☐Continue my subscription to the Evangelist, here is my $18.00/year

Comments

**KEEP IN TOUCH**

www.stambroselatham.com

For more information regarding:  
Mass Schedules  
Ministry Schedules  
Sacraments  
Adoration  
Parish Office Hours  
Faith formation schedule

Call the office at 518-785-1351  
Connect with us on Facebook  @saintambrosechurch

Are you receiving text and email notifications from St. Ambrose?  
Text the word ambrose to 84576 to opt in.
“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Hebrews 13:8

One of the most captivating things that I have found to be the most comforting, encouraging and renewing about studying Scripture, is that throughout the gospels Jesus is always on the move. We find that His mission was one that was rooted in needing to go out and meet the people where they are at, to seek out those that were lost and to make his ministry one that addressed the needs of the towns, villages, and cities He entered. With this, we can find that other than the necessary time needed for prayer, our Lord was on a mission to change the lives of all those He touched, whether they were aware of their need for it or not. Since my appointment as pastor in May of last year, a number of necessary changes have taken place to help our parish become sustainable for the future. Although they were difficult decisions to make, some received well and others not, they were always ones that were focused on our participation in the greater mission of the Church. The mission Jesus Christ set out for all of us to take part in, by following His example of always being on the move.

With this in mind, I want to share with you three changes that I have been working on in conjunction with others that I believe will help guide us to meet people where they are.

With any change comes uncertainty, anxiety, and discomfort, yet also with change comes new opportunity. For we can find in ourselves our willingness to “step-up” and embrace the opportunities that arise or find ourselves stuck in place. Turning us back to reflect upon the ongoing movement of Christ, not only as our Lord who works all around us but as a reminder that He is the prime example that we should always strive to emulate as disciples who place our faith into action. Recognizing that it is necessary for us to rest, “recharge” and accept where we are through our prayer, we can find that through that time, the necessary conversion of our faith and Christ’s entering into our hearts more can result. Leading us to a deeper faith, trust in the Lord and willingness to become a more active disciple than ever before. Helping us to look back with a new lens as to where we may have stood in place and to embrace change as it comes our way. A chance for each disciple to start anew with an eagerness that welcomes another opportunity for each of us to renew our faith daily through to service in a new role. As one community of faith, these are occasions for us to come together, to lift, support and encourage the gifts we find in one another.

The initial staff reduction and financial situation disclosure of the parish in June 2017 came as a shock to many in the church and in the school. Regardless of what had been presented or was common knowledge in the past, the reality was that both were on a collision course quicker than known. Dishearteningly, many responded by saying we should just close the school, rather than do all that we can to save it. This was discouraging as the school has my full support, for I recognize it as the heart of any parish that is blessed to continue to have one, where its closure would mean we have failed as a parish fulfilling part of the mission of the Church. However, the subsidy from the parish offertory to fund the school has increased threefold over the past two years due to unforeseen circumstances, very low enrollment from parishioner families, availability of free programs in our public school district and increased insurance costs. Leaving our parish school faced with the need for necessary change as well for the upcoming 2018-19 school year. The diocesan process for any restructuring of a parish school begins in November of the current school
year and continues through the more formal process with meeting with the Diocesan School Board that we began at the beginning of this current new year. The needs of the larger community we serve are calling for increased enrollment in our Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs, while we continued to follow the trend of decreased enrollment in the upper seventh and eighth grades over the past few years. A recommendation was made to the Diocesan School Board for restructuring in 2018-19 and the Bishop approved the expansion of the Pre-K programs and the elimination of the two upper seventh and eighth-grade levels beginning this coming fall. Although this is difficult for the families and children that will be affected, it is essential for our parish school to not only meet the needs of the community but also make our parish, church and school, sustainable for the future. I would like to continue to thank the dedicated teachers, staff, and aides publicly who make our school the “heart” of our parish. More importantly, I would like to continue to ensure each one of my full support as pastor and that it is my every effort and hope to ensure that with this restructuring that a position will be available for each one that has served our future “church” both for decades or only began educating our students this current year.

As we continue to move forward, our parish mission statement reminds us that we are a community that is centered around the future and that means the children and young adults who will follow our lead and take up the faith, passion, and heart of Christ that we reflect in the dedication we pass on and entrust to them. With that being said, our Young Adult/Youth Ministry program and Religious Education programs are the very vessel in which our parish’s future is passed on and nourished outside of mass and our classrooms. In January 2018, a Youth Ministry Advisory Board was established to offer their input as to what we are seeking in our programs going forward. This past Thursday, myself and three of those board members, conducted interviews with the three final candidates who applied for the Youth Minister position and after listening to their recommendations I have made a decision that will be announced soon. I am grateful to each person on the advisory committee for their input, patience, heartfelt honesty, willingness to serve in this role and enthusiasm throughout this process. An announcement will be made by March 1st as to who will lead our teens closer to Christ through sacramental preparation, relational ministry, participation in mass and outreach through service.

Finally, St. Ambrose is one of the only parishes in the diocece without an ongoing advisory board to the pastor, commonly referred to as a Parish Council. Their role is to help set the vision for the parish, communicate the larger concerns and where we can grow as a parish. Traditionally, each member would serve a set term of two to three years, however due to the history of it's having been disbanded years ago and non-existence since, a group of parishioners, ranging from seasoned members to our teens, have been asked to serve on this council for a term of 6-months - 1 year. This will allow our members to serve in this capacity as it is reestablished from scratch, directed along the way, to receive and bring the concerns of the people forward and to help make recommendations to the pastor for the future. From there, renewal of membership or new members will be asked to serve in this role based upon each persons’ willingness to continue and the traditional setup of varying terms for its members found in other parishes and set by the recommendations of the diocese.

May God continue to bless each and every one of us as we come together as one community of faith centered on our love of the Lord and the gift of the Eucharist. Thank you for all that you do to make St. Ambrose Parish Community one always being on the move with the Lord.

As always I am available to speak with you if you would like. Please call the office and schedule an appointment.