

DYNGUS DAY CELEBRATION

Fr. Aron and the parishioners St. Joseph's Parish in Williamsburg will be sponsoring a celebration of Dyngus Day, the Polish/Slavic day of merriment after Easter, on Saturday April 11th' at St. Mary's Memorial Hall, 1420 Fourth Avenue in Altoona. While typically celebrated on Easter Monday the event has been moved to the following Saturday for easier accessibility. From 6:30 PM until 10:30 PM the celebration will include Polka dancing with music provided by Li'l John Nalevanko and the ATM Band, and an ethnic buffet including halupki (golumpki), pirohi (pierogi), haluski, and kielbasa & sauerkraut. Start saving because the admission price of \$25.00 per person also includes beer and other refreshments. Additionally the evening will feature many small games of chance, raffles, and basket raffles. Proceeds benefit the high school CCD trip. For tickets please contact Delores Verbonitz at 814 832 2723 or visit www.dyngusdayaltoona.com.



Second
SUNDAY
IN
LENT

History of Lent

FR. WILLIAM SAUNDERS

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What are the origins of Lent? Did the Church always have this time before Easter?

Lent is a special time of prayer, penance, sacrifice and good works in preparation of the celebration of Easter. In the desire to renew the liturgical practices of the Church, *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* of Vatican Council II stated, "The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent -- the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and penance -- should be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. It is by means of them that the Church prepares the faithful for the celebration of Easter, while they hear God's word more frequently and devote more time to prayer" (no. 109). The word *Lent* itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *lencten*, meaning "Spring," and *lenctentid*, which literally means not only "Springtide" but also was the word for "March," the month in which the majority of Lent falls.

Since the earliest times of the Church, there is evidence of some kind of Lenten preparation for Easter. For instance, St. Irenaeus (d. 203) wrote to Pope St. Victor I, commenting on the celebration of Easter and the differences between practices in the East and the West: "The dispute is not only about the day, but also about the actual character of the fast. Some think that they ought to fast for one day, some for two, others for still more; some make their 'day' last 40 hours on end. Such variation in the observance did not originate in our own day, but very much earlier, in the time of our forefathers" (Eusebius, *History of the Church*, V, 24). When Rufinus translated this passage from Greek into Latin, the punctuation made between "40" and "hours" made the meaning to appear to be "40 days, twenty-four hours a day." The importance of the passage, nevertheless, remains that since the time of "our forefathers" -- always an expression for the apostles -- a 40-day period of Lenten preparation existed. However, the actual practices and duration of Lent were still not homogenous throughout the Church.

Lent becomes more regularized after the legalization of Christianity in A.D. 313. The Council of Nicea (325), in its disciplinary canons, noted that two provincial synods should be held each year, "one before the 40 days of Lent." St. Athanasius (d. 373) in his "Festal Letters" implored his congregation to make a 40-day fast prior to the more intense fasting of Holy Week. St. Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386) in his *Catechetical Lectures*, which are the paradigm for our current RCIA programs, had 18 pre-baptismal instructions given to the catechumens during Lent. St. Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444) in his series of "Festal Letters" also noted the practices and duration of Lent, emphasizing the 40-day period of fasting. Finally, Pope St. Leo (d. 461) preached that the faithful must "fulfill with their fasts the Apostolic institution of the 40 days," again noting the apostolic origins of Lent. One can safely conclude that by the end of the fourth century, the 40-day period of Easter preparation known as Lent existed, and that prayer and fasting constituted its primary spiritual exercises.

Of course, the number "40" has always had special spiritual significance regarding preparation. On Mount Sinai, preparing to receive the Ten Commandments, "Moses stayed there with the Lord for 40 days and 40 nights, without eating any food or drinking any water" (Ex 34:28). Elijah walked "40 days and 40 nights" to the mountain of the Lord, Mount Horeb (another name for Sinai) (I Kgs 19:8). Most importantly, Jesus fasted and prayed for "40 days and 40 nights" in the desert before He began His public ministry (Mt 4:2).

Mon. 03/02 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Cancer**
Feast Lenten Weekday
8:00 AM Mass Coy R. Smith, Sr., *Wife*

Tues. 03/03 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Heart Diseases**
Feast Saint Katharine Drexel
8:00 AM Mass Gary Petrunyak, *Family*

Wed. 03/04 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Arthritis**
Feast Saint Casimir
8:00 AM Mass Neil Cassarly, Birthday, *Carol Smith*

Thur. 03/05 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Nervous Disorders**
Feast Lenten Weekday
8:00 AM Mass Poor Souls in Purgatory, *F. Petrunyak*

Fri. 03/06 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Emotional Disorders**
Feast Lenten Weekday
8:00 AM Mass Rita Raichle, Ann, *Barbara Joan Raichle*

Sat. 03/07 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Diabetes**
Feast Third Sunday of Lent
4:30 PM Mass Health of Father J D Zatalava, *Gerri Rose*

Sun. 03/08 **A Day of Prayer for Victims of Addictions**
Feast Third Sunday of Lent
9:00 AM Mass Health of Helen Marie Force, *James Riley*
11:00 AM Mass Our Lady of Fatima Parish Family

*Lord
Jesus
Christ
Son
Of
God
Have
Mercy
On
Me
A
Sinner*


Happy Birthday:

03/01 Alicia Carper
03/02 Ethan Jones, Shawn Kelly
 Cassidy McKnight
03/04 Jack Corle, Rebecca Marshman
03/05 Mary Malligan
03/09 Francis Barroner

*Nocturnal Adoration
March 6, 2015
@
St. Mark's Church, 416 6th Avenue
8-11 PM*

Wedding Anniversaries :

02/24 Pete and Kathi Starr



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AND
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Lent**

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