



**1ST SUNDAY OF LENT
FEBRUARY 18, 2024**



Mission Statement

“Good Shepherd parish, under the guidance of the true Shepherd Jesus Christ, is a Catholic faith based community seeking to proclaim and live the gospel message. Recognizing our diversity, we strive to bring together a church family, welcoming all people as we grow together in faith, hope and love.”

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Website: www.goodshepherdnj.com



SERVED BY

Rev. Valentine Ugwuanya Pastor
Ed Stolarz Director of Music Ministry
Denise Perry Secretary

For more information on our parish please go to:
Goodshepherdnj.com
Or email us at
gsirvington@comcast.net

From the Pastor’s Desk. First Sunday of Lent.

Each year the Church gives us this season of Lent as a time and opportunity of retrospection. Lenten season sets a mirror before our eyes, a mirror in which to see ourselves as we really are, as God sees us. If we are honest and truthful with ourselves, we will see the very deep shadows there, the darkness of our sins. This realization about ourselves takes us back to that moment when our first parents Adam and Eve first realized what they had done, that they were naked, how they betrayed God their maker who gave them every good thing with an everlasting love.

As we begin this this Lenten season, there is a temptation to see Lent as a time of self-examination, a time of retrospection and a time of self-improvement, during which your focus or my focus is on myself or yourself. As your own Lenten journey or experience unfolds this year, keep the story of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness close to your heart. The Gospel of today’s first Sunday of Lent tells us that Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit was led into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, he was hungry. The devil said to him, “if you are the Son of God... Our Lord sees everything from bread to all the kingdoms of the world, as meaningless without the love of his Father. When the devil tempts Jesus to test his Father’s love, Jesus knows that love which is manipulated is not love at all, and cannot compare to the free and abundant love which is God his Father.

The devil wants Jesus to doubt the Father and to conceive of himself without the Father; for when Jesus’s heart is with his Father, the devil’s temptations are revealed for the nothingness that they are. What we have to know, as long as I conceive of God as far as away from the truest and deepest longings of my heart, I will always sin.

The man who is God in the flesh allows his creature, the fallen angel Satan (devil) to test his vulnerability as a man. We can perceive the humility of God in this. But we also have a model for our own testing from the evil one.

Therefore, God has given us the opportunity for us to do the Spring and spiritual cleaning in our lives during this Lenten season. It’s the time for us to focus on God, to stay faithful to the Lord. Even if we fall, we have to remember that we can stand up again and keep moving forward because our Lord when he fell did not remain there on the ground, rather he arose and continued his way to Golgotha where he triumphed over the devil and sin. Sin no-longer has the final word in your life. This Lenten season is a time of pray, sacrifice; sacrifice some ordinary comfort or convenience, giving the need food and drink, and helping the needy. It is also a time of penance. Our hope therefore, is not our strength, but in gazing upon Christ our Lord who first gazes upon us.

Good Shepherd Parish Schedule for Mass & Worship (schedules are subject to change)

Saturday (anticipated) 5:30pm Holy Day TBD.	Sundays —9:00am, 11:00am Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:45-5:15pm	National Holidays —8:30am Adoration Mo-Fri 7:30am-5:00pm
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Mass Intentions For the week of February 17 - February 24, 2024

Saturday 5:30pm For the Repose of the Soul of Deacon Sica
Feb 17

Sunday 9:00am For God's Protection and Guidance of Venus Matthews
Feb 18 11:00am For the People of Good Shepherd Parish

Monday 8:30am For God's Guidance and Protection of Sandi Mosley
Feb 19

Tuesday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Stanley Magloire
Feb 20

Wednesday 7:00am For the Repose of the Soul of Jean Mede
Feb 21

Thursday 7:00am For God's Guidance and Protection of Pope Francis
Feb 22

Friday 7:00am For God's Guidance and Protection of Paul Kocum
Feb 23

Saturday 8:30am For the Repose of the Soul of Alfred Tatyrek
Feb 24 5:30pm The Repose of the Souls of Dominic Luca Casulli

Kindly keep our parishioner's family, with health and other challenges, in your prayers

Let us always remember in our prayers the sick members of our Parish

Denise Younker	Paul Kocum	Sandi Mosley	Debbie Watson	Rihanna Scott
Elizabeth Cassata	Pope Francis	Frank Rocchi	Camile Laidlaw	
Frederick Hamilton	Curtis Richards	Carlos Quinones	Venus Matthews	
Jean Michelin	Corizon Abuzied	Bob and Barbara Nezlick		

* Please advise if any names should be added or delete from the list

Hospital Privacy | Please remember that current privacy laws regarding patients in hospitals do not allow hospitals/ pastoral care offices to contact parishes. If you or a loved one are in the hospital and want a priest to visit, please call the I office at (973)375-8568

Announcement
Our Church now has an Adoration Room. All are invited to visit the room, Mon-Fri 7:30AM-5:00PM.
To gain access to the adoration room, reservations are required. Please visit the rectory to reserve your date and time.

Please contact Fr. Valentine or call the rectory if you are interested in Intensions, of a Sanctuary Lamp, Alter bread and wine or Alter Flowers



Ministries: If you're interested in ministries of service either as a Lector or Eucharistic Minister, please call the rectory at 975-375-8568 or fill out the Information below and place in the collection basket.

Name : _____

Telephone #: _____

Lector _____ Eucharistic Minister _____

REPORT ABUSE
Protecting God's Children

The Archdiocese of Newark takes very seriously any and all credible complaints, and encourages anyone with knowledge of an act of sexual misconduct by the clergy, religious and lay staff to tell us immediately, so that we may take appropriate action to protect others and provide support to sexual abuse victims.

Individuals who wish to report an allegation may do so by calling the Child and Youth Protection. 201-407-3256, Fax: 973-497-4001. Or In person, 171 Clifton Avenue. Newark, NJ 07104.

Collection Report		February 11, 2024	
Weekly Target			\$6,500.00
Collection (Offering+ Fuel & Energy)			\$ 2,526.00
Surplus (Deficit)			\$ 3,974.00
Fiscal Year to Date			
Budget:			\$346,811.00
Actual:			\$57,290.00
Surplus (Deficit)			\$289,521.00
Rolling 4 Week Averages			
Average Collection:			\$ 2,740.00
Average Surplus (Deficit)			\$3,760.00

Minister Assignments February 24,- February 25, 2024

Saturday Sunday	Lectors	Eucharistic Ministers	Presider
02/24 5:30pm	Denise Perry	Denise Perry Barbara Banks Nellie Bate	Fr. Val
02/25 9:00am	Paulete Anderson Spence	Mina Yago Helen Chife-Akude Augustine Boakye	Fr. Val
02/25 11:00am	Dorothy Nwanonyiri	Luer Drews Janet Drews Jerome Hule	Fr. Val

GSP EVENT CALENDER

Sunday Feb 18		
Monday Feb 19	Presidents Day Rectory closed	
Tuesday Feb 20	Bible Study 7:00pm in the Rectory	
Wednesday Feb 21	Saint Peter Damian	
Thursday Feb 22	The Chair of Saint Peter the Apostle	
Friday Feb 23	Saint Polycorp	Stations of the Cross 12noon and 7PM
Saturday Feb 24		

Good Shepherd Parish Information

RECTORY HOURS: Monday Thru Wednesday 10:00AM-2:00PM; Thursday / Friday 9:00AM-12:00PM

Parish Registration Forms can be found at the back of the church or call the rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION Saturday 4:45-5:15 pm

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM In order to have your child baptized at Good Shepherd, the parents must be registered and active members of our parish. Godparents or sponsors must meet qualifications as to have received both sacraments of Communion and Confirmation, attend Mass regularly and been a registered parishioner at a Catholic Church For more information please call the Rectory at (973) 375-8568

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY Couples who are planning a wedding should call the parish office to meet the priest, to choose the date of the wedding and before any other arrangements are made call (973)375-8568

PASTORAL OF THE SICK Notify a priest of all who are hospitalized, home-bound, or Emergencies call (973)375-8568

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS, RCIA. Adults interested in becoming members of the Catholic Church and Catholics in need of Sacraments, Confirmation or Eucharist; inquire at the Rectory. To register please call the rectory at(973-375-8568

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Sunday of October-April from 10:00-11:00 am in the Church building. For more information please call the Rectory at (973-375-8568

THE DESERT JOURNEY WITH JESUS. FEB. 18, 2024, FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.

Today is the First Sunday of Lent. Today we begin our desert journey experience. Every year the Mother Church gives us this time and an opportunity for personal and communitarian time of introspection, reflection and change in our lives. For the better part of my life, I have thought of Lent as a season and time of reflection, examination and introspection. A time of taking personal inventory, a period of soul-searching and self-examination. These six weeks, set aside each year by the Church, have afforded me an annual opportunity for a sort spiritual spring cleaning. Can you imagine the excitement that our Lord Jesus must have generated as he began healing people, performing works of wonder, and preaching the good-news of the Kingdom? Can you also picture and imagine the hope and expectation evident in the faces of the people who flocked to him? He came to preach that this time is a “time of fulfillment” and the kingdom was really “at hand” (Mark 1:15).

In all of the wilderness temptations there is an attempt to attack and undermine our Lord’s true identity as God’s beloved Son. In all Jesus’ temptations-his moments of testing- are all part of the plan and purpose of God. It is not Jesus alone with the devil- whatever with our modern minds we might conceive the reference to the devil to mean. No, God is there too. This is a three-way contest, with our Lord Jesus in the center.

On this First Sunday of Lent, the Lord reminds us that this exciting new beginning in Jesus’ ministry, came at the end of something not quite so exciting, as our Lord began his ministry in a dramatic way. Through the readings, signs and bywords which characterize the Lenten season respite, the church challenges each believer to turn his/her gaze away from self in order to look at God. To turn to God, to focus and center on God is at the very heart of the experience of conversion. The Hebrew word **shubh** means to do an about-face or to change one’s direction; in Greek, the term **metanoia** connotes a change of mind and of heart which the ancients believed was the seat of the intellect and will. But Lent is not merely a time for making a change in my direction, or my mind and my heart; this is a season for putting on the mind and heart of God which has made known to us in Jesus Christ.

Every year Lent comes around and presents us with its usual challenge to take stock of our lives, to see more clearly what is in our hearts, and to discover what might be calling us out of our comfort zones. It is a time for personal as well as group reflection, a time for entering into ‘the wilderness’ and grappling with the mysteries of life, as well as a time of preparation for Easter when we renew our baptismal vows and celebrate the greatest mysteries of our faith.

Furthermore, Lenten season is more appropriately observed when navel-gazing is replaced by a God-like altruism that stretches a myopic vision of life and compels you and me to look not only at God but also at others, and, to do so with new eyes and a warmer heart and with open hands.

Thus, as your own and mine Lenten journey unfolds this year, keep the story of Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness close to your heart. What is important is this, when life gets hard or temptations come on your way or arises, try to remind yourself that every desert experience can result in new life as you try your best to stay faithful to the Lord. Even if you fall, remember that you can stand, don’t give up, stand up again and keep moving forward as our Lord Jesus triumphed over and overcome the devil in the desert and sin.