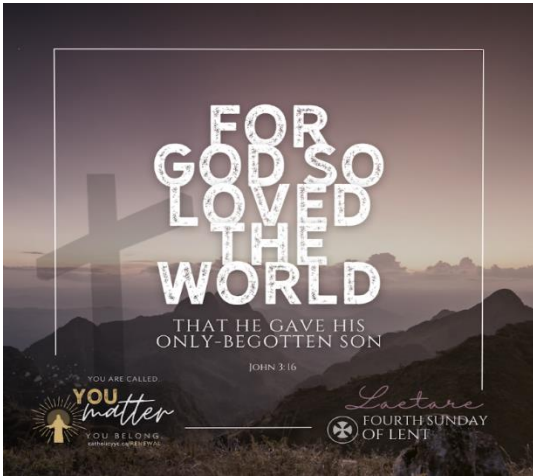




St. Martha's Parish

4th Sunday of Lent - March 10th 2024

Gospel Reflection - John 3:14-21



For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life: this verse is the source and the pivot around which the history of God with man dances. God loved, a past that endures and flourishes in today, a truth that absorbs everything; the whole biblical story begins with a "you are loved" and ends with "you will love" (P. Beauchamp). It is the happy news to repeat to ourselves at every awakening, at every difficulty, at every challenge. We are not Christians because we love God. We are Christians because we believe that God loves us. So that He gave us His Son... in the Gospel "to love" is always translated with another humble verb: "to give". God does nothing but eternally consider every man more important than himself. "So the world may know You

have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me" (Jn 17.23), the Father loves me as He loved Christ, with the same passion, the same trust, the same joy, in addition with with all the disappointments that I caused to Him. Everyone is the favorite child of God. Christ, who came from the Father as the giver of life, calls us to get rid of the image of a God with punitive intentions. Love is never scary, and knows no other punishment than suffering for not being welcome, not being reciprocated. And not just man, it is the whole world that is loved, says Jesus: the earth, the animals and plants and all of creation. And if He loved the world and its fragile beauty, then you too will love creation, you will love your neighbor. God did not send the Son to condemn the world, but for the world to be saved. God is not interested in instructing trials against us. God loved so much, and we can love like Him, because of His love: when I love, life doubles in me, my strength increases, I am happy. Each of my gestures of care, of tenderness, of friendship brings God's strength within me, opening a window onto the infinite. We commit ourselves not to save the world, He has already saved it, but to love it; not to convert people, He will do it, but to love them. If there is no love, no pulpit can say God; there is no bridge that reconnects the earth to the sky, the engine that restarts history, a history with a flavor of God.



YOU ARE CALLED

Communion under both species

We hope to start at the Holy Thursday Mass this year but to do so we need more Extraordinary Ministers of Communion. We will have training sessions for new and old ministers

Contact Information

403-381-8891 • office@stmarthasparish.ca

Pastor: Fr. William Monis

To rent the Knights of Columbus Hall contact Marcus Lynch-Staunton (403) 359-4457

Mass, Confession, Prayer

Mass Times: Mon, Wed-Fri 9am Tue. 7pm
Sat. 5pm Sun. 9am & 11am

Remember to spring forward on Sunday!

Mass time change: Monday, 18 March at 11:00am

Reconciliation: Sat. 4pm or by appointment

Adoration: Fri. 10am-8pm following Mass – schedule permitting

Rosary: 30min before Mass - **Divine Mercy Chaplet:** Fridays

3pm **Divine Office:** Morning prayers after weekday morning

Please pray for the sick in our parish:

Maureen Adamkewicz, Nico Escobar, Juliana Barrajon, Vera Schwartzkoff, Pauline Chabot, Joe Gatner, Anthony Johnston, Riley Svoboda, Devassy Palissery, Helen Smith, Kathleen Roth, August Schulze-Ebbinghoff, Ernest Geisler, Veronica Eagle Bear, Teresa Andron, Roz Walderman, Lou Karpick, Ellsworth Braun, Ellis Watson, Adeline Sherman, Linda Westgeest, Peter Danielson, Raymond Sander, Most. Rev. Gerard Pettipas, Bernie Yaretz, Theresa Blackwater, Viola Mogus, Robert Dubois.

Enlarge the Tent – Art of Accompaniment

“Removing our Sandals before the Sacred Ground of the Other” with Fr. Tim Boyle. Each gathering will begin at 10:15. We will celebrate Eucharist at 11:15. **Monday March 18:** “*Mother Maria of Russia... on uniting the Cross and the Sword*”

Mothers’ Rosary Group

The Mothers’ Rosary group will be meeting weekly downstairs at St. Martha’s for prayer and fellowship, **every Wednesday from 9:30-11:30**. Babysitting is provided. Please join us! We are looking for babysitters.

Soap for Hope Canada

If you have extra soap/toothpaste/shampoo or any hygiene items you’d like to donate to those in need, you can drop them off in the box by the church’s door.

Grocery Cards Program

Support our Parish! It is a KofC & CWL Fundraiser. Purchase your Grocery Cards in our gathering space after all weekend Masses or **make an e-transfer: knightscards9280@gmail.com indicating the STORE name. Orders received & paid for by Thursday, will be available for quick pickup at our Grocery Card stand at the Masses on the following Saturday / Sunday.**

Day Home run by our parishioner Helen

Joyful Day Home on the West side near the University: Helen is an active member of our parish, compassionate and caring; she is looking for two children ranging from 4 to 5 years old. Joyful Day Home is under the We R Kids umbrella | For info: hellowokingo@yahoo.ca

KofC outreach program

Thank-you to all the generous folks who have donated clothing, soap and snacks to be used for the outreach program. A special thanks to the Monday hobby group who have been knitting warm hats, scarves and other items to keep people warm this winter. If you are donating items, please consider the season as we are looking for warmer clothes and gently used items. As spring and summer approach have look in your cupboard for water bottles that aren’t using as we can certainly use those. Currently we are going out about once a week and delivering food and support to about 50 people in the downtown area. Please know that your donations are appreciated as well as any prayers you wish to offer. If this work interests you and/or you are interested in becoming involved with our Knights of Columbus Council please contact Grand Knight Mark Nixon or Ken HakstoI – 403. 382.9856

Bereavement Group

Bereavement Group will meet on **Tuesday, March 26, 1pm to 3pm**. Coffee/snacks, speakers, videos are part of the program. For more info, or to register for the upcoming meeting, contact the office, 4033818891 or ruth.mcmillan55@gmail.com

STM Picture Directory

Mark your calendar: our parish is scheduled to have a Picture Directory on **May 2, 3 and 4**. Everybody is invited, because “we belong, we matter, we are called”!

Mass intentions

Mon 11 Mar	9:00 am	Carol Paulhus +
Tue 12 Mar	7:00 pm	Sarafin family +
Wed 13 Mar	9:00 am	Maciek M. J. Teschlik +
Age Care	10:30am	Zenia Koop +
Thu 14 Mar	9:00 am	Alampi Szuc +
Good Sams	10:30am	Bernice Bast +
Fri 15 Mar	9:00 am	Teresa Vanden Dungen +
Sat 16 Mar	5:00 pm	Primitiva Q Gozon +
Sun 17 Mar	9:00 am	Megan Twigg +

Mass Intentions guidelines

To those requesting multiple Masses (be it for one person or several different people) please note that **only one Mass per person requesting** can possibly be prayed here in this parish. We will make every effort to schedule one Mass here on the date you are requesting. **We cannot hold Mass requests for more than 2 months, all other requests will be sent away.**

Donation envelopes

Donation envelopes for 2024 can be picked at the parish office. If you wish to sign up for Pre-Authorized Giving Plan please contact Moncy: finance@stmarthasparish.ca **For those who already have PAD, a box of special donations envelopes is available at the parish office.**

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary meets every **Saturday, at 10:00 am**, in the basement of St. Martha’s Church. All are welcome!

Called to serve!

Our parish needs people of good will to volunteer in any of the Ministry you are called to serve: **Lectors, Singers/Players for the choir, Sacristans, Hospitality team members and Eucharistic Ministers** for our Sunday Masses.

Abiding Together Podcast group

Abiding Together Podcast group for adult women is **Thursdays from 6:30pm - 8:00pm** in the gathering space at St. Martha’s. Bring your bibles and a notebook. More info here: <http://www.abidingtogetherpodcast.com/> or email Shanice.scharchun@gmail.com

Assumption Charismatic Prayer meetings and potluck

Assumption Charismatic Prayer Group meet every Wednesday at 7:00 pm in Assumption hall. Their monthly potluck on **the first Wednesday of each month**. Doors open at **5:30pm**, supper at 6pm with praise and worship starting at 7 pm at Assumption Hall. All are welcome!

Lethbridge People of Praise Society

The Annual General Meeting of the Lethbridge People of Praise Society, who host the Live-In Retreats, will be held on **Saturday, March 16** at St. Joseph’s School in **Coaldale**. Registration begins at 9:30am, followed by praise and worship, a guest speaker, the business meeting along with voting for new Core Members and will conclude with fellowship over a potluck lunch.*A minimum of 25 in attendance is required to have a quorum*

Lenten Penitential Services

St. Peter’s, **Milk River: Thursday, March 14 at 7pm**
St. Joseph’s, **Vauxhall: Wednesday, March 20 at 7pm**
St. Martha’s Thursday, March 21 at 7pm
Assumption on Saturday, March 23 at 10:00am

40 Hours Devotion for Vocations

As part of the Diocesan Renewal, the Office of Vocations is excited to launch the 40 Hours Devotion for Vocations in the Diocese of Calgary - catholiccyc.ca/40hours. This initiative invites us to pray continuously for forty hours before the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, with a focus on increasing vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. The 40 Hours Devotion for Vocations will be launched on Friday, March 1 at St. Mary's Cathedral. Our parish will participate in the Devotion **Friday, April 12 at 8 am to Sat, April 13 at midnight**. EVERYBODY is invited to be at the Presence of our Lord and to ask Him to send out workers into His harvest field.

Youth nights

Join the NET team for fun games and snacks. There will be a new discussion topic each week.

Grades 6-9: Every Wednesday, 7:00 - 8:30 pm at **St. Martha's**

Grades 9-12: Every Sunday, 7:00 - 9:00 pm at **Assumption hall**

Questions? Get in touch lenthbridge@netcanada.ca

Save the dates: on March 18th there will be an open gym night hosted by NET for all youth in grades 6-12. This will be from 6:30-8:00pm at Children of St. Martha's school.

There will be a family skate **on Saturday March 23rd from 7:15 - 8:15 at Civic ice arena**. Hot chocolate and treats to follow.

April 6th - The youth will be volunteering at the Soup Kitchen. If you would like to help prepare and serve dinner **between 4:00pm - 8:00pm**, please contact Nicole at 403-892-2010

Diocesan Women's Conference

Join Beloved Daughters Ministry for their second annual women's conference entitled, "Worthy and Made New." Conference will be held from **May 3-4, 2024 at St. Michael's Church (Calgary, AB)** with guest speakers Crystalina Evert and Fr. Anthony Sortino, LC. For more information visit: www.beloveddaughterscyc.com

Mental Health Learning Sessions by Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Every session will take place in-person at the **Sandman Signature Hotel** in Lethbridge, **Essie's Ballroom** | Online sessions will be available on Google Meet. Doors open at 5:00pm, dinner served at 5:30. Presentation will start at 6pm and go to 7:30pm |RSVP by email: woitteb@holyspirit.ab.ca

Mar 20: *ADHD - Understanding the Diagnosis and Treatment Strategies* -Ft. Aleigha from True Balance Counselling

Apr 18: *Emotional Regulation - How to help our kids when they have big feelings* -Ft Allic and Bailey from True Balance Counselling

May 14: *Digital Detox* - Ft Lethbridge Family Services

"The Way to the Father"

God Squad Canada is hosting its 27th annual Men's Conference called "The Way to the Father" on **March 22-23**, at **Ascension Catholic Parish in Calgary**. Jon Leonetti along with Brother Simon of the Seeds of the Word Community in Calgary will be inspiring and ultimately bringing us into a deeper relationship with God. For info: www.godsquad.ca

Lent Challenge

Parishioners are invited to participate in the **FUN Lent Challenge**; pick up a challenge from the poster in the gathering space; choose one or more challenges, do it and celebrate by entering the draw.

K of C Food Drive for the Interfaith Food Bank

St Martha's Knights are asking your help to fill the shelves with food by making a cash donation rather than a food donation. This will allow the food bank to purchase \$3.00 or more of the food they most need for every \$1.00 you so generously give. The dates of the drive will be at the masses of **March 16 and 17**. You can give cheque, E-Transfer, cash, or grocery cards. Make cheques payable to St Martha's Knights of Columbus |E-Transfers to knightscards9280@gmail.com | Fill in the form with: Reason for transfer: Food Bank Name:___ -Address:___ - Phone number:___ An income tax receipt for donations over \$15 will be sent out by the Interfaith Food Bank.

Tax Receipts

Our bookkeeper sent out tax receipts by email and printed them out for those who don't have a printer: they are available to be picked up in the gathering space.

Parish Lent Retreat

Brother Dan Gurnick, OFM, will come to preach on Saturday, **16 March** and on Sunday, **17 March**. On **Sunday, at 3pm** he will also speak about *How the Church sees addictions*; adoration will follow.

Sacraments

Baptism Infant baptism is celebrated following the completion of our parish baptism preparation program. New and expectant parents are invited to contact Zachary Hampton, our Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

First Holy Communion, Confirmation: To register; fill out registration form on our [website](http://www.stmarthasparish.ca). Contact Zachary Hampton, Sacraments Coordinator, for more information: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults): RCIA started on Tuesday, October 10, following the 7 PM Mass. If you are interested in becoming Catholic or know anyone who is, please register on the parish website as soon as possible. For more information, call the office or email: sacraments@stmarthasparish.ca | **RITEs** for RCIA Candidates are on Lenten Sundays at 11 am Mass

Marriages/Marriage Preparation: Couples registered within the parish are required to make arrangements at least **six months prior, no exception**, to the date of marriage by calling the office to schedule interviews with Fr. William and completing the marriage preparation program. Couples complete the marriage preparation course AFTER their first interview with a cleric. Calgary diocese marriage preparation courses: catholiccyc.ca/marriage_prep. There are also classes available at All Saints Parish, Lethbridge.

Anointing of the Sick If you have a relative who has been admitted to hospital please call the parish office.

Our parish relies on your Sunday offerings for maintenance and growth. By making your pre-authorized offertory gift, you are providing crucial support to care for your parish.

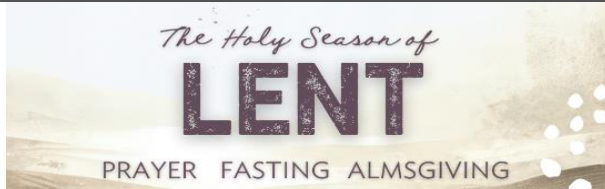
Contact our parish office to set up a direct debit deposit.

Please prayerfully discern where you are called to serve Our Lord at St. Martha's.

Lent is about re-centering on God

It has been for some weeks that we are journeying on the path of Lent: how is this affecting us, where are we heading to? Before the liturgical reform of Vatican II, Lent was a period characterized by penances, sacrifices and mortifications. Today the Church invites us to "Repent and believe in the gospel", according to the first words spoken by Jesus in the Gospel of Mark (Mk 1,15). **An invitation to change one's life, orienting one's existence to the good of others and to give adherence to the good news of Jesus.** The meaning of Lent lies in these two different theological approaches. Never in His teaching did Jesus invite you to do penance, to mortify yourself, much less to make sacrifices. Indeed, He said the opposite: "I want mercy and not sacrifices" (Mt 12.7). Sacrifices center man on himself, on his own spiritual perfection, mercy orients man towards the good of his brother. In fact, sacrifices, penances and mortifications only center man on himself, and nothing can be more dangerous and lethal than this attitude.

Paul of Tarsus, who as a fanatical Pharisee and a convinced advocate of these practices, once he met Jesus, went so far as to write in the Letter to the Colossians: *Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day... Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God. If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— "Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" —according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.* (Col 2,16.20-23). Paul understood very well that these practices center man on himself, in the mirage of an impossible spiritual perfection, as distant and unattainable as one's ambition is great. For this reason, Jesus instead invites immediate and concrete self-giving, as great as one's capacity to love is. Lent is not oriented towards Good Friday, but towards Easter of resurrection. **For this reason it is not a time for mortifications, but for vivification. It is about discovering new, original, unprecedented forms of forgiveness, generosity and service, which raise the quality of one's love to put it in tune with that of the Living, and thus experience Easter as the fullness of Christ's life and one's own.** The acceptance of the good news of Jesus ("Convert and believe in the gospel") is the vital element that enlivens our existence, makes us discover new original forms of love, and makes all those gift-giving abilities that are latent and were only waiting for the right moment to emerge. Enjoy the journey! – A. Maggi



Holy Week 2024

28 March, Holy Thursday:
Mass at 7:00 pm followed by adoration



29 March, Good Friday:
Service at 3:00 pm



30 March, Easter Vigil:
Mass at 8:00 pm



31 March, Easter:
Mass at 9:00 am and 11:00 am



TOGETHER
in ACTION | 2024

Our parish GOAL:

\$ 42,034

"God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

Every Friday in Lent

Mass at 9:00 a.m.
Eucharistic Adoration will begin after Mass,
to end with Benediction at 3:00 p.m.
Soup Supper at 5:30 p.m.
Stations of the Cross will begin at 7:00 pm.

