



SAINT COLUMBA
CATHOLIC CHURCH

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February 20, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Faith of Saint Columba Parish,

Pope Francis has proclaimed 2025 to be the Jubilee Year of Hope, stating: “We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us, and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision.” This Lenten Season, let us focus on how we can grow in faith, hope and love. There are many things that we can do during Lent to help us draw closer to Our Lord. We might consider **attending an additional Mass** during the week. **Wednesday all-day adoration** in the church is a wonderful opportunity to be in the presence of our Lord (sign-ups are in the back of the church). The **Stations of the Cross and Soup Suppers** on Fridays can help us to reflect upon the sufferings of Jesus out of His love for us. **Suggested Scripture readings for each day of Lent** will be in the **March 2** bulletin. **Fasting** between meals during Lent and **abstaining from meat** on Fridays can remind us of the forty days Jesus spent in the desert. **Almsgiving** for the poor reminds us of how God shares His blessings with us.

This year, instead of mailing each family a copy of the Little Black Book for Lent, we have responded to the suggestions of parishioners to trim our mailing costs by **placing the books in the church** for anyone who enjoys this resource. Please contact us if you are unable to pick one up and we will gladly mail it to you. **Online Lenten resources abound**, including those on our Parish app, the Formed website (free with St. Columba’s subscription), our Facebook page, and our YouTube channel. Within our own Parish app are numerous prayerful resources, including Daily Reflections, which can inspire your Lenten journey. **Our Parish app has greatly expanded** and contains many prayerful podcasts including the Bible in a Year, the Rosary in a Year, and even the Chosen! **The Chosen** is a compelling series that allows us to see Jesus through the eyes of those who knew him, staying faithful to the Gospels and at the same time tells us a story that is “in between” the lines of scripture. You can download our app at myparishapp.com or by texting APP to 55321.

Our Lent 2025 Study, presented by Dr. James Gregory, M.A. in Theology and Educational Ministry, is: *Passion & Physiology- How Human was Christ?* During this study we walk through the life of Jesus described in Scripture and show how Jesus was fully human. We will dive into Luke (the physician) and show how his detailed descriptions of the Passion of Christ compare with modern medical physiology. Sign up on the website or call the parish office to enroll. This class runs from March 3 – April 14 for 6 weeks, Mondays 8:30 am and 6:30 pm for 1.5 hrs.

It’s been a very active year in the parish. We have progressed into the Implementation stage of our **Next Generation Parish** program. Many thanks to all the parishioners who are eager to help shape the future of our parish and enact the goals of the Envisioning Committee. Together, with the Catholic Leadership Institute, we have developed a plan to cultivate a deeper missionary spirit throughout the community. This process has a page on our website so that you can learn more. **Please call the office if you would like to become more involved.** It is very exciting. Within the upcoming months, you will see our **website undergo a complete renovation**, making it more user-friendly, appealing and accessible for its many visitors.

We enclose our **2025 Lent and Easter Season Schedule**. We have much to offer between Christ the King our Mission Church, and St. Columba Church. Part of our vision for the future is to incorporate and complement our Liturgy and Confession schedules between the two churches in our Parish during Holy Week. **This year we bring back the Lenten Soup Suppers here at St. Columba and invite you to come and have a relaxing meal together with time to attend Stations of the Cross at either church (see our schedule). We encourage you to enrich your Lenten observance by attending some of the Masses, penance opportunities, Stations of the Cross, or Liturgy of the Hours at Christ the King Church in Benton with Father Andrew St. Hilaire and experience the richness of our Mission Church. Please keep this schedule handy for quick reference and note that some Mass times have changed for this coming year.**

Soon, you will be hearing more about the **Diocesan Annual Campaign**. I ask you to be very generous in supporting your Bishop in the Apostolic works throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg.

May this Lenten Season be a time of spiritual growth for all of us! Please, keep our Church family in your prayers so that we may continue to bring the Light of Christ into the world. Thank you for being a part of our parish family.

Saint Columba, pray for us! Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Rev. Richard J. Mowery
Pastor
Enclosures

LENTEN GUIDELINES

1. The traditional Lenten practices of piety, fasting, almsgiving and other forms of self-denial are warmly recommended by the Church.
2. The faithful observance of Lent should manifest itself in the imitation of Christ in daily life and in the readiness to sacrifice time and talents whenever possible, in personal, parish, and community efforts for those in spiritual or material need. The spiritual hunger of the unchurched locally and in mission lands can be a focus of prayers and charitable giving.
3. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age or older. They are also days of fasting for those between the ages of 18 and 59 years of age. Those bound by the law of fasting may take one full meal. Two smaller meals are also permitted; liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed. If health or ability to work is seriously affected, the law does not bind.
4. All Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence (no meat) for those 14 years of age or older.
5. Fridays of the year outside Lent remain days of penance. The Bishops of the United States highly recommended the traditional abstinence from meat on Fridays during the entire year, together with acts of mortification, for the cause of peace in the world. However, some other practice of voluntary self-denial or personal penance may be substituted.