

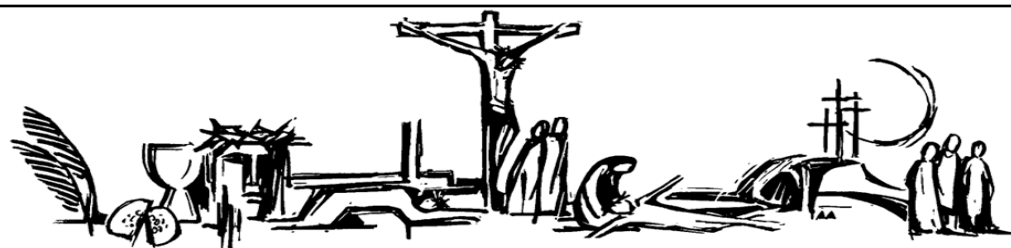
5 EVENINGS OF LENTEN PROGRAMME TALKS

To be held in the Meeting Room or Hall on Thursdays

- ◆ 26 February 2026 7pm
- ◆ 5 March 2026 7pm
- ◆ 12 March 2026 7pm
- ◆ 19 March 2026 – Mass at 7pm & refreshments in the Hall afterwards to celebrate St. Joseph Parish Feast Day
- ◆ 26 March 2026 7pm

UPCOMING LENTEN PROGRAMME

- ◆ Extra Mass for Lent every Wednesday evening: 25 February, 4, 11, 18 & 25 March, 1 April 2026 at 7pm
- ◆ Rite II Reconciliation: Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 7pm
- ◆ Lenten programme talks every Thursday: 26 February; 5, 12, 19 & 26 March; at 7pm
- ◆ Stations of the Cross every Friday: 20 & 27 February; 6, 13, 20 & 27 March 2026 at 7pm
- ◆ St. Joseph's School Stations of the Cross Friday: 3rd April 2026



“I NEVER KNOW WHAT TO GIVE UP FOR LENT!”

Lent is more than just “giving something up” and fasting from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Pope Francis challenged us to think about fasting as something more powerful than we normally consider it, describing it as “learning to change our attitude towards others and all of creation, turning away from the temptation to ‘devour’ everything to satisfy our voracity and being ready to suffer for love, which can fill the emptiness of our hearts. At the start of Lent, we should ask ourselves – what pulls me away from loving God, loving others, and loving myself well? How can I incorporate acts of sacrifice, acts of giving, and acts of prayer that will help me love as God loves?”

Giving thought to observing Lent is important. Whether you wait until the last minute to decide or you’ve known your Lenten sacrifice since last Lent, it’s worth spending time to thoughtfully consider how to make the most of your experience this year.

Because observing Lent is so much bigger than what you “give up.”

 www.stjoseph.org.nz

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 9am to 2.30pm Monday to Friday



SAINT JOSEPHS
ST JOSEPHS CATHOLIC CHURCH TAKAPUNA

LENT 2026

ASH WEDNESDAY, 18 FEBRUARY TO HOLY THURSDAY, 2 APRIL

Lent is the season which highlights God's desire to recapture our hearts. Jesus began his public ministry with a call: “Repent, for the kingdom of God is close at hand!” Jesus’ invitation means “Step back from your usual way of behaving, view life upside down, be open to the God of surprises, tune in to the wonderful things which God is doing for you, through you and around you!”



We have to *make time* if we are going to respond to Jesus’ invitation. Making time for God is called **Prayer**.

The best prayer involves more listening than talking – allowing God’s messages to touch us:

- ◆ Spend a few minutes in the evening looking back on the day, noticing both failures and blessings. Seek God’s mercy and strength, rejoice and give thanks.
- ◆ Read the gospel passage used at Mass today or tomorrow – read it slowly twice – for the head and for the heart - then allow it to speak to you.
- ◆ Pray a psalm
- ◆ Participate in a **weekday Mass** – at St Joseph’s, Monday to Friday 9.15am, an extra Mass Wednesday 7pm, Saturday 9am; at Milford, Monday to Saturday 10am. Or watch the daily Mass online on the parish website.
- ◆ Celebrate the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**: at St Joseph’s every Saturday at 9.30am and at Milford every Friday at 10.30am. The communal celebration of Reconciliation will be at St Joseph’s on Tuesday 24 March at 7pm
- ◆ Participate in **Stations of the Cross** – Fridays at 7pm at St Joseph’s Church
- ◆ Come to the **Passion Re-enactment by students of Carmel and Rosmini Colleges** at St Joseph’s Church on Tuesday 31 March at 7pm

A second Lenten practice is **fasting**.

On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday we fast from eating meat (called "abstinence"). Especially on the Fridays of Lent, uniting ourselves with Jesus in his sufferings, we practise some form of self-denial.

It is good to fast from alcohol, lollies or smoking during Lent. But Pope Francis recommended a spiritual Lent focusing on "fasting" from negative behaviours, such as giving up indifference, hurtful words, gossip, and selfishness. He proposes:

1. Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
2. Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
3. Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
4. Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
5. Fast from worries and trust in God.
6. Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
7. Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
8. Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.
9. Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
10. Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
11. Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.



Pope Francis said that fasting must never become superficial. He quoted St John Chrysostom: "No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others."

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS DATES & TIMES - 18 February 2026.

Ash Wednesday is a day of abstinence (not eating meat) and fasting (eating less than usual).

Our Mass times are as follows:

ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH

- ♦ 9:15am Mass
- ♦ 1:30pm Liturgy with St. Joseph's School
- ♦ 5:00pm Mass
- ♦ 7:00pm Mass

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CHURCH

- ♦ 10:00am Mass



A third Lenten practice is **almsgiving**, or sharing our material blessings with those in need.

- ♦ Donate to the NZ Bishops' Lent Appeal through Caritas the Catholic Church's main aid and development agency. Details can be found on their website at www.caritas.org.nz/lent or by using the envelopes available at Mass. The Lenten Appeal supports poor communities overseas and in New Zealand, especially in self-development. Donations are tax deductible.
- ♦ Share your time in service to a neighbour in need
- ♦ Remember the sentiment of Pope Leo: "Small deeds, big difference"!

Enjoy a more simple lifestyle during Lent - and rejoice in the blessings of God!

We also have a series of presentations by parishioners on **Hearing the voice of God and responding in daily life**

Heavenly Father,

As I enter another Lenten journey, guide me to the path that leads to You. Fill my heart with gratitude, patience, strength, and peace as I strive to become the-best-version-of-myself, honestly admitting my shortcomings and sins. As I renew my resolve each day to become a better person, let me hear your voice in the deepest reaches of my heart. Give me rest in You.



Help me to accept others, showing them your great love instead of casting judgment. Stay with me through the busy days this week and remind me that when I need comfort, solitude, wisdom, or guidance, I can always turn to you. Help me develop discipline and generosity through fasting and almsgiving and come closer to you through prayer this Lent.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever.

Amen