

**PORTLAOISE
PARISH**

**link
up**

21stFebruary 2021

First Sunday of Lent



“Come back to me
with all your heart”
Joel 2:12

The call of Lent

Do You want to Fast this Lent?

In the words of Pope Francis

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.

Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.

Fast from anger and be filled with patience.

Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.

Fast from worries and have trust in God.

Fast from complaints; contemplate simplicity.

Fast from pressures and be prayerful.

Fast from bitterness; fill your hearts with joy.

Fast from selfishness and be compassionate.

Fast from grudges and be reconciled.


Fast from words; be silent and listen.



The Parish Centre 057 8621142

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What is Lent all about?

'Many of us would confess that we're not quite sure what Lent is all about. We know it's about doing difficult stuff, like giving up chocolate. We know that Lent is about growing closer to God, but can giving up chocolate really get us closer to God?



To understand Lent, we need to look to the wilderness story which we are told on the first Sunday of Lent every year. Every year on the first Sunday of Lent we are told how Jesus went into the wilderness for forty days to fast and to reflect on the job he was about to do here on Earth. We are told how he was confronted with temptation and how he overcame it. There are three elements to this story. Jesus withdrew from worldly distractions and fasted, he reflected on who and what he was about, and he overcame temptation. The problem is, we all seem to latch onto the first bit of the story about fasting and forget the two more important elements. Jesus reflected on the importance of the ministry he was about to undertake and he refused to be swayed from it. This is the important bit. This is how we need to understand and live our next forty days.

At this time of year we are asked to 'repent'. We are asked to turn away from things in our lives that are not working well or are wrong. That will be different for all of us, so we need to sit down in a quiet space and work out what we need to do. How we need to change should be something more important than those new-year resolutions we all make and break. Next we need to identify the barriers that stop us making those changes. Withdrawing from worldly comforts might be part of this barrier which is where fasting or giving up TV might come in. Lastly we need to resist the temptation to give up on plans to change ourselves and the world around us, and that's the hardest bit of all.

As children today's gospel is presented to us with an accompanying illustration of the devil complete with huge bat like wings a scaly tail and horns. How easy to resist temptation packaged so obviously as a 'bad choice'. The trouble with temptation is it rarely comes packaged as a 'bad choice'. Often temptation comes as a fairly harmless choice or even as an attractive or intelligent option. How harmless does it seem to sip half a glass of wine when you're supposed to be quitting. How harmless does it seem to 'borrow' a little cash from the office tea fund ... you can always pay it back later.

There's lot of talk about what is classed as a temptation and what isn't. In the context of the first Sunday of Lent, a temptation is anything that takes you further way from God. If having an extra cream cake takes you further way from God, then it's a temptation ... if having an extra cream cake has nothing to do with your relationship with God than it's totally unimportant.

When it comes to temptation, a simple rule of thumb is to ask yourself in each of your daily decisions, " Will this decision bring me nearer to God or take me further away?" Knowing who you are and what you are trying to achieve in life not only helps you to identify your temptations, but also gives you a reason and strength of character when it comes to resisting. Today is the day we start giving the devil a hard time. Tempted?



We welcome into our Parish Community

Tadhg Jordan Gorman,
Bianconi Way.
baptised last weekend

LENTEN STATIONS

For the support of our Priests

Envelopes are available in Church porches for those who haven't got Development Boxes and wish to contribute to the Priests Collection. You can drop this envelope in one of the collection boxes provided in our Churches or returning to the Parish Centre during Lent.

Trócaire Boxes are available in the Church porches or you can pick up a box in the Parish Centre.

Thank You!



This Lent

Lent comes each year in three different cycles. This Lent we follow the gospel for the 'Year B' cycle. As the wisdom of the readings of the following weeks unfurl, we are invited to confront and overcome the temptation in our lives that prevents us from living the gospel. We are reminded that life is full of daily choices. What negative aspects do we need to drive out of our lives before we can make those choices? To motivate us when the demands of the gospel seem altogether too difficult, we are given a glimpse of God's glory and reminded that with death comes resurrection. Finally we are reminded that we must all 'die to self' ...like the grain which must die in order to bear fruit, so too must we always humbly put the needs of others before our own.

A BIT OF HISTORY!

21st February 1848

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published 'The Communist Manifesto' in London.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Gen 9:8-15 Ps.24:4-9

1 Pet 3:18-22 Mk 1:12-15



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<p>SPORTS PEOPLE; May need to be aligned biomechanically to prevent problems and cushioned for shock absorbency.</p>	<p>CHILDREN; Who are in toeing, out toeing, have poor posture or gait or where parents notice excessive wear.</p>

KELLIE TAYLOR BSC (Hons) Ost. M.O.C.I. and DARREN CONROY BSC (Hons) Ost. M.O.C.I.

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TIME TO THINK!

RENEWING FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE; POPE FRANCIS' MESSAGE FOR LENT 2021

In his message for Lent 2021, Pope Francis focuses on the three theological virtues inviting us to "renew our faith, draw from the living waters of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God."

Grounding his reflection on the Paschal Mystery, the Pope says, "This Lenten journey... is even now illumined by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Jesus."

He goes on to say that the journey of conversion, through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, "makes it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope, and effective charity."

Accepting and bearing witness to the truth

Francis explains "accepting and living the truth revealed in Christ means, first of all, opening our hearts to God's word." Through fasting, "experienced as a form of self-denial," we are able "to rediscover God's gift and recognise that, created in His image and likeness, we find our fulfilment in Him." Fasting, too, by helping us recognise our own poverty, helps us to love both God and neighbour.

"Lent is a time for believing," the Pope says, "for welcoming God into our lives and allowing Him to 'make His dwelling' in us."

The 'living water' that helps us on the journey

Pope Francis relates the virtue of hope to the 'living water' that Jesus promises the Samaritan woman at the well. This is not the physical water the woman is expecting, but rather the Holy Spirit who is given through the Paschal Mystery.

Although hope may seem challenging in fragile and uncertain times, "Lent is precisely the season of hope, when we turn back to God."

Hope, he says, "is given to us as inspiration and interior light" through "recollection and silent prayer." The experience of hope in Lent, he says, "means receiving the hope of Christ, who gave His life on the Cross and was raised by God on the third day."

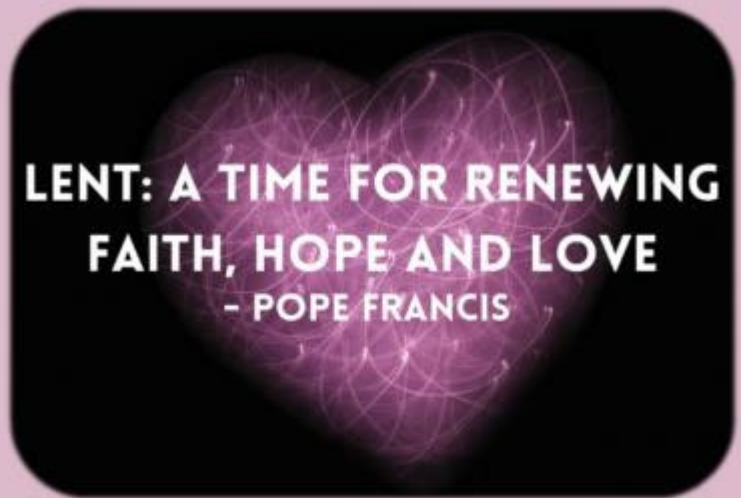
Love, the highest expression of faith and hope

"Love is a leap of the heart," says Pope Francis. "It brings us out of ourselves and creates bonds of sharing and communion."

Francis, emphasises the need for "social love" in building up "a civilization of love."

"Love is a gift that gives meaning to our lives," he says. Love helps us to see all men and women as our brothers and sisters. Charity is multiplied when given with love, as we see not only in the Scriptures, but in our own lives, too, when we give alms "with joy and simplicity."

"To experience Lent with love," says Pope Francis, "means caring for those who suffer or feel abandoned because of the Covid-19 pandemic." He invites us to "speak words of reassurance, and help others to realise that God loves them as sons and daughters."



A journey of conversion

After reminding us that "every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping, and loving," Pope Francis concludes by saying:

"The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our goods, helps us as communities and as individuals - to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father."

The following reflection grounds us in the reality of being a Christian....

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not shouting, "I'm saved"
I'm whispering, "I get lost!"
"That is why I chose this way"

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I don't speak of this with pride
I'm confessing that I stumble,
and need someone to be my guide

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not trying to be strong,
I'm professing that I'm weak,
and pray for strength to carry on

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not bragging of success,
I'm admitting that I've failed,
and cannot ever pay the debt

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I'm not claiming to be perfect,
my flaws are way too visible
but God believes I'm worth it

When I say ... "I am a Christian"
I still feel the sting of pain
I have my share of heartaches
which is why I seek His Name

When I say ... "I am a Christian" I do not wish to judge
I have no authority, I only know I'm loved!

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HANDING ON
THE FAITH



Extra! Extra! Read All About It!

There was a time when you could walk the streets of Dublin and hear the voice of a newspaper boy crying out,

"Extra! Extra! Read all about it." He called out to get the attention of people who were passing by so that they would come to him and buy a newspaper. That was the way the news was spread in those days.



How do people get their news today? People get their news in many different ways. For some, the newspaper is still their main source for news and they read it from cover to cover. Some may get their news from the radio. Probably the main way that people get the news today is from television or even from our mobile phones. No matter how we get our news, it is important for us to know what is going on in the world around us.

Did you know that Jesus himself was in the news business? The Bible says that Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news of God. Listen to what he said,

"The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news."

Jesus wanted everyone to know the good news of God's love for them.

How do people get the good news of God's love today? Some may get it from newspapers, radio or television. During this time of our pandemic a lot of people are listening to our Mass on our parish radio, or watching Mass through our parish webcam, Facebook or Shalom world where they hear about God's love. But the best way to spread the good news of God's love is the same today as it was in Jesus' day. The best way is for you and me to tell others about it! Tell your friends and family about God's love today!

You and I should be like the newsboy standing on the street corner crying out, "Extra! Extra! Read all about it! The time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news - God loves you!"



My Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to follow your example and share the good news of God's love with everyone we meet. Amen.

We know that Jesus spent forty days in the desert fasting and praying. During Lent we try to follow Jesus' example by doing something special to show how much we love him and want to be like him. This is not easy and sometimes it is difficult to decide what we want to do and even more difficult to keep doing it for forty days.



There are three things that we are asked to focus on during Lent.

They are:

PRAYING: Spend a little more time with God.

SACRIFICING: Giving up something that you really like.

ALMSGIVING: Giving to those who have very little or sharing

SOME OF THESE SUGGESTIONS MIGHT HELP YOU DECIDE WHAT TO DO:

I will share a smile



I will pray for those who are hungry

I will help my mammy

I will put some money in the Trócaire Box

I will write a letter to my nana



I will pray for those who have died

I won't eat sweets

I will make a card for my granddad

I will play with my little brother/sister

I will help my teacher

I will share my lunch with my friend

I will clean my room without complaining

I will be patient

I will be kind to someone

I will make a card for my mammy

I will pray for those who are sick

I will eat my dinner



I will share my pencils with my friends

I will help clean the kitchen

I will put my litter in the bin

I will say thank you to Jesus

I will help mind the baby

I will do what my teacher asked

I will go to Mass

I will forgive someone who hurt me

I will call my grandparents



I will give my daddy a hug

I will pray for peace

I will read a story to my sister

I will say 'sorry'

I'm sooooo sorry...



I will share my toys

I will make my bed

I won't watch television

I will give away something



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We are continuing the printing of our weekly linkup magazine during current restrictions, working remotely. We ask that all Anniversaries/ adverts/notices are submitted via e-mail to;

linkup@portlaoiseparish.ie

or phone to 057-8692154 before 12 noon Wednesday. If you are phoning, please leave a voicemail with your phone number, as this phone will not be attended on a full time basis and we will return your call.

Thank you for your co-operation and stay safe.

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Springtime Orienteering: Emo and Portlaoise residents are invited to explore their navigation skills this spring through orienteering facilities in Emo Court and Pairc Na Phobail, Portlaoise. Explore the outdoors in a different light. Get fit and have fun doing it! Download the Virtual Maps anytime through the MapRun6 app and then challenge family members on their problem solving, decision making, Teamwork and Self-Awareness skills.

COVID-19 Support Line for Older People: ALONE manage a national support line and additional supports for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to COVID-19. Professional staff are available to answer queries and give advice and reassurance where necessary, seven days a week, 8am-8pm, by calling 0818 222 024.

New SOSAD Ireland voluntary mental health and bereavement centre opening soon in Portlaoise: The SOSAD Laois free telephone counselling service is now active for anybody in distress or who simply needs to talk. Phone SOSAD Laois 083-8664157. Facebook SOSAD Laois

Portlaoise Community & Family Resource Centre are hosting a FREE ONLINE event for parents and caregivers: Parenting and Managing Anxiety in Children with Dr. Malie Coyne, clinical Psychologist, Wednesday 24th February at 8pm. Book your place today. Tel. 057-8686151 / 087-9171359 or e-mail; info@portlaoisefrc.ie

The Council phone line 057-8664000 is open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm, for the Laois Community Response Support Helpline, to facilitate the most appropriate community response to the needs of vulnerable people living in the community, where their usual sources of support have become unavailable due to Covid-19 and also to deal with normal council queries. **Call or e-mail; covidsupport@laoiscoco.ie**

CHOOSE THE WORLD YOU WANT

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22ND FEBRUARY TO
7TH MARCH

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT
22 FEBRUARY - 7 MARCH



During these two weeks we are reminded once again to choose Fairtrade products when shopping, not only during this time but throughout the year.

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Check out www.fairtrade.ie for news and updates.



CLIMATE, FAIRTRADE AND YOU

CHOOSE THE WORLD
YOU WANT



**OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR
THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY ;**



Elizabeth McCormack

née O' Neill

The Grange, Portlaoise,
Ballinakill and Newtown



Eileen Phelan

née Kenny

Sancta Maria, New Road

Sheila Whelan - Ballydavis

Mary Blake - Borris Road

Rita Breen - Roselawn

James Byrne

Northampton, England and formerly
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Sr. Mary Pius Madden

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Eileen Carroll née Deane

Ballinakill and Birr

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Our sympathy to their families.

A message of sympathy may be left for the family by logging
on to the death notice at www.portlaoiseparish.ie/deathnotices

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In Loving Memory of

MARY LALOR

Ballycarroll, Portlaoise.



The Lalor family would like to thank most sincerely all those who supported us in the very sad loss of our beloved, much loved and cherished wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother Mary, who passed to her eternal reward on 22nd January 2021.

Thanks to all who offered their condolences by sending Mass and sympathy cards, text messages, messages on rip.ie, and phone calls. Thanks also for the floral tributes and donations to St. Vincent de Paul. To those who left food and refreshments at the house, thanks. Also, thanks to all who lined the route to The Heath Church and for those who attended at the graveyard.

Heartfelt thanks to Dr. Sinead Burke and Doctors, Nurses and staff of The Cedar Clinic; Jim Murphy and staff of Hughes Pharmacy; Staff of The Regional Hospital Portlaoise and St. James's Hospital Dublin; Ambulance Service, Midoc, OT Department HSE, Public Health nurses, Palliative Care nurses, Irish Daffodil nurse, Carers and Mary's niece Marie Rowe. Sincere thanks and gratitude to all who supported Mary in her illness, especially our family, extended family and friends.

Sincere thanks to the Priests of the Parish, especially Monsignor John Byrne for celebrating Mary's funeral Mass. Also, thanks to Fr. Tom O'Connor for his regular house visits to Mary. Thanks to Kathleen McEvoy and Ellie Foran for leading the Rosaries.

Our thanks to Matthew Keegan and David Goode for their compassionate and professional manner in which they carried out the funeral. To Elaine Lambe-Bigley and Teresa Delaney for their music ministry, our thanks. Also, thanks to the Sacristan Phyllis Booth. Thanks to the gravediggers for preparing Mary's resting place and to Ross Molloy for streaming the funeral mass.

As it would be impossible to thank everyone individually, please accept this acknowledgement as a sincere expression of our gratitude. The Holy Sacrament of the Mass will be offered for your intention.

Mary's Month Mind Mass will be celebrated on Monday 22nd February at 10am, in Sts. Peter's & Paul's Parish Church and can be viewed via the Parish Webcam.

*"Those we love we never lose for always they will be
Loved, remembered, treasured, always in our memory"*

Rest in Peace Mary

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE
In Loving Memory of
ORLA CONROY-KELLY

25 Bianconi Way, Portlaoise.
Whose birthday occurs 25th February 2021



Are there birthdays in Heaven?
Does the angel blow his horn?
Announcing to everybody, that this
is the day you were born.
Can the stars be your balloons and
angel food your cake?
Presents wrapped in moon beams,
all the angels helped to make.
Birthdays meant so much to you,
They were always a big deal,
Birthday presents, lots of friends
and perhaps a special meal.

So we'll whisper a little prayer today, asking everyone up
above, to sing you a happy birthday song and give you all
our love.

Happy birthday Doll, loved and missed more everyday.

Lots of love from Mammy & Daddy, Sharon & Jim,
Lorena & Shane, Brendan, Lynda & Damien, Olivia & Brian,
Geraldine & Rocky, adored nieces and nephews,
your daughter Lydian and partner Sean, your treasured
son Paddy and your granddaughter Orla-Mae.

May Orla Rest in Peace

In Loving Memory of
LILY DARGAN

Late of 3 Abbeyleix Road, Portlaoise.
28th Anniversary occurs 3rd March 2021

LAURENCE DARGAN

43rd Anniversary occurs 27th February 2021

Gone, yet not forgotten, although we are apart,
Your spirit lives within us, forever in our hearts.

*Loved and remembered always by Mary, Eugene,
Sean and Ronan.*

May They Rest in Peace

In Loving Memory of
WILLIAM (Mick) FENNELLY

Late of 30 St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise.
44th Anniversary occurred 20th February 2021



Memory drifts to scenes long past,
Time rolls on, but memories last,
Sunshine passes, shadows fall,
Love's remembrance outlasts all.

*Loved and remembered always by Mary,
Eugene, Sean and Ronan.*

Rest in Peace William

In Loving Memory of
CATHERINE DOWLING

7 Borris Road, Portlaoise whose Anniversary
occurred 19th February 2021



*Will those who think of Catherine
today, a little prayer to Jesus say.*

*Always remembered by all
her loving family.*

Rest in Peace Catherine

In Loving Memory of
DOMINIC DUNNE

9 Glendowns, Portlaoise. 13th Anniversary occurs 27th February.

Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in
Sts. Peter & Paul's Parish Church on
Sunday 28th February at 10am.



No words can tell, no tears express,
The love, the loss, the emptiness,

You are not just a memory or part of the past,
You are ours to remember as long as life lasts.

*Sadly missed and always remembered by his loving wife Mary,
family and friends.*

May Dominic Rest in Peace

In Loving Memory of
DENIS GRIFFEY

32 St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise.
35th Anniversary occurs 22nd February 2021



Your presence we miss,
Your memory we treasure,
Loving you always,
Forgetting you never.

Sadly missed by all his loving family.

May Denis Rest in Peace

In Loving Memory of
MICHAEL RIGNEY

St. Brigid's Place, Portlaoise.
5th Anniversary occurred 18th February 2021.



No words can tell, no tears express,
The love, the loss, the emptiness.
You are not just a memory or part of
the past, you are ours to remember,
as long as life lasts.

*Sadly missed and always remembered by
your loving wife Kathleen, family & friends.*

May Mick Rest in Peace

In Loving Memory of **SEAN KAVANAGH**

Main Street, Abbeyleix.

9th Anniversary occurs 25th February 2021



If memories bring us closer,
We will never be far apart,
Our lives go on without you,
It's never been the same.

*Loved and remembered always
by Maree, Caroline and Brian.*

Rest in Peace Sean

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Main
Street
Abbeyleix

Portlaoise Parish



Results for

18th February 2021

15

21

29

31

No €20,000 Jackpot Winner

WINNERS

Patrick Delaney Jnr
James & Anne Ging
Helen & Tom
Clare Scully
Lisa & Cathal

MATCH 3s €1,000

05
Match 3s
€200
each

PROMOTER

Peggy Kelly
Lotto Gift
Laura Skelly
Parish Centre
Cathal O'Neill

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Priests of the Parish



Msgr. John Byrne P.P.V.G.
Tel: 057 8621142



Fr. Ciprian Matei C.C.
Tel: 057 8509998



Fr. David Vard C.C.
Tel: 057 8661139



Fr. Theodore Tomasik SVD
Tel: 057 8661605

To contact the Priest on Duty:
Parish Centre during office hours
Tel: 057 8621142
Outside office hours
in emergency only
Tel: 057 8621364

Safeguarding

All safeguarding statements and policies can
viewed on our website and our Church
Porches.

Diocesan Designated Liaison Person
Mick Daly dlp@kandle.ie

Parish Centre



Office Hours Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

Phone: 057-8621142 / 057-8660722

E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie

Twitter: @portlaoiseparis

MANAGER Declan Kelly

Parish Secretaries Michelle Bartley
Agnieszka Kaczmarek

Accounts Michelle Conroy

Sacristans Parish Church

Sr. Sybil and Sr. Julie

All Masses and services from the Parish Church
are live streamed www.portlaoiseparish.ie

(Sacristy phone attended prior to Mass times
057 8600119)



Secretary: Julie Conroy
Monday to Thursday
11am to 1pm & 2.15pm to 5pm
057-8692154

Advertising deadline: 12 noon Wednesday

Subject to availability of space

E-mail: linkup@portlaoiseparish.ie

PARISH SHOP

057 8621142 - Claire Scully

Support for the Parish

We have traditionally depended on the passing of the collection
baskets at Sunday Masses for support. *Thank you* to the many who
have found new ways of continuing to support the Parish during
this time of Lockdown. The generosity of so many means we
continue to be well supported and can pay our way at this time.

Ways to contribute to our Parish

Envelope boxes available at Church porches and Parish Centre

Direct payment by cheque or cash

Cashless Point at the back of the Parish Church

Donation facility on our website

Standing Order forms available at the Parish Centre

Or Transfer directly to our Account

Portlaoise Parish Account:

IBAN: IE53AIBK93327916658045

Portlaoise Parish Clergy Fund Account:

IBAN: IE12AIBK93327916658201

(The BIC for both accounts is AIBKIE2D)

THANK YOU

LENT



WAYS TO ENGAGE IN OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

Consecration to St. Joseph - to celebrate the Year of St. Joseph

33 days of prayer to St. Joseph will take place everyday after the morning Rosary. Even if you have missed the beginning of this devotion, you may join at any time.

The book 'Consecration to St. Joseph' containing the reflections and prayers is available at the Parish Centre Shop

Triduum to St. Joseph

19th - 21st of March

Three days to celebrate and to pray through the intercession of St. Joseph

Confessions

Every Friday, from 6pm to 7pm a priest will be available for Confession in the Prayer Room, in the Parish Church

Stations of the Cross

Throughout Lent on Friday at 7.30pm we will pray together the Stations of the Cross



Due to current restrictions all ceremonies will be celebrated virtually
www.portlaoiseparish.ie