



# St. Francis Xavier Parish

26 CHESTNUT LAND ROAD

NEW MILFORD, CT 06776

860-354-2202

Web Site: [www.sfxnewmilford.org](http://www.sfxnewmilford.org)

Email: [sfxparish@sfxnewmilford.org](mailto:sfxparish@sfxnewmilford.org)

Office Hours: 9 A.M. - 5 P.M. Mon. - Thurs.

March 5, 2017

First Sunday of Lent

ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD



## MOVED BY **MERCY**

2017 ARCHBISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

### Kick-Off Weekend



[www.archdioceseofhartford.org](http://www.archdioceseofhartford.org) •  ArchdioceseofHartford •  ArchbishopBlair



**SATURDAY VIGIL - March 4**

5:00 P.M. +Jeanne Lahiff  
Req. by Kathy & Jack Healy

**First Sunday of Lent**

**SUNDAY - March 5**

7:30 A.M. +Patrick Kersten  
Req. by Adrienne Coppola  
10:00 A.M. +Muriel Moreau  
Req. by Carmine & Josephine Buono  
5:00 P.M. For The People of St. Francis Xavier &  
The Immaculate Conception Province

**MONDAY - No scheduled Mass - March 6**

**TUESDAY - March 7**

6:30 P.M. +George A. Lalak  
Req. by The Lalak Family

**WEDNESDAY - March 8**

8:00 A.M. For the living and deceased members of  
The Shugrue and Brennan Families  
Req. by Their Family

**THURSDAY - March 9**

6:30 P.M. +Anna Funaro  
Req. by The Lalak Family

**FRIDAY - March 10**

8:00 A.M. +Martha E. Lalak  
Req. by The Lalak Family

**SATURDAY VIGIL - March 11**


5:00 P.M. +Catherine Brady  
Req. by Kathy & Jack Healy

**Second Sunday of Lent**

**SUNDAY - March 12**

7:30 A.M. For The People of St. Francis Xavier &  
The Immaculate Conception Province  
10:00 A.M. +For the Valedes and Lumalcuri Families  
Req. by Tom & Cathy Valedes  
5:00 P.M. +Stamathi Sourbis  
Req. by Tom & Cathy Valedes

**ITEMS FOR THE MISSIONS:** If you have any of the following items: rosaries, prayer cards, medals, small religious books, Bibles, etc, to send to the missions, please contact Judy at 860-354-7254.



St. Francis sends a final farewell to our dearly departed:  
Elizabeth Risetto  
Richard Cioto

**Do you like hockey?**  
**Come to this fun family day with the Knights of Columbus & support a worthy cause!**  
When: Sunday, March 12 (3pm; doors open at 2pm)  
What: Bridgeport Sound Tigers vs. Hartford Wolf Pack  
Where: Webster Bank Arena, Main St, Bridgeport  
Tickets: \$25 (proceeds are being donated to Voice for Joanie) Voice For Joanie is a group of volunteers providing computer technology and assistance so that people with ALS have a "voice".  
To order tickets, contact Gene Calarco at 860-355-3572 or email [cjojogene@charter.net](mailto:cjojogene@charter.net). (Make checks payable the New Milford Knights of Columbus.)

**Confraternity of the Rosary Monthly Meeting**  
Monday, March 6 at 12 noon in the Church Hall  
Bring your own sandwich, we will provide the dessert and drinks. All ladies of the parish are invited. New members are always welcome.



**Catholic Relief Services**  
**Operation: RICE BOWL**  
Join our faith community - and nearly 14,000 Catholic communities across the United States - in a life-changing Lenten journey of encounter with CRS Rice Bowl.

Pick up your family's Rice Bowl from the window sills at the exit doors this weekend. May these 40 days better prepare us to encounter ourselves, our neighbors and our God.  
Visit [crsricebowl.org](http://crsricebowl.org) for more information.

**Archbishop's Annual Appeal**  
This weekend marks the start of the 2017 **Archbishop's Annual Appeal** in our parish. If you haven't already, you will receive a letter from Archbishop Blair seeking your support. Together we can change the lives of thousands of God's people. The "Good Works" performed by our Church in the areas of social services, healthcare, and pastoral services are critical for so many in need. Please respond as generously as possible.

**CHURCH REGULATIONS ON FAST AND ABSTINENCE**

Fridays in Lent- Days of Abstinence

On days of abstinence, meat may not be eaten at all. This also includes items made from meat, like gravies and soups. Catholics 14 years of age or older are bound to abstinence on Fridays in Lent, and on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. **REMEMBER: THERE IS NO UPPER AGE LIMIT ON ABSTINENCE.** You are not excused from abstaining from meat if you have reached a certain age. However, those who have health issues which prevent them from abstaining from meat on these days should seek other forms of penance.

**ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY ARE DAYS OF ABSTINENCE AND FASTING.** Fasting and abstinence are not the same. Fasting is different than abstinence. Fasting means one full meal, two light meals, with no eating in between meals.

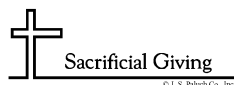
Catholics from 18 to 59 are bound to the obligation of fasting. Those who have health issues may find other means of penance if fasting is impossible.

**New Parish App!** St. Francis Xavier Parish has our own app for iPhone and Android smart phones. This will allow us to better communicate with you throughout the week and keep you updated with relevant parish news or updates. It will be a great resource by providing daily Mass readings, Catholic news and prayers, convenient prayer and Confession reminders, our bulletins and more.


We hope for our new app to be a tool for fostering stronger parish life at St. Francis Xavier and better engaging the New Evangelization.

There will be no need for parishioners with smart phones to remember to silence their phones before Mass. The app will send you a reminder to silence your phone 20 minutes before the Mass you select. So, be sure to download the app today by visiting myparishapp.com, or searching for myparish on your phone's app store, or text **App** to 88202 to download the app, and then select St. Francis after opening. Stay connected with us all week.

Sponsored by our Knights of Columbus **BINGO**  
Every Monday night  
VFW Hall (Avery Road, New Milford)  
Doors open at 5:45 pm (BINGO begins at 6:30 pm)



OFFERTORY - February 26 = \$5,886.00  
5 ½ % CATHEDRATICUM = \$324.00  
5 ½ % CATHOLIC SCHOOLS = \$324.00  
ST. FRANCIS' SHARE = \$5,238.00

  
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**Confessions:**  
Every Monday 6 - 7 pm  
Every Saturday 4 - 4:45 pm

**Stations of the Cross:**  
Every Friday 7 pm

**St. Patrick's Day Dinner Dance**  
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Washington and St. Patrick Church in Roxbury are co-sponsoring a full-course corned beef and cabbage dinner with music and dancing on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at the Washington Town Hall. Live music will be provided by the Nick Longo Duo. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. BYOB. Set-ups will be provided. Tickets are \$25. Please call their Parish Office at 860-868-2600 if you would like to attend.

**WE NEED LITURGICAL MINISTERS!**  
Please, please consider assisting us in these liturgical ministries. It would be so great to have a full complement of ministers on the altar at ALL our Masses. Thanks for considering this. If you feel you will be able to assist us, please fill in the form below in this bulletin, detach it, and turn it into the parish office or place it in the collection. You will be contacted in the future for training.

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**Ministry Sign-Up Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

- Requested Ministry:*  
(Please check as many as you would like)
- ( ) Youth Altar Server      ( ) Reader/Lector\*  
( ) Eucharistic Minister\*      ( ) Master of Ceremonies  
( ) Choir Member      ( ) Greeter  
( ) Usher

\*To be a Reader or Eucharistic Minister, you must be a Catholic in good standing and have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.



**LIFE TEEN MASS**  
**Every Sunday**  
**5:00 P.M.**

More information regarding the next Life Teen Life Night will be in next weeks bulletin, and we'll send out an email and post it on the website and on our new parish app.

**NEW NEWS:** This Lenten season we will be selling Luminaries for lighting at the Easter Vigil in memory or honor of a loved one(s). The bags are purple with a cross cutout. The price for a Luminary is \$10. Half the proceeds will go to our Youth Ministry program here at St. Francis Xavier and the other half will go to SavetheStork.com. You may purchase after all the Masses beginning March 4<sup>th</sup> or at the Parish office. Please call Sue P. with questions. Thanks and God bless!

**ATTENTION ALL 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS:** As per your schedule there will be a special presentation on Tues., Mar. 21<sup>st</sup> at the Church from 7:00-9:00pm. This is a mandatory part of the program and every student **MUST** attend with a parent or guardian. Our guest speaker will be Miriam Hildago from the Archdiocese of Hartford. She comes to talk to us about Chastity and living our Catholic faith. This is a required night.

**JR. YOUTH GROUP: 6, 7 & 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS:** Movie night on Fri., Mar. 24<sup>th</sup> from 7:00-9:00pm. We will be watching the movie "Overcome". Eat dinner before you come and bring your favorite movie snack to share. RSVP to Sue P. at 860-354-5372 or email her at spullen@sfxnewmilford.org

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY:** Join us on Sat., April 1<sup>st</sup> at the 5:00pm Mass. After the opening prayer all the children in grades kindergarten – grade 5 will be invited to hear the Liturgy of the Word with teen and adult leaders in the Church Hall. The children will return to their families for the Liturgy of the Eucharist after the petitions. This is a wonderful opportunity for the children to hear the Gospel and its meaning in words they understand. Any questions please call Mary Vannucci at the Faith Formation office.

**CONFIRMATION YEAR TWO- REMINDER:**

The date for the Confirmation ceremony is:  
 Sat., June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Faith Formation**  
**860-354-5372**

**CLASSES FOR THIS WEEK:**

\*\*Tues., Mar. 7<sup>th</sup> NES grades 1&2 3:30-5:00pm  
 \*\*Child Lures will be presented during regular class time  
 Wed., Mar. 8<sup>th</sup> SNIS grades 3-5 3:30-5:00pm  
 \*\*\*Thurs., Mar. 9<sup>th</sup> SNIS grades 3-5 3:30-5pm  
 \*\*\*Child Lures will be presented during regular class time

**CLASSES FOR NEXT WEEK:**

\*Sun., Mar. 12<sup>th</sup> grades K-5 11:30am-1:00pm  
 \*Child Lures will be presented to grades 1&2  
 \*\*\*\*Sun., Mar. 12<sup>th</sup> Confirm. yr 1&2 11:30am-1:00pm  
 \*\*\*\*Child Lures will be presented to year 1&2  
 Sun., Mar. 12<sup>th</sup> grades 6,7&8 2:45-4:15pm  
 \*\*\*\*\*Sun., Mar. 12<sup>th</sup> Confirm year 1&2 2:45-4:15pm  
 \*\*\*\*\*Child Lures will be presented to year 1&2  
 \*\*\*\*\*Mon., Mar. 13<sup>th</sup> Confirm year 1 3:00-4:30pm  
 \*\*\*\*\*Child Lures will be presented to year 1  
 Mon., Mar. 13<sup>th</sup> grades 6,7&8 6:30-8:00pm  
 Tues., Mar. 14<sup>th</sup> grades 6,7&8 6:30-8:00pm  
 \*\*\*\*\*Wed., Mar. 15<sup>th</sup> Confirm year 2 3:00-4:30pm  
 \*\*\*\*\*Child Lures will be presented to year 2  
 \*\*\*\*\*Wed., Mar. 15<sup>th</sup> Confirm yr 1&2 6:30-8:00pm  
 \*\*\*\*\*Child Lures will be presented to year 1&2

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade Mass:** The 5th Grade Masses will be Sat., Mar. 11<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm and Sun., Mar. 12<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. All 5<sup>th</sup> graders are asked to participate as either: Lectors, Gift Bearers, Offertory, Greeters or Altar Servers. Please call Mary V. at 860-354-5372 or email her at MVannucci@sfxnewmilford.org as to how your child would like to participate and at which Mass.

**4<sup>th</sup> Graders - Children's Stations of the Cross:**

If your child would like to participate in the Children's Stations of the Cross on Fri., Mar 31 at 7 pm, please let me know by Mon., Mar. 6. Your child would need to be at the Church at 6 pm to practice with the other children. The parts are: readers, a cross bearer and two candle carriers. Contact Mary Vannucci at 860-354-5372 or email her at MVannucci@sfxnewmilford.org.

**SNACKS: APPLE JUICE** and goldfish, cheese its, pretzels, animal crackers or cookies are needed for our Faith Formation program. These donations may be left in the Church hall or brought to the School building. This is for use for ALL (grades K-10) Sunday – Thursday classes, thanks.

## The View From **The Season of Lent**



My Window

A few years ago there was an interesting news clip on Ash Wednesday on the internet which caught my attention early in the morning as I was catching up with the news of the day. Vice President Joe Biden was getting ready to introduce President Obama concerning some economic reports. As Mr. Biden stood at the podium, the feed was being broadcast by Sky TV, a European news feed. The commentators, both British, began talking about the spot or mark on Mr. Biden's forehead. They were completely puzzled and speculated that Vice President Biden must have sustained a bruise or injury on his head. This went on for

a while talking when, thankfully, someone informed one of the commentators that it was Ash Wednesday, and Mr. Biden, being a Catholic, obviously had ashes on his forehead. The commentator mentioned, apologetically, that she was, in fact, a Catholic, and should have known better. Indeed, she should have, and I presume that she didn't get to church on Ash Wednesday.

Through the years there have been celebrities and news reporters who have gone on television with ashes on their foreheads. This sometimes has provoked comment. I can think of Chris Matthews, who hosts *Hardball* on MSNBC, who is every often seen with his ashes. Another is ESPN's Tony Reali (who, by the way, was one of my parishioners in New York), who is host of *Around the Horn*.

In my years as a Catholic priest, and as a Franciscan, I am still baffled by the phenomenon that is Ash Wednesday. I am puzzled, not by the ordinary Catholic, who has a relationship with God and His Church, who goes to Mass and frequents the sacraments on a regular basis. I would expect Ash Wednesday to be something special for them. But it is the many others who do not belong to a parish, who do not go to Mass, but who see some pressing need to get ashes on Ash Wednesday. And I purposely use the term "get ashes," because this is obviously what they seek to do on Ash Wednesday, not go to church, not attend Mass, not receive the Sacred Eucharist, but rather to "get ashes." Judging from some of the people we see on Ash Wednesday, if there were a more efficient or convenient way to do it, that would be even better. Some of them would love it if we just stood on the street or in the parking lot, having a drive-through ashes dispenser, or went into restaurants, or greeted them at their front doors and put ashes on their foreheads. Or how about simply mailing ashes to all our parishioners- or sending it through Amazon?

In past years there have been some memorable incidents. When I lived in Manhattan, there was a constant stream of people looking for ashes on the street, or coming to the parish office, or banging on the rectory door. I recall the time when a woman came up during the Mass for communion and waved me off saying "I don't want any of that (pointing to the Body of Christ), I just came up for ashes."

Cardinal Timothy Dolan once compared Lent to baseball's spring training. It was a coincidence that Ash Wednesday was also in the middle of reporting week for baseball teams to spring training, and this was certainly an exciting harbinger of another great baseball season. But spring training is only a beginning. Players begin exercise and workout routines that will prepare them for the opening of the baseball season in April. One note of interest, however: as Ash Wednesday very often is celebrated the same time spring training begins, Holy Week and Easter usually (and does this year) coincides with the beginning of the regular baseball season. And as spring training (or even reporting day) is only a beginning, we know that beginnings are important. But they are important if we follow up on them.

Think of all the things that we begin in life, and don't follow up on. Maybe a diet. We begin very enthusiastically, but eventually, go back to our old habits. Perhaps we had a not-so-good report from the doctor. Our cholesterol is up, blood pressure high. We come home with renewed vigor to do the right thing. We may go shopping for foods that will help us, go to the pharmacy for medications, and begin an exercise program. If we are diligent, we will be successful. More often, however, we fall by the wayside.

Life is full of empty gestures. Our enthusiasm in the beginning often wanes, and what was so exciting for us on Monday, becomes wearisome and a burden on Friday. What we sometimes forget is that all these things take work- hard work, very hard work, a lot of sweat and a lot of tears.

One of my favorite programs used to be *American Idol*. You observe the raw talent (or sometimes the lack thereof) of these young people, who think they are going to be the next superstar. For very few, this may happen. For most of the others, they go home, sometimes accompanied by tears, but often with a lot of disappointment. Everyone is looking for that break, that easy fix that will jettison them to stardom. Some people get through with singing talent that may be best equated to running one's fingernails across a chalkboard. Promising beginnings don't always bring great endings.

Sometimes people play the lottery, thinking they are going to be millionaires. They will speak about this in terms like they have already won, planning on what they will do with the riches. Someone said that you have a better chance of being mauled by a grizzly bear and a polar bear on the same day than winning the lottery. I am sure that the odds are better for being the next *American Idol*, but not much.

Ash Wednesday presents a challenge- to finish what we start. Ash Wednesday and Lent provide us with an opportunity to take great steps to overcome those things which keep us from holiness. In watching our favorite sports teams, we saw the end result of years of training, practice, difficulty, and even failure. We see the results of countless sacrifices of young people who perhaps would be doing other things, having fun with their friends, going to movies, going to clubs. Instead they choose to focus their lives on their goal, their sport, and in the end, we see the best in the world.

So, whether it is our favorite baseball team, or the next *American Idol*, or the winner of the gold at the Olympics, the challenge of Lent is to sacrifice so that we can win the greatest prize of all- life with God.

Happy Lent,

Love,

Fr. Joe