

Christ Child Catholic Church
***Dedicated to Growth in Christ and to the
Challenges of Loving Service***

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
February 18, 2018

**Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent
2018**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in his providence offers us each year **the season of Lent as a “sacramental sign of our conversion.”** Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life.
With this message, I would like again this year to help the entire Church experience this time of grace anew, with joy and in truth. I will take my cue from the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: **“because of increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold”** (24:12). These words appear in Christ’s preaching about the end of time. They were spoken in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, where the Lord’s passion would begin. In reply to a question of the disciples, Jesus foretells a great tribulation and describes a situation in which the community of believers might well find itself: amid great trials, false prophets would lead people astray and the love that is the core of the Gospel would grow cold in the hearts of many.

False prophets

Let us listen to the Gospel passage and try to understand the guise such false prophets can assume.
They can appear as “snake charmers,” who manipulate human emotions in order to enslave others and lead them where they would have them go. How many of God’s children are mesmerized by momentary pleasures, mistaking them for true happiness! How many men and women live entranced by the dream of wealth, which only makes them slaves to profit and petty interests! How many go through life believing that they are sufficient unto themselves, and end up entrapped by loneliness!
False prophets can also be “charlatans,” who offer easy and immediate solutions to suffering that soon prove utterly useless. How many young people are taken in by the panacea of drugs, of disposable relationships, of easy but dishonest gains! How many more are ensnared in a thoroughly “virtual” existence, in which relationships appear quick and straightforward, only to prove meaningless! These swindlers, in peddling things that have no real value, rob people of all that is most precious: **dignity, freedom and the ability to love.** They appeal to our vanity, our trust in appearances, but in the end they only make fools of us. Nor should we be surprised. In order to confound the human heart, the devil, **who is “a liar and father of lies,”** has always presented evil as good, falsehood as truth... We must learn to look closely, beneath the surface, and to recognize what leaves a good and lasting mark on our hearts, because it comes from God and is truly for our benefit.
A cold heart
In his description of hell, Dante Alighieri pictures the devil seated on a throne of ice, in frozen and loveless isolation. We might well ask ourselves how it happens that charity can turn cold within us. What are the signs that indicate that our love is beginning to cool?
More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money, **“the root of all evil.”** The rejection of God and his peace soon follows; we prefer our own desolation rather than the comfort

found in his word and the sacraments. All this leads to violence against anyone we think is a threat to our own **“certainties:” the unborn child, the elderly and infirm, the migrant, the alien among us, or our neighbor who does not live up to our expectations...**

What are we to do?

The Church, our Mother and Teacher offer us in the Lenten season the soothing remedy of prayer, almsgiving and fasting.
By devoting **more time to prayer,** we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception, and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well. **Almsgiving** sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbor as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone... When we give alms, **we share in God’s providential care for each of his children...** **Fasting** weakens our tendency to violence, it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth... With affection and the promise of my prayers for all of you, I send you my blessing. Please do not forget to pray for me. **Pope Francis**

Sacrament of Reconciliation

By request or appointment

Anointing of the Sick

Saturday & Sunday March 10 & 11 during the
Mass at 5 pm. and 10 am

Birthright 241 -8444 or 800 550 4900

Prayer Group in the Parish

Every Tuesday at 8:15 a.m. all Women and all Men!

MASS INTENTIONS – February 17 - 23

Saturday 5:00 p.m. The Boisvert Family

Sunday 10:00 a.m. + Cecily Olsen

Tuesday 9:00 a.m. Murphy - Dwyer

Thursday 9:00 a.m. Mark Walsh

Friday 8:00 a.m. Murphy - Dwyer

Every Friday of Lent Soup Supper and Pray the Stations of the Cross. Meet at 6:30pm for Soup and then join your fellow parishioners to pray the Stations of the Cross together.

THANK YOU MEN’S CLUB

Thank you for the wonderful celebration of the Mardi Gras Parish Party, last Fat Tuesday, you worked very hard and thanks to all of you for your presence. We enjoyed the party!!

Stewardship of Treasury

Report Sunday February 10 & 11, 2018

Total Plate	\$ 1,202.00
EFT	\$ 655.00
TOTAL	\$ 1,857.00

Thank You and May God bless you!

Sunday February 25th Care Packages for our Troops

Once again we’ll join **The Mountain Bible Church** to put Jesus’ love and mercy into practice with small practical gifts of encouragement to our men and women serving in the military overseas!!

**Come celebrate St. Patrick’s Day with us!
Saturday, March 17th from 6pm-9pm**

We will have appetizers, corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, fruit, and something for vegetarians as well. Also included are fabulous desserts, beer and wine. There will be music and 50/50 raffle. As this a fundraiser for the young families group we are asking for a donation of \$15 per person or \$30 per family. If you wish to donate you can pay at the door or see Ann, Chiara or Jocelyn after Mass on Sundays.

Women’s Club/Prayer Group

We meet the 4th Wednesday of each month. February 28th from 1 to 2:30 PM. Our focus is social and spiritual at the same time. Please contact Ruth McCormick ruthmcc@flash.net

Prayer requests: can be emailed to christchildchurchprayerline@gmail.com OR written and placed in the box provided in the Church foyer!