Saint Alphonsus

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

FEBRUARY 18, 2024: FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



He was among wild beasts,

and the angels ministered to him. (Mk 1:13)

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Mass Schedule

Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri, Sat	8:30 AM
Wed	6:00 PM
Sunday	9 AM, 11 AM, 12:30 (Spanish) and 5 PM

Alphonsus Academy & Center For the Arts

Friday	8:30 AM or as announced

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesday	6:30—7:30 PM

Confessions

Wednesday	6:30—7:30 PM
Saturday	11:00—12:00 PM

**Or call one of the priests for an appointment*

Worship

This Week's Readings

Sunday: Gn 9:8-15/Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 (see 10)/1 Pt 3:18-22/Mk 1:12-15
Monday: Lv 19:1-2, 11-18/Ps 19:8, 9, 10, 15/Mt 25:31-46
Tuesday: Is 55:10-11/Ps 34:4-5, 6-7, 16-17, 18-19/Mt 6:7-15
Wednesday: Jon 3:1-10/Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 18-19/Lk 11:29-32
Thursday: 1 Pt 5:1-4/Ps 23:1-3a, 4, 5, 6/Mt 16:13-19
Friday: Ez 18:21-28/Ps 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7bc-8/Mt 5:20-26
Saturday: Dt 26:16-19/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 7-8/Mt 5:43-48
Next Sunday: Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18/Ps 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19 (116:9)/ Rom 8:31b-34/Mk 9:2-10

Giving Update

Weekly Budget Amount: $14,890

Offertory for 2/11: $14,562

Please remember to help the poor. Donations to the poor box in the narthex go to our St. Vincent DePaul Society.

Left QR code for GiveCentral

Right QR code for Venmo

Please Pray for the Sick

Dorothy Bonds
Jamie Wallett
Monica Alexis Rios
Margaret Nichols
Tessa Sergent
Diane Mareci
William Ahearn
Emilia Hurtado
Michael and Elizabeth Velten
Fidel Mercado Chavez
David Birks
Celeste Soult
Magdalena Gonzalez
Michael Aldape
Janet Horvat
Frank G. Bauer
Al Corleone
Tracy Duda
Jacob Duda
Dorothy O'Brien
Ryan Meadow
Danny Browder
Carol Kania
Leslie Salimi
Jason Jamero

Eucharistic Adoration: A Source for Peace:
Sometimes our weeks can be quite hectic, making it hard to find quiet time to pray. If this sounds familiar, join us for Mass on Wednesdays at 6 PM, followed by Eucharistic Adoration from 6:30-7:30 PM. This can be a great way to re-center yourself in God and experience the peace that only Christ can give.

Wednesday Evening Men's Vespers
Men of the parish are invited to attend our Communio prayer group each Wednesday from 8:15 PM-9:00 PM in the rectory chapel (come to the rectory side door). It's a great way to take your spiritual life a step further as we enrich our knowledge of the faith, encourage each other in life's challenges, and grow in fortitude together. We chant the Liturgy of the Hours and share reflections on the upcoming Sunday gospel reading, followed by a social with refreshments, fellowship, and conversation. All men of the parish are invited. Questions or more info, contact James Morrow, jemseoul@hotmail.com

MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, February 18
9:00 AM Susan Combes (Health Blessings)
11:00 AM For the success of Safe Families for Children Ministry
12:30 PM The People of St. Alphonsus
5:00 PM +Nathan Schmidt

Monday, February 19
8:30 AM Emma Graham (Birthday Blessings)

Tuesday, February 20
8:30 AM The People of St. Alphonsus

Wednesday, February 21
6:00 PM +John Lusak

Thursday, February 22
8:30 AM Christine Zajczenko (Birthday Blessings)

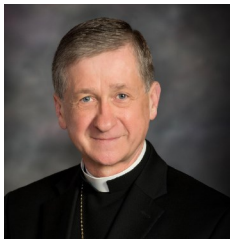
Friday, February 23
8:30 AM The People of St. Alphonsus

Saturday, February 24
8:30 AM Lynn Ray (Health Blessings)

Sunday, February 25
9:00 AM +Matthew Richko
11:00 AM +Phil Piazza
12:30 PM +Manuel and Maria Naula
5:00 PM Janis Vaughn (Birthday Blessings)

News and Events

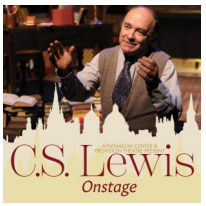
Feb. 21 Mass w/ Cardinal Cupich



Archbishop of Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich will celebrate Mass at St. Alphonsus on Wednesday, February 21 at 4:30 PM.
St. Alphonsus will still have our regular daily Mass at 6:00 PM.

The Lumen Christi Institute and the Loyola University Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage are sponsoring a Catholic Criminal Justice Reform Network: Panel Discussion at the Athenaeum this evening. Invite-Only. Contact the Hank Center if you wish to attend. www.luc.edu/ccih/

C.S. Lewis at ACTC



Friendship and community are important. Like friendship, Art enables us to see reflections of the Beauty in the world around us.

All C.S. Lewis enthusiasts are encouraged to check out the performances Feb. 23-25 at the Athenaeum. There will be a panel discussion on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 4 PM. Join us to discuss the performances and meet fellow fans of C.S. Lewis and the marvelous worlds he created. Following the discussion, ***Golden Sessions***, a ballet inspired by Lewis' *The Four Loves,* is at 7 PM. For tickets, visit athenaeumcenter.org/events

Young Adult Ministry

The Young Adult Ministry (YAM) is one of St. Alphonsus' most active parish groups! YAM is led by a volunteer board and is guided by Pastoral Associate, Brooks Robinson. Stated simply, the ministry's mission is to help one another participate in Christ's mission, that we, as young adult Catholics, may be effective disciples, evangelists, and agents of charity in all that we do. YAM provides many social, intellectual, service, and spiritual opportunities for growth.

Visit the St. Alphonsus YAM Facebook page, *www.facebook.com/AlphonsusYoungAdult*
or contact the YAM board at *stalphonsusyam@gmail.com*

Eucharistic Revival Lenten Retreat— Saturday, February 24



The Eucharist is the "source and summit of the Christian Life" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324) and the Catholic Church teaches that the bread and wine we bring to the altar are transformed into Christ's body and blood. And yet, in an age when we seem to need Christ more and more every day, barely 31% of American Catholics believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Last year, the bishops of the United States initiated a Eucharistic Revival movement to encourage the faithful to rekindle a relationship with Christ.

On **February 24th**, everyone 18-39 years old is invited to join us at St. Alphonsus for a half day retreat focusing on the Eucharist and our relationship with Christ. This event will kick off at 9AM and end at 1PM. We will be joined by Fr. Derek Ho, who will offer talks on the Eucharist and lead us in small group discussions. Additionally, confession and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament will be available.

The cost to attend this event will be $15/person. Coffee and Bagels will be available in the morning with light food available throughout the retreat. We ask that you sign up in advance so we can get an accurate count of attendees. Please register at our parish GiveCentral event page at www.givecentral.org/otp/39058

Happy Hour Social—Feb. 25



Our Young Adult Ministry board hosts monthly socials celebrating joyous faithful community! All young adults are invited after the 5:00 PM Mass on Sunday, February 25. A group will meet in the narthex of the church after the Mass before walking over to Olive Black, down the street on Lincoln Ave. Invite your friends!

More Events for Young Adults



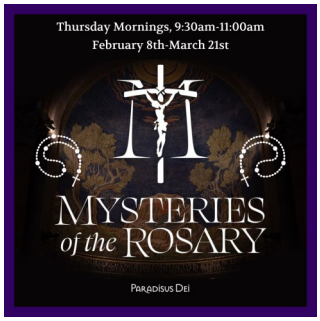
Catholic Sports Leagues Thursday evening volleyball league is now on waitlist.

Bowling sign-ups are now live at www.catholicsportsleagues.com . The 4 week league starts April 9, on Tuesday evenings at Waveland Bowl and is just $55 as an Early Bird special. This league will fill up fast so don't delay!

Faith Formation

Mysteries of the Rosary— The Sorrowful Mysteries Lenten Study
The Scourging at the Pillar

Thursday Mornings, NOW through Mar. 21, 9:30 AM-11:00 AM, in the Rectory



Join us atop the roof of The Church of the Ecce Homo, the location where Pilate brings Jesus out to the crowd. The Scourging takes place within the context of Jesus' trial. Pilate finds no crime in Jesus, yet has him brutally scourged. Our Lord's pain and suffering is very real yet it points to something much deeper - an infinite love - a God who is willing to endure the deepest pain on our behalf. Encounter a love that conquers death. A love that fights - for you! It's not too late to join us. Enter into the Mystery of Christ's Scourging and discover the power of the Rosary.

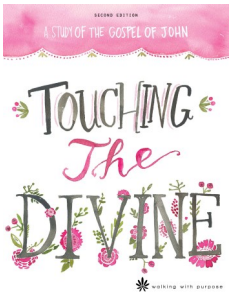
Questions? Email Emily at eember@stalphonsuschicago.church for more info.

"The Rosary is a powerful weapon to put the demons to flight and to keep oneself from sin...If you desire peace in your hearts, in your homes, and in your country, assemble each evening to recite the Rosary."

~Pope Pius XI

Walking with Purpose

Women's Group— Tuesday mornings and evenings
9:30-11 AM or 6:30-8 PM

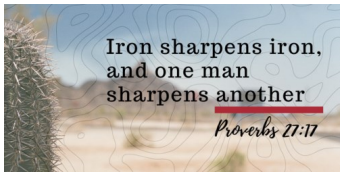


Come as you are. You are welcome here. Make authentic connections with other women! Refuel and Refresh! Learn more about God!

The **Touching the Divine** Bible study focuses on qualities of Jesus revealed through the Gospel of John. This study draws us into a deeper loving relationship with Jesus as we reflect on His life and personality.

Saint John referred to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," and as we study, John will teach is how much Jesus loves us and how His love is the true satisfaction of our souls. Questions? Contact Susan Combes at smbcombes51@gmail.com

St. Alphonsus Men's Group



St. Alphonsus Men's Group meets Thursday nights to pray the liturgy of the hours, have fellowship, and to propose challenging topics to discuss.

When great conversations happen, synergy that creates connections and helps values be shared develops. *Proverbs 27:17* describes this as two iron tools being sharpened and made more effective. The same applies with friends coming into contact, sharpening and encouraging each other to greater service.

We meet every Thursday night at 7 PM in the rectory. Food and drinks provided. All men are welcome, with most men being in their 20s and 30s. Access can be gained at the west facing rectory door in the parking lot.

For questions or more information, contact Men's Group at our email, divineofficers@gmail.com

"Come to me all you are labored and burdened and I will give you rest" Matthew 11:28

Holy Week & Easter Schedule



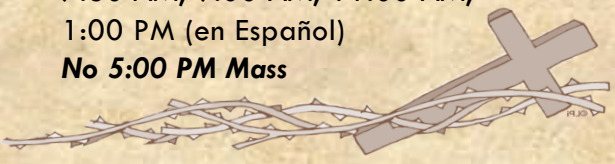
Palm Sunday, March 24
Mass times: 9:00, 11:00 AM,
12:30 PM (Spanish) and 5:00 PM

Holy Thursday, March 28
8:30 AM Liturgy of the Hours
7:00 PM Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday, March 29
8:30 AM Liturgy of the Hours
3:00 PM Stations of the Cross
7:00 PM Good Friday Liturgy

Holy Saturday, March 30
12:00 PM Blessing of Easter Baskets
8:00 PM Easter Vigil

EASTER SUNDAY, March 31
7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM,
1:00 PM (en Español)
No 5:00 PM Mass



Divine Mercy Sunday, April 7
3:00 PM Holy Hour & Confessions



Safe Families for Children

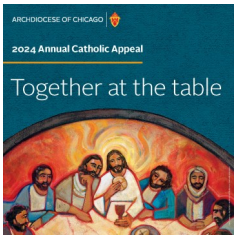
Please join us for New Volunteer Training on Saturday, February 24th here at St. Alphonsus! FREE light breakfast and lunch included! RSVP at www.eventbrite.com/e/safe-families-illinois-training-fingerprinting-tickets-800086639677 or scan the QR code here!

Volunteer roles covered in training:

- "Host Family" - host local children in your home for short periods of time
- "Family Friend" - provide volunteer babysitting or transportation for host families and local families in crisis situations

Safe Families for Children is a national, Christian nonprofit which connects local families in crisis with "safe families" who volunteer to watch their children while parent(s) get back on their feet. This is a great opportunity to show Christ's love and compassion for local families, often young single moms with no support system, in a tangible and meaningful way. For questions, please reach out to us at safefamiliesstals@gmail.com

Annual Catholic Appeal



Our parish is conducting our campaign for the Annual Catholic Appeal. Please remember the ACA is much different than a one-time special collection. It is a pledge campaign where you can make a gift payable in installments.

The new Annual Catholic Appeal theme, *"Together at the Table"*, is an important theme as we prayerfully consider our support for the Appeal, but also important for embracing the life that the Lord wants us to live. Each pledge makes a difference! All parish communities participate in the campaign and the gifts of many enable our parish, school, and ministries to deliver much needed services. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generous response. To make your gift, you can complete the mail-in giving envelope in the pews or make a gift online at annualcatholicappeal.com

Collection for Church in Central and Eastern Europe on Feb. 25



Next week, we will take up a special collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe. This collection supports the Church in more than 25 countries that struggle to recover from former communist rule. It also aids communities throughout the region that are affected by the war in Ukraine. Funds support pastoral care, catechesis, renovations, and seminary formation. Your support restores the Church and builds the future in this region. Please prayerfully consider how you can support this collection next week. You can find more information at www.usccb.org/ccee



NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival

Eucharistic Prayer Companion

First Sunday of Lent: Turning Towards Jesus

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

Pause for a few moments, and allow yourself to become aware of Jesus' gift of himself in the Eucharist. Realize that, at this very moment, the Lord of Life is gazing upon you with great love. Allow yourself to receive his loving gaze. You are his beloved child. Rest in his loving gaze.

Thank Jesus for the gift of himself in the Eucharist.

ASK FOR THE GRACE: Jesus, help me to turn away from any sin in my life.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION — *Read slowly, 3–4 times. Allow the words of Scripture to wash over your mind and heart. Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through this passage.*

> **"Beloved: Christ suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18)**

REFLECTION QUESTION — *Allow yourself to sit with these questions for a while, being attentive to how the Lord is speaking in your heart.*

During this time of Lent, Jesus is inviting us to root out sin in our lives as the first step in cultivating a culture that does not accept sin. What is one area of sin you are struggling with right now? Be concrete and specific. Give this struggle to Christ on the Cross so that he can put it to death.

SCRIPTURE MEDITATION — *Read slowly, 3–4 times. Again, allow the words of Scripture to wash over your mind and heart. Let the Holy Spirit speak to you through this passage.*

> **"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: 'This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'" (Mark 1:14–15)**

REFLECTION QUESTION — *Allow yourself to sit with these questions for a while, being attentive to how the Lord is speaking in your heart.*

Repenting of sin—turning away from what distracts us from Jesus—is only half the battle. We must also make an effort to build a culture that does not accept sin. We must cast aside sinful alliance and learn to walk together with Christ. How is the Lord calling you to support others in humility as they learn to walk more closely with him? Ask him who in your life he is calling you to assist in seeking out his merciful love.

Remain in silence with the Lord. Allow him to speak in the silence, in your heart. Receive his presence. If it helps, write down what you sense the Lord communicating to you during this time of prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER — Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen. (Collect, First Sunday of Lent)

SUNDAY MASS CONNECTION — At every Mass, Jesus offers himself to the Father for us. We can always join our own offerings with Jesus at Mass. This Sunday, offer your desire to turn away from a specific sin and focus your attention more fully on Jesus. Joining your sacrifice to his, consider praying for all those in the world who struggle with your same area of sin and are not repentant.

LOVE IN ACTION — In the Gospel reading above, Jesus asks us to "repent, and believe in the gospel." To believe in the Gospel message more deeply, we must immerse ourselves in the actual reading of the Gospels. Consider giving yourself a Lenten challenge to read from the Gospels for a set amount of time each day, even if it is only five minutes. Allow that prayerful reading of the Gospels to help you turn away from sin, and encourage others to do the same.

FORMED— Just Press Play!

St. Alphonsus Parish has purchased a subscription to FORMED so that you, yes YOU! can receive FREE access to Bible Studies, Family Programming, Classic Spiritual Books, and more! Deepen your relationship with God as you grow in knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.

Programs include: Studies on the Eucharist and the Gospels; Sacred Art; Catholic Commentary on the popular series, The Chosen; Lives of the Saints; Children's Shows and Films; Books written by Pope Benedict XVI, Fulton Sheen, and Peter Kreft; and Audio Talks by Bishop Robert Barron, Fr. Mike Schmitz, Scott Hahn, Dr. Brant Pitre, Trent Horn, and more! **¡Hay programas en español también!**

TO SIGN UP FREE:
1) Go to formed.org/signup
2) Type in Zip Code 60657
3) Choose St. Alphonsus
4) Fill out your Name and Email
5) YOU'RE IN!

PARA REGISTRARSE GRATIS:
1) Vaya a formed.org/signup
2) Escriba el código postal 60657
3) Elige a St. Alphonsus
4) Escriba su nombre y correo electrónico
5) ¡DISFRUTA!

Did you know that FORMED is also an App? Stream your favorite content directly to your devices! Perfect for Family Movie Nights and when you're On-the-Go. Download FORMED today!

Stewardship—First Fruits

FIRST FRUITS
time talent treasure

We invite all parishioners who want to participate in online giving to do so by enrolling through GiveCentral and setting up your donation via the First Fruits campaign (weekly Mass offering).

A huge thank you to those that are already giving online. Please consider making St. Alphonsus an extension of your home and family when contributing.

Sign up at *www.givecentral.org/location/39*
You can also text *Sunday* to (773) 570-7600

Stewardship Reflection

"After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God…." - Mark 1:14

Have you ever thought about how difficult it must have been for Jesus to go to Galilee, knowing that John had just been arrested for teaching the same message that He was proclaiming. It took great love and trust for Jesus to do what the Father had sent Him here on earth to do. In the same way, living a stewardship lifestyle takes great love and trust from us. We must be willing to surrender completely to God, trusting that He will always give us all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.



Be a Substitute for Religious Education!

Like children? Want to share your faith and learn it better too?

Sometimes our catechists get sick or have work events, and when that happens we need YOU! You are reliable, and even if you're not always available on Tuesday evenings, you're the first person we'll call.

Jesus said what you do to the least of these you do to me.
Let the little children come to Jesus!

Contact Emily at eember@stalphonsuschicago.church for more info.

Celebrating Penance and Reconciliation

The gift of Christ's presence in the sacraments can't be duplicated. This sacrament of forgiveness and mercy offers us the healing experience of Christ. God is present and anxious to heal the wounds in our life due to sin and to help us grow.

Celebrating reconciliation reminds us that we are meant to move in the direction of God's call for us. We are loved and forgiven. Until the day we die we always have the opportunity to turn to God and hear those words again.

This guide and examination of conscience can help you to celebrate the sacrament this Lent.

Follow these basic steps:

1) Make the Sign of the Cross, while saying it aloud. 2) Start with *Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been* (how long) *since my last confession. These are my sins....*

Examination of Conscience

- Have I honored God above everything else?
- Have I ignored God's guidance in making my decisions?
- Have I neglected praying to God regularly?
- Have I used the name of God or of Jesus in a disrespectful way?
- Have I come to celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays?
- Have I cared for my parents and other adults in my family?
- Have I cared for my children and grandchildren in a responsible way? Have I failed to look at some one lovingly, or have I seen them as a burden or a bother?
- Have I failed to take good care of my own body with good food, rest and exercise? Have I abused drugs or alcohol?
- Have I physically hurt anyone, or have I hurt someone's feelings, or have I been so angry that I might have hurt someone?
- Have I been faithful in my marriage? Have I been loyal and faithful to my family and friends?
- Have I been responsible in the exercise of my sexuality?
- Have I respected others in my relationships?
- Have I taken what is not mine?
- Have I told the truth?
- Have I been jealous of other people or of other things?
- Have I done what I can to help the poor?
- Have I done what I can to make the earth a good place to live?
- Have I done what I can to be part of my church and community?
- Have I shared my possessions and my talents with others?

The United States Bishops give some more examples of grave sin:

- Swearing a false oath while invoking God as a witness;
- Acting in serious disobedience against proper authority;
- Committing murder, including abortion and euthanasia; harboring deliberate hatred of others;
- sexual abuse of another, especially of a minor or vulnerable adult; physical or verbal abuse of others that causes grave physical or psychological harm;
- Stealing in a gravely injurious way, such as robbery, burglary, serious fraud, or other immoral business practices;
- Speaking maliciously or slandering people in a way that seriously undermines their good name;
- Producing, marketing, or indulging in pornography;
- Engaging in envy that leads one to wish grave harm to someone else.

This list covers most of the major areas of our lives. However, it is not exhaustive. As was stated above, it is important to look for patterns and habits of acting, as well as to look for specific offenses.

Act of Contrition

O my God,
I am sorry and repent with all my heart
for all the wrong I have done
and for the good I have failed to do,
because by sinning I have offended You,
Who are all good
and worthy to be loved above all things.

I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace,
to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid the occasions of sin.

Through the merits of the Passion
of our Savior Jesus Christ,
Lord, have mercy

Lent 2024

Lenten Fish Fry— Friday, March 8 at 6:30 PM!

Truly a highlight and staple of Lent, St. Alphonsus will be hosting one grand Lenten Fish Fry this year. This event is sponsored by our Knights of Columbus council to benefit charitable projects of the parish.

Date and Time: Friday, March 8th, 6:30 PM—9:00 PM
Where: 1429 W. Wellington, Chicago in Festival Hall, beneath the church
Featuring the Trinity Irish Dance Troupe around 7 PM.

Cost: $20 for adults. $10 for kids 5-12. Free for 4 and under.
Adult tickets purchased at www.givecentral.org/otp/39718
Buy Kids tickets at the door

Menu: Fried Beer Battered Cod, Macaroni and Cheese, Coleslaw
For Sale separately: Mini-cupcakes, Brownies and other treats
BYOB Alcohol only. Water and other non-alcoholic drinks will be for sale
For the kids: Multiple kids games and prizes

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!! Sign-up to volunteer at our KoC Fish Fry website page, www.stalphonsusknights.com/fishfry/

Contact Ray San Agustin, raysanagustin15158@gmail.com for sponsorships and questions!

Catholic Relief Services— Rice Bowl



Like prayer and virtue, charity is not just for Lent. However, the time of Lent has always been set aside to help us show more concern for the poor and to make that concern part of our daily habits.

Make a resolution to do something positive for others. Just as we resolve to 'give up', add a resolution to do something for the peace and welfare of the world. It can take many forms - from walking instead of driving for short errands, to making the time to spend with someone who is lonely or elderly.

Contribute to CRS Rice Bowl. Rice Bowl is a program sponsored by Catholic Relief Services. You can collect the money in a small bowl placed on your table to remind yourself. Add to it any money you save from fasting as well as your spare change. At the end of Lent, bring your savings back to the parish in the form of a check or cash. Learn more at www.crsricebowl.org

Coming to Confession During Lent



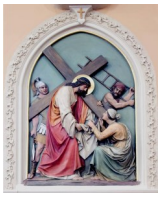
Lent is a traditional time to 'take stock' and discover the ways in which we can turn more fully toward the Lord and away from the sin that weighs us down. It is a great season in which to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

The sacrament is Reconciliation is regularly offered twice each week: Wednesday from 6:30 to 7:30 PM; Saturday from 11:00 to 11:30 AM. You may also contact the rectory office and schedule an appointment with a priest.

Divine Mercy Chaplet

The Divine Mercy Chaplet will be prayed at 6:30 PM on Fridays before Stations. If you need a refresher on how to pray the chaplet, you can go to www.catholic-link.org/how-to-pray-the-divine-mercy-chaplet-your-step-by-step-visual-guide/

Stations of the Cross



Each Friday during Lent, the Stations of the Cross are prayed at 6 PM (en Espanol) and 7 PM (in English). This prayer allows us to meditate on Christ's Passion and death while walking the "Way of the Cross." It is a wonderful way to grow in one's knowledge of being a disciple of the Lord.

Gospel Reflection

After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." — Mk 1:14-15

The Ministry of Angels

What an amazing event we reflect upon today. Jesus, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity humbled Himself in two ways. First, He allowed Himself to endure the temptations of satan. Second, He permitted His very own creation, the good angels, to minister to Him in His human form.

First of all, recall that satan is a fallen angel. He was created by God and was created good. But the Book of Revelation (12:4) indicates that one-third of the created angels were cast out of Heaven to roam the earth. These demons act under the direction of the highest fallen angel, satan. Thus, according to the passage above, it was satan himself who tempted Jesus in the desert. Additionally, Jesus permitted the good angels to minister to Him in His human nature. These acts reveal the perfection of the virtue of humility within the humanity of our Lord.

According to Saint Thomas Aquinas, angels were created for three primary reasons. The first is for the purpose of worship. Worship of God brings about communion with God and enables perfect love to flow back and forth from God to each angelic being. Second, angels enact the will of God in all things. This includes the implementation of the laws of nature and the imparting of the grace that Christ won on the Cross. Third, God uses angels as messengers. Scripture records various ways that the angels spoke to the prophets, to our Blessed Mother, to Saint Joseph and to others. Saint Thomas Aquinas also believed that each of us is given a particular guardian angel whose role is not only to protect us but also to communicate the will of God to us.

As God, Jesus was the Creator of all angelic beings with the Father and the Holy Spirit. As man, Jesus was the recipient of both the ministry of the good angels and the attacks of the fallen angels. By humbly subjecting Himself to the natural powers of these angelic creatures, Jesus was also teaching us that we must do the same.



One of the primary natural powers of both the good and bad angels is the power of influence and suggestive thought. Angelic beings have the ability to put before your imagination ideas meant to either influence you for the good (the good angels) or to deceive you and lead you into sin (the bad angels). These communications are real, and we should be aware of them. In his book, The Spiritual Exercises, Saint Ignatius of Loyola devotes much time and energy to the ministry of angels. He teaches how to distinguish the lies and deceptions of the fallen angels from the consoling direction communicated by the good angels. In many ways, our Gospel passage today, by which Jesus submitted Himself to the temptations and ministry of the angels, lends much support to the importance of trying to understand how these angelic creatures influence us. For more on this, see the book *Probing the Depths: Ignatian Lessons and Meditations Arranged According to the Liturgical Year*.

Reflect, today, upon the amazing truth that both angels and demons are constantly active in your life, seeking to influence you. As you ponder their spiritual role in your life, consider the various ways you can learn more about them. Speak to your guardian angel. Ask for the intercession of the highest of angels. Try to join them in their divine worship. Pray for their protection. Ask them to communicate to you the highest of truths from God. Seek to be attentive to these holy angels so that as you learn to discern their voices, you will be ready to follow the direction they give to you from God.

My Lord and Creator of All, You created the angelic order for the glorious purpose of love and worship. You also give them the mission of enacting Your holy will and communicating to us on earth. Please help me to be more aware of the deceptions of the fallen angels and the direction of the good angels. Angels of God, pray for me, protect me and guide me into God's perfect will. Jesus, I trust in You.

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Contact

Sacramental Information

Contact our parish office at (773) 525-0709 for information regarding celebrating sacraments including Baptisms (infant and adult), Reconciliation (confession), Eucharist (Communion), Confirmation, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick. For information regarding Funerals, please first contact the funeral director of your choice to begin making arrangements.

How to Offer a Mass Intention

Have you ever noticed that every Mass said here at St. Alphonsus is offered for a special intention? The entire congregation prays for that intention during the petitions (Prayers of the Faithful) when we say, "For those who have died, and for the intention of this Mass: (named intention)"

You can make a Mass Intention request here. Masses are often offered for family, friends and relatives that have died. Praying for the dead is a Spiritual Work of Mercy. Offering a Mass for someone that has died is an especially comforting gesture to the family. Mass can also be offered to commemorate joyful occasions and to give thanks to God for blessings received.

The customary offering for a Mass is $15. However, any amount that you would like to offer is acceptable. You can request Masses by visiting the Parish Office during office hours or calling the Parish Office at (773) 525-0709.

You can ***register in the parish*** by coming to the rectory office or going online at *www.stalphonsuschicago.org*. The advantage to registering is that we know who you are and can better plan our programs by knowing whom we serve.

Want *to find out what is happening in the young adult community?* Join the St. Al's Young Adult Listserv. We send out monthly emails to let people know about our upcoming events. To register for the listserv, contact *stalphonsusyam@gmail.com*

The ***Knights of Columbus*** are the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization. For more information, visit *www.stalphonsusknights.com*

St. Alphonsus Social Media

Choose to participate in meaningful engagement! Having an attitude of engagement challenges us to love our digital neighbor as ourselves. You can find St. Alphonsus' Facebook and Instagram by going to the parish website and clicking the icons at the footer of the page.

Directory

Parish Office

1429 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657-4121
(P): 773-525-0709 |
www.stalphonsuschicago.org
parish@stalphonsuschicago.church

Parish Office Hours:

9:00 AM— 5:00 PM Mon- Fri

School Office

1439 W Wellington Ave, Chicago, IL 60657-4121
(P): 773-892-1397 |
www.alphonsusacademy.org

School Office Hours:

8:00 AM– 3:00 PM

Staff

Parish Staff

Rev. Steven Bauer, Pastor
Rev. Jesús (Chuy) Raya, Associate Pastor
Brooks Robinson, Pastoral Associate
Emily Ember, Coordinator of RE/Evangelization
Brian Bloye, Director of Music and Organist
Daniel Szymanski, Director of Operations
Mario Serrano, Parish Office Manager
Kathryn Kibler, Sacrament Ministry Coordinator/Parish Secretary

School Staff

Gerit McAllister, Principal
Angela Kladis, Assistant Principal
Madeleine Durkin, Director of Admissions
Kim Wallett, Secretary
Connie Del Toral, Administrative Assistant