



Piece: *Original Sin and Banishment From the Garden of Eden*, circa 1511
Artist: Michelangelo Buonarroti
Location: Sistine Chapel ceiling

Sin and Redemption

One thing today's readings—and really all of Scripture—make abundantly clear is that the devil exists. He is a liar and a deceiver, just as he was for our first parents and for Jesus as well. This is good to keep in mind at the beginning of Lent. We need a conversion of heart because the devil tempts us. We are sinners. Sin is real. The story of original sin illuminates the failure of Adam and Eve, and the reading from Romans explains that that sin has reached us. In this fresco, Michelangelo paints the devil as a serpent with a human upper body to accent that the devil is a person. All humanity is wounded and weakened by sin.

Yet even if sin and the devil are realities, the good

news is that they are not the strongest realities. Jesus, as he shows us in the Gospel, is stronger than the enemy, and he shares that strength with us. We can be new creations through the salvation and forgiveness Jesus offers. His obedience can make us righteous.

During Lent, we try to purify our heart with God's grace so that we freely choose righteousness.

For Reflection

Have I prayed about what God wants me to give up or take on in Lent? What resolutions will help me love God more while distancing me from obstacles to his love?

Our actions reveal another reality of the good news: our choices make a difference. God trusts us so much that he gives us free will and allows us to play a part in our own salvation. Accepting his grace is the first step toward victory over sin. That is why your Lenten fasts and promises are such game changers—they strengthen your will, purify your heart, and make you more like Jesus.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

“But the snake said to the woman: ‘You certainly will not die! God knows well that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, who know good and evil’” (Genesis 3:4-5).

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

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FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – MARCH 5, 2017

The Sanctuary Lamp Burns In Memory of Josie & Gus Fredriksen

★ ★ MASS INTENTIONS ★ ★

SAT	5:15 PM	Anthony Volpiccini	THURS	7:00 PM	Bob Muldowney
SUN	7:30 AM	Jerome Setlock	FRI	7:30 AM	Severine Prock
	9:00 AM	Living & Deceased Parishioners	SAT	5:15 PM	Dec'd Members of the Mammarella Family
	11:00 AM	Leon Doney	SUN	7:30 AM	Gus Fredriksen – 35 th Anniversary
MON	7:00 PM	Our Parishioners		9:00 AM	Living & Deceased Parishioners
TUES	7:00 PM	Karen Schmitt		11:00 AM	Carole Keaveney
WED	7:30 AM	Samuel M. Kemp, Jr.			

NEXT WEEK AT A GLANCE

SCRIP: Lukes 5:15pm Costanzo 7:30am Schwendt 9:00am Grieco 11:00am Hafer

<u>DAY</u>	<u>MASS</u>	<u>LECTOR</u>	<u>COMMENTATOR</u>	<u>ALTAR SERVERS</u>
SAT	5:15 PM	Ann Marie Arbo	Joe Bailey	Parker Davis, Carson Endy, Josh Piccarreta
SUN	7:30 AM	Dennis Piontek	Sean Werner	Joey and Logan Conlon, Austin Lobaugh
	9:00 AM	Gretchen Markel	Pat Fessler	Luke Voelker, Jordan and Lauren Yerger
	11:00 AM	Mary Ann Cotter	Rhonda Ouimet	Faith Ouimet, Sean Purretta, Aiden Reber

Second collection next week is the Monthly Collection

Immaculate Conception Academy **Early Education Program News!**

Immaculate Conception Early Education Program is now enrolling for its new **Pre-Kindergarten Program**, which will now feature an option to attend **five full days or five half days or a combination as needed from 8:30am – 2:45pm or 8:30am to Noon.**

This program will prepare students to enter our full day Kindergarten both academically and socially. The curriculum will include weekly art, music and library visits, as well as age appropriate physical education experiences. Before Care options are available for all students and After Care options are available for full day students.

For more information please contact Adele Reilly, Advancement Director at 610-404-8645 or adele.reilly@icaknights.org

Remember in your prayers the sick of our parish: Marco Fiato, Bryan Fiato, John & Margaret Kakas, Maryanne Prentice, Delores Woy, Alice Arantowicz, Yolanda Marino, Ann Schlott, Kathy Patrick, Joseph & Susan McCorristin, Mary & Phil Morici, Margaret Maccarone, Dan Casciano, Jake Maccarone, Madge Butto, Joan Cronin, Rita Conrad, Rose Osorio, Tony Guilliams, Steve Mammarella, Gloria Richards, Jane Falcone, Joseph Kolenda, Kenneth Barth, Dominic Strock, Bob Hocker, Mike DiScala, Mildred Mattassa, Deb Petras, Ronald Kryman, Anna Swiezak, Margarie & Walter Hansen, Arlene Shirley, Robert Thomas, Madison Rhoads, Rita Dougherty, Norma Nanni, Becky Shemanski, Lou Franco, Joe Nanni, Lucille Schiel and Helen McDonald

Congratulate the recently wed: Shawna Anne Mills and Michael David Budick

Pray for the recently deceased: Andrew Martin, Lucy M. DiSabatino and Samuel E. DiSabatino

Welcome our new parishioner: Ms. Loretta Davidson

Congratulate the newly baptized: Luke Robert Cremi

THIS WEEK AT ICC:

Mon	03/06	7:30pm RCIA
Tues	03/07	7:30pm Baptism Class
Wed	03/08	7-9pm Eucharistic Adoration
Fri	03/10	1:45pm Stations of the Cross 7pm Stations of the Cross
Sat	03/04	4-5pm Confession

WHAT'S HAPPENING

FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS AS HE CARRIED THE CROSS FOR OUR SALVATION. STATIONS OF THE CROSS WILL BE HELD THIS WEEK ON FRIDAY, MARCH 10TH AT 1:45PM WITH THE CHILDREN OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ACADEMY AND AT 7:00PM.

The Women's Society is serving the meal at the Community Table on March 14th. This important community outreach program serves struggling families in our community. Please note that The Community Table meal has moved to the Friendship Fire Co Hall at 214 West 1st Street, Birdsboro. You may bring your food hot and ready to go in the foil steam table pans from 4-5pm. We need vegetable dishes, casseroles, meats, drinks, and desserts. If you are able to make a dish or want information on how you can help, call Marsha at 610-385-6319.

Easter Candy Sale – Homemade Peanut Butter and Coconut Eggs are sure to please the most discerning palates. Find the order sheets in the narthex. To aid in our planning, please order and prepay as soon as possible (no later than March 12th). Make checks payable to ICC Women's Society and drop your order in the collection plate, at the school or church offices, or mail to ICC, 905 Chestnut St, Douglassville, 19518.

The Women's Society will celebrate our annual AGAPE service on March 15th. We will meet in the social hall at 6:30pm for a short business meeting before the service. All women of the parish are welcome to come celebrate our Lord's love for us, and our love for each other. Come break bread with us!

ICA HSO Coach Bag Bingo - March 25th - Social Hall Doors Open 5pm/Games Begin 6pm

\$25 in advance/\$30 at the door. Tickets include 16 regular games and a door prize. Bingo cards for our 4 special games and the Grand Prize will be sold at the event. We will also have Basket Raffles, a 50/50 raffle and a Wine Pull. Contact Kira at 610-301-8942 or ICABINGO@gmail.com. Checks should be made payable to ICA HSO. Online payments can be made through PayPal www.ICAHSO.org. BYOB- Adult Only Event.

RESORTS Casino AC - March 20th - LEAVE the Church promptly at 9:30am - Package Deal: Pay \$32 get \$25 Back - Call Carol J. if interested at 610-775-4447

Senior High School Youth Group will meet March 10th at 7pm in the lower level meeting room of the church office. All high school students are invited attend and bring a friend for an evening of fun, food, and prayer.

Bereavement Support Group will meet on March 14th, 7:30-8:30pm in the Church Office, lower level. Please enter from the rear across from the playground. Our group offers an opportunity to come together to work through the grieving process with the help and support of others who have experienced this difficult journey. For information call Pat Fessler at 610-775-1892 or Toni Kaucher at 610-404-1389.

Annual Lenten Food Drive for the benefit of the Food Pantry at St. Joseph's Parish, The Kennedy House, and Catholic Charities of Reading begins March 1st. Non-perishable food items and cash can be placed in the large basket and cash canister in the narthex of the Church. Food will be collected through Palm Sunday. If you have any questions, contact Deacon Jim at 610-385-3666.

A Lenten Endeavor: Operation Rice Bowl – Fast and pray with your family and make a sacrificial offering to Operation Rice Bowl so as to help those who live with hunger and poverty both at home and abroad. The Rice Bowl is located in the rear of the church near the baptismal font.

Immaculate Conception has been asked to participate with other local Churches in meeting the needs of the Food Pantry, called "Community Table" at the Birdsboro Community Center. We are collecting **Cleaning Products** such as bathroom, window and kitchen cleaners; laundry soap items and paper towel/wipes. The Collection Bin is in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please email Deacon Chuck at catgio@comcast.net.

Eucharistic Adoration: During the forty days of Lent our church will be open every Wednesday evening, 7-9pm for Eucharistic Adoration. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed in the monstrance on the altar. You are welcome to come and spend some quiet time with the Lord Jesus. You may bring your own prayer books, use any of the books in our parish library, read the Bible, pray the Rosary, or just sit and relax and enjoy the peace that comes from simply being in the presence of God. You may feel that you can't pray well. Don't let that discourage you. The mere fact that you have carved out a period of time to be with Jesus is a great act of faith. When you come, bring to the Lord your hopes and desires, your dreams and aspirations, your fears and anxieties and entrust all them all to God.

Don't Give Up Chocolate For Lent! Join *Dynamic Catholic* for *Best Lent Ever*, a FREE email program designed to help you have a life changing Lent. This program is based on Matthew Kelly's "Resisting Happiness". This book leads readers in a deeply personal way, to the realization that they cannot get to where they want to go without God. It was specifically written to re-engage disengaged Catholics and inspire individuals to grow in their spiritual lives. Visit BestLentEver.com to sign up and receive daily emails with practical tips, short inspirational videos from Matthew Kelly, and personal reflections from Dynamic Catholic team members. Discover how to open your hearts to God and do more than just give up chocolate for Lent...leading to your best Lent ever.

Thanks to all who supported The Student Council's mission to serve those in need at the Kennedy House in Reading, PA. Because of your generous donations of needed items and volunteer time, we were able to serve 175 meals on Saturday and 250 meals on Sunday. To those who were able to volunteer time, thank you for your endless enthusiasm and tireless superior work ethic. It was an awesome experience for all those involved. Thank you for all you do to support our Student Council and its mission.

Love and Joy for a Wounded Heart - a Lenten evening of reflection for the separated and divorced on March 21st, 7pm at St. Francis Center for Renewal – Monocacy in Bethlehem. Presenter is Deacon Peter Schutzler MS. This free event is sponsored by the Office of Marriage and Natural Family Planning. For questions, call 610-289-8900 ext. 28.

Calendar

Monday

March 6

Lenten Weekday

Lv 19:1–2, 11–18

Mt 25:31–46

Tuesday

March 7

Lenten Weekday

Is 55:10–11

Mt 6:7–15

Wednesday

March 8

Lenten Weekday

Jon 3:1–10

Lk 11:29–32

Thursday

March 9

Lenten Weekday

Est C:12, 14–16, 23–25

Mt 7:7–12

Friday

March 10

Lenten Weekday

Ez 18:21–28

Mt 5:20–26

Saturday

March 11

Lenten Weekday

Dt 26:16–19

Mt 5:43–48

Sunday

March 12

Second Sunday

of Lent

Gn 12:1–4a

2 Tm 1:8b–10

Mt 17:1–9

Dear Padre,

Why is it OK to eat fish during Lent? What if I'm a vegetarian?

The other day I was grocery shopping. I bought chicken on sale for \$1 per pound and salmon for \$8.99 per pound. If penance were about being economical, I would be eating chicken. If penance were the same as living simply, I might give up both proteins for an egg or bean alternative. (If you asked my fellow priests, they might say all food is penance when I cook.)

The *Catechism* teaches, "The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers insist above all on three forms, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others" (CCC 1434). Notice the last word: others. Fasting and abstaining from meat during Lent are shared sacrifices and part of our Catholic identity and duty (Canons 1249–53). The pope in Rome, your grandmother in Milwaukee, Catholics in India, and our fellow Christians (if and when they participate) are all united by this common penance. You express that unity by eating fish on Fridays.

If you are a vegetarian or vegan, I encourage you to do something additional during the Fridays of Lent to reflect the spirit of discipline and self-denial. However you observe Lent, remember: All Catholics are united to each other and to God in our prayer, penance, and worship.

Patrick Keyes, CSsR
sundaybulletin@liguori.org



A Word From Pope Francis

"With its invitation to conversion, Lent comes providentially to awaken us, to rouse us from torpor, from the risk of moving forward by inertia."

—Homily, Basilica of Santa Sabina, March 5, 2014