

## First Sunday of Lent, February 22, 2026

### Intentions:

Feb. 22 - In loving memory of **Beverley Nadeau**, requested by Linda Cassidy and family.

Mass Intentions: \$15.00

### Offertory Collection:

February 15 - \$536.00 Thank You

### February 23

**St. Polycarp:** Born circa 69, St. Polycarp was one of the Fathers of the early Church, a Greek bishop from Smyrna and an important 2nd century figure in Christian theology. His *Letter to the Philippians* was a significant foundation of early Christian literature, establishing the role of Apostle Paul and referencing the existence of other texts of the Bible's New Testament. He was a leader of the second generation of Christians, the first Christians who were not eyewitnesses to the death and resurrection of Our Lord. Extremely influential in the catechesis and initiation of new Christians, he was named bishop of Smyrna, located in modern-day Turkey. Polycarp's dedication to religion ultimately led to his death. He was arrested and killed by the Romans for refusing to abandon Christianity about the year 155 at the age of 86. He is a patron of those suffering from earaches.

### February 26

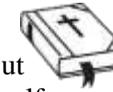
**St. Porphyry of Gaza:** Bishop of Gaza and hermit also called Porphyrius, not to be confused with the third century Neoplatonist philosopher. Born in Thessalonika, Macedonia in 347 - he belonged to a wealthy Greek family but, at the age of twenty five, became a hermit in the desert of Skete, Egypt, later residing on the banks of the Jordan in Palestine, and finally in Jerusalem. With the help of his friend Mark, he gave away all of his inheritance, worked as a humble shoemaker for a time, and then received ordination as a priest. Against his will, he was made bishop of Gaza in 396, proving a brilliant and energetic prelate. One of his chief challenges came from the pagans of the region, but by the end of his life he had extirpated virtually all of the remnants of the old religion. He erected a church on the site of the most prominent pagan temple in the area as a symbol of his victory. His deacon, Mark, authored a biography of the bishop, a genuinely valuable historical document. Porphyrius died in Gaza on February 26, 420.

### Stations of the Cross

Please join us at St. Gabriel's for the Stations of the Cross every Friday in Lent (except Good Friday) starting at 3:00 p.m.



**Reflection:** We are never immune to temptation; it is real. But temptation always brings choice, decision, and greater self-knowledge. In the case of the Son of God, his choice was also between God and Satan, his decision was to be faithful to God's Law and revelation, and his greater self-knowledge led him out of the desert to begin his public ministry. In our daily living we must place our temptations and the choices within the context of the commandment to love God and neighbor. This is Lent's challenge and invitation. (Living Liturgy, p. 64).



**Pope's Intentions for the Month of February:** For children with incurable diseases: Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope.



**Prayers for the Sick.** Please pray for the sick among our families and friends, especially for Roy Campbell, Linda Cassidy, Patricia Cassidy, Suzanne Lafontaine, Priscilla Rowley, and Lorraine Stafford. *The names will remain on the list until we are otherwise advised.*

## Administrator's Corner

### Lent: Journey towards renewal.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a 40-day journey to prepare our hearts for Easter. The number 40 holds profound significance in scripture: 40 days of deluge that cleansed the earth, 40 years of wandering in the desert as Israel sought freedom, and 40 days of fasting by Moses and Jesus as they prepared for their missions. This biblical number symbolizes a time of trial, testing, and transformation.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent, we receive ashes on our foreheads, a poignant reminder of our mortality and need for repentance. "Remember you are dust, and to dust you will return" (Genesis 3:19). This somber yet hopeful ritual invites us to reflect on our lives and turn towards God.

Lent is a holy season which for some, a preparation to enter into a life journey with God through baptism (Catechumen) and for others it is a period to recall their baptism and to prepare for renewing their baptism promises on Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday.

This season invites us to imitate Jesus' spiritual training in the wilderness. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we prepare to meet the risen Jesus on Easter Sunday.

Prayer is our lifeline to God, a conversation that transforms our hearts. As we pray, we align our will with God's, seeking guidance and strength. It is a time to rediscover who we are before God, and a time to say yes to God and no to Satan as Jesus did. Set aside time daily to be with God, reading scripture and listening for His voice.

Fasting: Pope Benedict XVI relying on the church's tradition held that fasting is a great help to avoid sin and all that leads to it. He cited occasions when the bible encouraged fasting "the Lord Commands man to abstain from partaking of the tree of good and evil." Further Benedict said that "since all of us are weighed down by sin and its consequences, fasting is proposed to us as an instrument to restore friendship with God." Then inferring from the New Testament he said "The true fast is thus directed to eating the 'true food' which is to do the Father's will." Fasting in the Lenten journey is not simply abstaining from food but is a complex and deep reality according to John Paul II "means putting a limit on so many desires, sometimes good ones, in order to have full mastery of oneself, to learn to control one's own instincts, to train the will in good."

Pope Leo emphasizing on the need for penance declared "We order you to fast, reminding you not only of the need to abstain from meat, but also of the need to do works of mercy. In this way, what you have spared on ordinary expenses is changed into providing food for the poor.

Almsgiving is the outward expression of our inner conversion. As we give to the poor and vulnerable, we encounter Christ himself. Lent is a time for communion and solidarity (Pope Paul VI). Let's share our blessings with those in need.

A powerful example of Lenten commitment comes from an unexpected encounter. A priest was approached by a young man with a knife, demanding money. But when the young man saw the priest's collar, he apologized and refused to take his money. The priest offered him a cigar, but the young man declined, saying, "I gave them up for Lent!" This story highlights the young man's commitment to his Lenten sacrifice, even in unexpected moments.

May we hunger for God and thirst for holiness, seeking Him in prayer, fasting, and generous giving. As St. Augustine said, "When I am completely united to you, there will be no more sorrows or trials." Let God renew us daily, giving us His heart of love and compassion. As we journey through Lent, may we emerge renewed, reflecting Jesus' love and compassion to a world in need.

## Pastoral Directory

Baptisms:	Father Anthony Nwaohiri	623-3419
Financial Council Chair:	Janne Campbell	832-4290
Pastoral Council Chair:	Martine Messier	808-4573
Mass Intentions & Bulletin:	Marilyn Deslauriers	222-3762
Pastoral Care:	Father Anthony Nwaohiri	623-3419
Advertising Ministry:	Lorraine Brisson	832-3351

**EMERGENCY:** [anwaohiri@gmail.com](mailto:anwaohiri@gmail.com) For emergencies, email this address with EMERGENCY in the subject or call the church office at 613-623-3419.

**Lost and Found:** Periodically, please check the lost and found basket at the church entrance for articles you may have left behind.

**Sts Michael and Gabriel helpinghand ministry:** Her objective is to serve needy families periodically in a timely and confidential manner. More details will be announced soon. The administrators can be reached at [stmichaelshelpinghands@gmail.com](mailto:stmichaelshelpinghands@gmail.com) or (613) 623-3419.

**West Carleton Food Access Centre: (WCFAC)** Please remember our local Food Bank each week by donating items to St. Gabriel's grocery cart. Cash donations of \$20.00 and over will receive a tax receipt. Please include your name and address on the envelope. See Suzanne Lee if you have any questions. Thank you for your support.



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## St. Gabriel's

### Roman Catholic Church

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# All Welcome



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Deacon James Kubina [jgkubina@gmail.com](mailto:jgkubina@gmail.com)

### Weekly Eucharist

**St. Gabriel's** (Constance Bay) **St. Michael's** (Fitzroy Harbour)

Sunday 11:00 am Mass

Saturday 4:00 pm Mass  
Sunday 9:00 am Mass

live streaming link on YouTube St. Michael's Mass at 9 am Sunday  
**StMStG-Live**

Confessions and Sacrament Of the Sick are also available by request.  
Please contact Fr. Anthony directly to book an appointment.

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