

“YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST” -Lenten Suggestions- by Fr. Steve Lape

With Lent upon us once again, we’re being personally invited by our Lord to be renewed and strengthened in following Jesus’ lead in our daily living. It can be very easy to get carried away with daily commitments and interests: family, job, shopping, school, household tasks, friends, hobbies and other interests. Although such commitments are obviously important, our commitment to Jesus in the faith community can often take a back seat. In order to help strengthen our personal relationship with Jesus, as well as our faith community ties, here are a few suggestions of things you can do during Lent to “die more to yourself” and live more for Christ (some you may already be doing or have done before):

- ✦ If you’re not already doing so, strive to attend Mass every weekend.
- ✦ **Attend a weekday Mass at least once a week.**
- ✦ Read one or more of the Gospels (not racing through to get them done, but taking time to reflect on sections each day.)
- ✦ **Go to Confession at least twice during Lent.**
- ✦ **Pray the rosary at least one day a week.**
- ✦ Read a spiritual book from St. Mary’s library (located in the front vestibule of the church.)
- ✦ **Come to a Bible Study night or a “Faith & Film Night.”**
- ✦ Review the readings for the upcoming weekend Mass ahead of time.
- ✦ **Begin and end each day with a prayer of thanksgiving.**
- ✦ Offer a grace before meals.
- ✦ **Spend at least one hour each week volunteering for a community charity project.**
- ✦ Visit someone who is sick, homebound, in a nursing facility or hospital.
- ✦ **Donate goods to the area’s needy (food, clothes, money, toiletries, etc.)**
- ✦ Join a parish committee.
- ✦ **Pray the Stations of the Cross in church.**
- ✦ Spend time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament (either by attending St. Mary’s 1st Friday of the month adoration from 8:30-8p.m., or just simply coming to quiet in prayer before any Catholic church’s tabernacle.
- ✦ **Participate in a Lenten Holy Hour on a Friday of Lent at St. Mary’s.**
- ✦ Read a spiritual article at least twice a week from a religious newspaper or magazine.
- ✦ **Watch a religious program on a TV station such as EWTN, or view a DVD or video (perhaps one from St. Mary’s library.)**
- ✦ Read about the life of a saint whom you may not know much about.
 - ✦ **Go on a pilgrimage to a Catholic church, monastery, or shrine outside of our area.**
 - ✦ Work on a prayer journal, writing various spiritual thoughts, observations, questions, and comments on how you recognized Jesus’ presence with you during each day.
 - ✦ **Offer an elderly neighbor a hand, running an errand, shoveling snow for them, or doing another task around his/her home.**
 - ✦ Learn more about a social justice issue that the Church has publically commented on (abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, poverty, hunger, homelessness, refugees, labor justice, the environment, etc.)
 - ✦ **Check out the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* each day (online or book) to learn more on its various teachings.**
 - ✦ Go to a quiet place each day of Lent for about 10-15 and come to quiet with Christ in prayer.

