

First Sunday of Lent February 22, 2026

Today's readings are pretty sin-centric. From Adam's disobedience in the garden, leading to the fate of blackened souls for us all, to Paul's claim of justification by faith, freeing us from sin, to Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

Like most ancient peoples, Judeans believed in animal sacrifice as the means of atonement for sin. But this atonement, through the sprinkling of the blood of scapegoats, was very cheap. Apart from costing the penitent a few shekels to purchase an animal for the temple sacrifice, there was no real personal involvement in actual penitence. Paul's "justification by faith alone" was also lacking. There is no personal accountability there. We instinctively know that this is not real redemption.

Rather, it is Jesus' face-to-face with personal temptation, that speaks to us of the part that personal responsibility plays in our individual redemptions. For this, Jesus became our role model. Before he was tempted in the wilderness, he first emptied himself completely (fasting for 40 days). In his fast he felt utter weakness and, I imagine, an extreme dependence on God. At the end of his fast he faced three basic temptations, those of pleasure, power and possessions... the most common temptations to us all. What these three temptations have in common with each other is the desire to be SELF-serving, rather than being a servant to God and others.

Rejecting these temptations requires us to be disciplined and deliberate. Deliberate in denying pleasure by choosing to fast, rather than indulge. Deliberate in lowering ourselves in the service of others, rather than being raised up to the high parapet with angels at our command. And lastly, deliberate in denying possessing more than we need, choosing to do works of mercy and to share our resources, ra-

ther than isolate ourselves and hoard what we've been blessed to have.

Perhaps SIN, as the culprit of our unfaithfulness to God, is not the point. Rather our call, as we begin our Lenten journey, is to turn away from anything that distracts us from being smitten by the all-embracing LOVE of the Spirit of God. Perhaps we can make ourselves most available to a love-immersion by emptying ourselves of all the things that distract us and falsely fill us – the sense of power, of pleasures and of possessions – that make us feel complete in ourselves and not in need of God.

In order to feel weak enough to actually need God. Paul prophesies in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

So, rather than beating our chests in "Mea Culpas," may we begin our Lenten journey emptying ourselves in order to feel weakness, so that all that is left is God's strength and all-consuming love.

—Cathy Hartrich

Church Center Offices

Mon-Fri 9am-3pm

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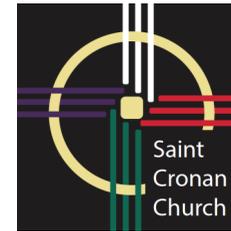
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Food Pantry Director: Mary Solomon



St. Cronan Catholic Church February 22, 2026 First Sunday of Lent



Mass Information

SUNDAY – 8 am. and 10 am.

SATURDAY VIGIL – 5 pm.

Wednesdays – 8 am.

Sacrament of Reconciliation by appointment.

Bulletin Deadline: Noon Tuesday



St. Cronan Basket Raffle!

Our first fundraiser of the calendar year! We have several baskets for you to choose from:

- Liquor Basket valued at \$350
- St. Louis Basket valued at \$800
- Toy Basket valued at \$110
- Wine Basket valued at \$200
- Original Artwork = *Priceless*

Tickets will be on sale after each mass through March 15, when the drawing will take place. Sell tickets to your friends and neighbors! Call Mary in the church office if you would like to buy chances via Credit/Debit card. 314-289-9384
Tickets are 1/\$5, 4/\$10 or 10/\$20 Baskets will be displayed in the back of church

Black Lives Matter Vigil takes place the third Friday of the month at the corner of Manchester and Kingshighway, 4:30-5:30 p.m. The next vigil will take place on Friday, February 20. Please join us!



Lenten Booklet: Walk New Paths as Pilgrims of Hope: Our Liturgy Committee has compiled a Lenten Booklet. Hard copies are available in the back of church and it is also available online on the church website.
<https://stcronan.org/news-events/>



Prayers Please: Nick and Shirley Ambrose and Family; Elisabeth Byrne’s mom, Denise Siebold; Joe Connolly; Yvonne DeHart’s daughter, Cathy Hebert; Nancy Buck’s daughter, Jeanne Oberle; Trish Curtis’ sibling, Skip; Joe Fairless; Judith Santamaria, Leslie Conway; Madonna and Tom’s friend, 3-1/2 year old Juliette Braren; Jane Sykes; Mary Proot’s sister, Terry Jacks, and Mary’s son, Tim Proot; Madonna Kuciejczyk-Kernan; Ken Ladd; Fr. Gerry Kleba; Marie and Roland Martir’s daughter, Carrie and their granddaughter, Madi and their dear friend, Robert Screace, who has been placed on hospice; J.T. Fowler; Grace Mueller; Joe Kuciejczyk, brother of Madonna and Janet, and brother-in-law of Tom, John Ross and Maria, daughter of Marci and Dominic Soda; Sr. Lynne Schmidt’s nephew, Brian Ahr; John Ross; Teresa Beard’s son, Edward Burch; Dodie Heilich, sister in law to Helen and Sandy McKinney; Judy Benson, Elliot Gaillardetz’s caregiver; Ed Calcaterra, brother of Diane Calcaterra; Colleen Wallace’s cousins; Ruth Hasser; Katy and Dennis Rosolowski; Ruth Hasser; Sandra Ward; Fr. Jerry Stookey’s brother, Tom



The Unfish Fry is coming! Friday February 27th from 5:30pm-7pm the Unfish Fry Crew will be serving an all vegetarian/vegan meal that is open to the public. There will be a wide selection of desserts for sale and beverages for a donation. A great time is guaranteed for everyone! Adult tickets are \$12 and child tickets are \$6. Tickets are available online or at the door. First Unitarian church, 5007 Waterman Blvd, St. Louis, MO, United States, Missouri 63108

All Trivia Enthusiasts: Midtown’s annual Trivia Night will be March 21 at The Heights in Richmond Heights. Visit <https://www.midtownstl.org/trivia-night> for more info or to register.

St. Cronan Social Justice Book Club takes place today and on the 2nd Sunday of each month in the Church office conference room after the 10AM Mass from 11:30AM -12:30PM. Looking ahead the March 8th book will be *“Insane for the Light: A Spirituality for Our Wisdom Years”* by Ronald Holheiser.

Fair Trade Coffee: We are ordering Fair Trade coffee for Sunday mornings. If we order in bulk, we get a cut on shipping. If you care to order some coffee and add to the Cronan order, please contact Al Sprehe and give him your order. 314-607-7188. Order forms are located in the church vestibule. We will have the coffee at Church or in the office for pick up. Make checks payable to **St. Cronan** and write “coffee” on the memo line.



Please join us for Turtles: Turtles is a monthly gathering of Cronan women who read and discuss books on spirituality and current issues. The difference between Turtles and the SJ book club is that Turtles are slower at reading the books – we break the book down into several parts to read and share over several meetings. This way, we can delve deeper into the book’s content, spend some time socializing, and don’t have to read a whole book every month. Yes, there is wine and snacks! We meet the third Monday of the month at the home of one of our members. We will be starting a new book on February 16. This is the perfect time to join us. If you are interested email Diane – diane@stcronan.org or Yvonne DeHart dehartyi@aol.com

John Michael Talbot
The Journey East and Healing in the Spirit

2026 Retreat and Concert
Retreat: March 20 doors open 6:30pm
March 21 doors open 8:30am

Come join us for the Spring Lenten Retreat with John Michael Talbot: The Journey East and Healing in the Spirit. John Michael, the spiritual father of the community of the Brothers and Sisters of Charity in Arkansas, will lead us using the early Fathers of the Church, Scripture and Song to bring us the Healing the Lord desires for us. Join us Friday, March 20th at 7 p.m. at the Cardinal Rigali Center in the Fleur de Lis Room and all-day March 21 beginning at 8:30 a.m. We will end the retreat with Mass at 4 p.m. But wait, there’s more - there will also be a concert on Saturday evening at 7 p.m. by John Michael. He is a gifted, internationally renowned musician, who we hope you can join us for, as he shares and leads us, inviting our hearts in deeper worship and communion with God.

To register for the retreat, for the concert, or both, go to our website - archstl.org/renewal or call the Catholic Renewal Center at 314-731-6100.

WELCOME

Our Newest Member:
Anne Grass

Blessing Bags: Our Confirmation class is collecting items to distribute to the homeless. See Monday notes for a list of needed items. Please place donated items in the box in the vestibule of Church. The Confirmandi will then compile the bags and have them in Church for you to pick up and distribute.



St. Cronan Catholic Church Land Acknowledgement.

We respectfully acknowledge that St. Cronan Church stands on the ancestral lands of Native American and Indigenous peoples. We honor their enduring presence and acknowledge the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization. We are committed to learning, dialogue, and fostering reconciliation with Native American and Indigenous communities.

For the full land acknowledgment, visit stcronan.org.