

Lenten Environment 2018:

Lent is a period of six and a half weeks from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. It is a time for spiritual preparation for the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. The color for the season is purple, as you will see in the priest's vestments and in the décor of the church. It is the color of sacrifice but also the color of Kingship.

It is a time of penance, sacrifice and prayer to prepare ourselves to live life closer to God. It is a time to strip away all the non-essentials to reveal what is truly important to our salvation. It is a time to consider what in our life might be keeping us from fully responding to God's grace and thus from a close relationship with God.



Windows: Strings of Lenten promises

The religious education students each wrote 3 Lenten promises to display in the gathering space. The three promises represent the three main areas of Lenten practice: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Consider how you are addressing these practices this Lent.

Baptismal font: The Cross of Christ

The font is empty of the life-giving water for Lent. The cross is here, waiting for the sacrifice that will change everything. The wheat, carried over from Advent, symbolizes the sacrifice—He is the bread of life. He makes everything else make sense.

His sacrifice brings us back into a relationship with God. He brings us into the Holy Family once and for all. We are his sons and daughters, we only have to say YES! I'm all in! Thank you for adopting us despite our sinfulness, luke-warm attitudes, and lackadaisical commitment to you. Help me Lord to be ALL-IN, every day, in thanksgiving for your eternal commitment to us!



Let's imagine the lack of living water in our life and how that would change everything. We long for this living water which will come rushing back at Easter.





Altar wall: Scattered bits

The world feels chaotic these days. There is so much division in the world. Like so many scattered bits that have no rhyme or reason. Even among Christians there are divisions, suspicion, disdain, and criticism. As Lent unfolds reflect on how God has a plan to ultimately bring everything into harmony. He will bring beauty, truth and goodness to all. He will take all the scattered bits and bring them into harmony.

Reflect on this as you see the background change during Lent and Easter. How can we be available to let God bring our lives into harmonious beauty, truth and goodness? Are we open to these changes? Do we recognize how we are resisting God's work in our lives? Relax, reflect, and let God do his holy work in you and through you.

Niches: Empty window frames

Lent is a time of reflection, a time of emptying. What needs to stay, and what needs to go? Empty yourself of habits that lead you away from holiness. It is time for the yearly review. What would "The Boss" say about you? How do you spend your time? What are your leisure pursuits? Do they enhance your progress toward holiness? How many hours are spent in mindless entertainment? How much time is dedicated to listening for the quiet voice of God—to his plan for you today? Who do you work for? You work for God. You are his hands. Take care of your family. Take care of your temporal needs. Take care to give your job the dedication and hours you promised. Cull away everything else and "I work for God" will be your thought each morning. Show me Lord what you need from me today. At Easter, your successful Lent will shine through the window frames.