

Join us on the journey.

The parish community of the Church of Saint Ann extends this invitation to everyone.

Together we are seeking for ourselves and others an extraordinary Lenten experience.

With us on the journey are our candidates and Elect. These individuals will receive full initiation into the Catholic faith at the Easter Vigil. Also on the journey are our confirmation candidates who will receive that sacrament during the Easter season.

The candidates and Elect have stood before us at Mass each Sunday before being dismissed to break open the Word of Scripture. Those students preparing for confirmation celebrate around the Eucharistic table with us each Sunday.

These individuals are living symbols of our Catholic identity. They stand firm against a world that seeks to lure them away from God and the gospel message of solidarity, peace and justice.

In our gospel reading the devil tries to lure Jesus away from his ministry, tempting him with power, prestige and wealth.

The devil tempts Jesus with power when he challenges him to **“command that these stones become loaves of bread.”**

Jesus could have called on his Father and made bread from stones, but he stands firm.

The devil tempts Jesus with prestige when he challenges him to **“throw yourself down”** and let the angels rush to support you.

Jesus could have called on the angels who would have obeyed his command and rushed to help him, but he stands firm.

The devil tempts Jesus with wealth when he tells him that **“I shall give you all the kingdoms of the world and their magnificence.”**

Jesus knew that earthly rewards were nothing in comparison to the rewards of heaven, and he stands firm.

Jesus was confident in his identity. He knew that the Father loved him and that his ministry was to bring all people into a closer relationship with God.

Jesus stood firm against the temptations of power, prestige and wealth, so that they wouldn't interfere with His relationship with God.

We are called to follow Jesus' example and stand firm against those same temptations, so that a desire for power, prestige or wealth won't interfere with our relationship with God.

This season of Lent is an opportunity for each of us to embrace our Catholic identity, and stand firm.

Our Lenten menu of activities this year includes two opportunities for us to stand firm and publicly witness our Catholic identity.

We have the opportunity each Saturday morning to stand firm with the Respect Life ministry and witness to the world that all life is precious and worthy of respect and dignity.

We also have an opportunity every Thursday evening to stand firm with Credo Pax Christi and witness to the world that we Catholics seek to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ.

Every day provides us with an opportunity to stand firm in our Catholic identity, and we can do this by listening to Jesus' command that we serve God and serve one another.

Let us stand firm against anger, prejudice, greed, indifference, jealousy and hatred.

Let us stand firm for justice, kindness, compassion, mercy, and peace.

This Lent let us challenge ourselves to join the journey of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, Savior of all People, the Son of God

and

Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel.