

**CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**

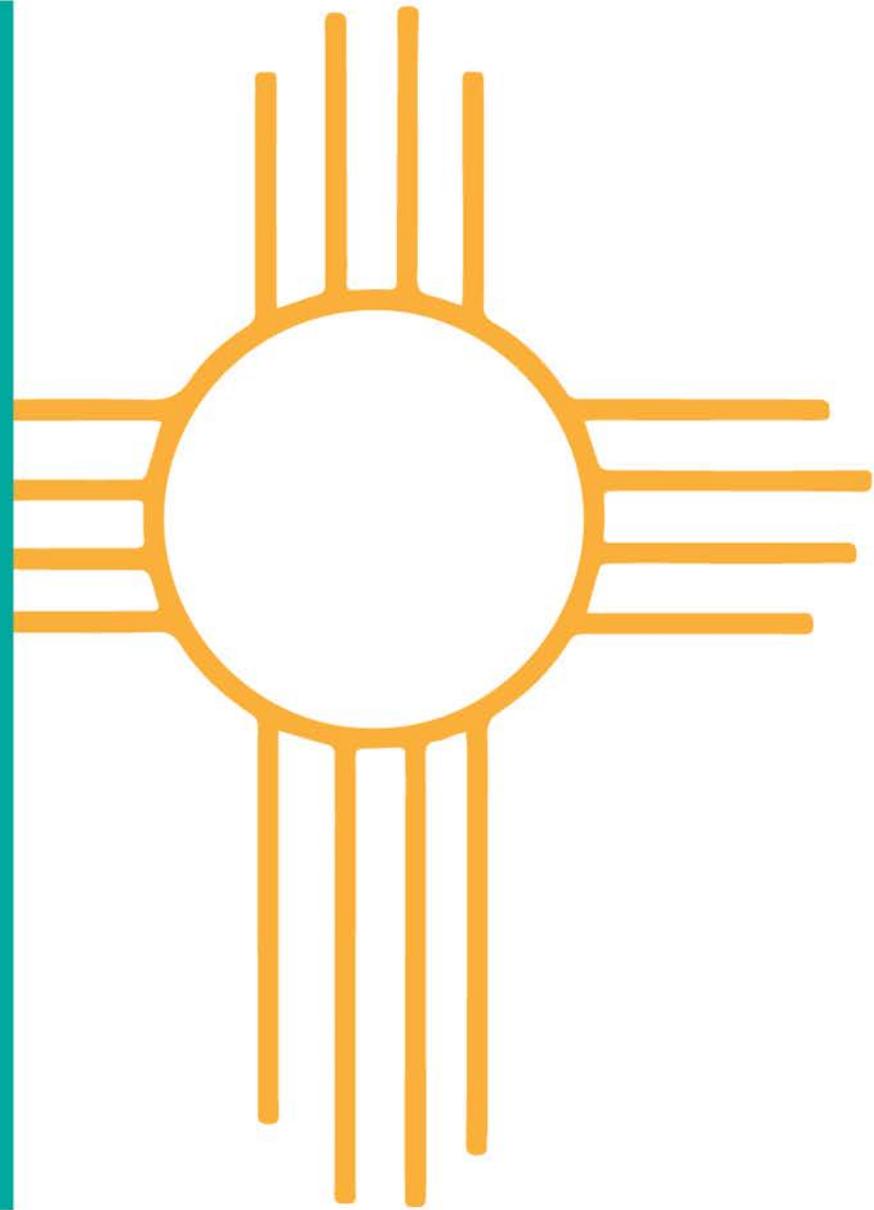
**REBUILD**

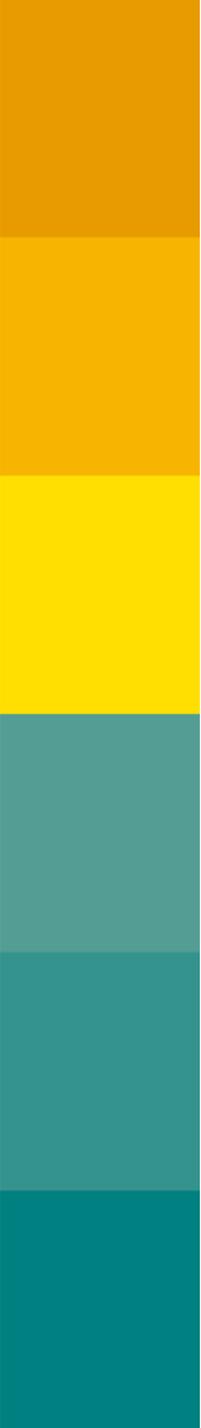
**RESTORE**



**RENEW**

**TOGETHER**





# March Prayer Service

# RENEW





## “Transfigure us, O Lord”

Bob Hurd, Glory & Praise Hymnal #274

## “Unless a Grain of Wheat”

Bernadette Farrell, Gather Hymnal #697

## “Lord, I Need You”

Matt Maher

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LuvfMDhTyMA>

## “Hosea”

Gregory Norbert, Gather Hymnal #386



# Opening Prayer

God of mercy and love,  
Sustain us throughout this Lenten season.

Strengthen and encourage us to embrace this holy season of Lent as a time of renewal and transformation.

As we journey toward the sacred days of Easter, clear our paths of obstacles.

Show us the way to repent and return to your love.

Remind us to seek you with humble and trusting hearts.

Guide us toward simplicity and truth.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen. +

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# Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Prophet Joel (2:2-13)

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

The Word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.



# Questions for Personal Reflection

- *How might God be calling you to return to him during this Lenten season?*
- *What are some ways in which your spirit may be in need of renewal?*
- *Lenten fasting is a practice that can place us in greater connection to God through our attempts to remove our dependence on earthly things. When reflecting on ways to fast during Lent, then, it might be helpful to consider fasting, not just in the context of foods associated with feasting, but also in contexts such as media or entertainment, or habits and comforts. Which Lenten fasting practice might offer a meaningful challenge for you this Lent?*

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# Excerpts from Pope Francis' Message for Lent 2021

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2021/02/12/210212a.html>

“During this season of conversion, let us renew our faith, draw from the ‘living water’ of hope, and receive with open hearts, the love of God, who makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. At the Easter vigil, we will renew our baptismal promises and experience rebirth as new men and women by the working of the Holy Spirit. This Lenten journey, like the entire pilgrimage of the Christian life, is even now illumined by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Christ...

Lent is a time for believing, for welcoming God into our lives and allowing him to ‘make his dwelling’ among us (cf. Jn 14:23). Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down – like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false – in order to open the doors of our hearts to the one who comes to us, poor in all things, yet ‘full of grace and truth’ (Jn 1:14): the Son of God, our Savior...

Dear brothers and sisters, every moment of our lives is a time for believing, hoping and loving. The call to experience Lent as a journey of conversion, prayer and sharing of our good, helps us – as communities and as individuals – to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit, and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father...”

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# Questions for Personal Reflection

- *Select a phrase or sentence from this reading that resonates with you. What implications can this have for you during this Lenten season?*
- *How might we improve the ways we welcome God and “make his dwelling among us...” within our current roles in our Catholic school communities?*
- *Take a moment to identify something that might be weighing you down today. If fasting can be considered as a way to free us from “all that weighs us down,” is there a way to bring this burden to God this Lent?*
- *Pope Francis encourages us to embrace the moments of our lives as opportunities for conversion. Reflect on the past week and see if you can identify a few key moments where you might have felt a strong sense of faith, hope, and/or love. Consider offering a special prayer of thanks to God for these moments.*



# Closing Prayer

God of the journey,  
Bless our preparations this Lent.

Throughout this holy season, may we

Fast from hurting words and say kind words,  
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude,  
Fast from anger and be filled with patience,  
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope,  
Fast from worries and have trust in God,  
Fast from complaints; contemplate simplicity,  
Fast from pressures and be prayerful,  
Fast from bitterness; fill your hearts with joy,  
Fast from selfishness and be compassionate,  
Fast from grudges and be reconciled,  
Fast from words; be silent and listen.

Help us to be faithful to a fast that brings new life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen. +

(2021 Do You Want to Fast This Lent? In the words of Pope Francis

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/cultural-diversity/african-american/upload/Pope-Francis-Fasting-Tips.pdf>)





## “Jerusalem My Destiny”

Rory Cooney, Gather Hymnal #390

## “The Glory of These Forty Days”

Claudia Frances Hernaman, Gather Hymnal #388

## “I Will Never Forget You, My People”

Carey Landry

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05d91wAzs9k>

## “Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)”

John Newton & Chris Tomlin

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mglz\\_39loE8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mglz_39loE8)

