

Saint Lawrence O'Toole Parish

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Fr. John N. Burchat, Parish Priest

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Office Hours

Tuesday & Friday
9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon
613-756-2037



✠ Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time ✠

40 Days until Easter

February 15, 2026

ASH WEDNESDAY THIS WEEK marks the beginning of Lent with the imposition of ashes—a gesture that strips away the illusion that we are the source of our own life, that we make ourselves, or that we can stand alone. It summons believers to repentance, the only fitting response to divine love from which, in sin, we have turned away. Marked with ashes in the midst of the community, the faithful confess not merely particular failings but a deeper rupture: a failure to love rightly, a turning from the God who is the giver of life.

The public sign of ashes points beyond moral performance toward an interior conversion of heart and mind. Scripture calls the whole people to repentance even as Christ warns against religious display, reminding us that outward signs have meaning only when they awaken sincerity and humility. The ashes name our frailty—mortality, contingency, and dependence on God—and expose the persistent illusion of self-sufficiency.

Lent therefore begins not with self-improvement but with truth: the recognition that death is the measure of our creaturehood, the moment when every pretension of autonomy collapses. Yet this reckoning is never the final word. The same divine love that reveals our mortality also promises resurrection. In that promise, death becomes the hinge of new creation. Marked as dust, believers begin the Lenten journey toward Easter trusting that what is confessed as broken and mortal is, by grace, destined for resurrection and transfiguration in Christ.

FASTING AND ABSTINENCE: The Catholic Church prescribes fasting (only one full meal and two smaller meals which together are not greater than the full meal) and abstinence from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Catholics aged 18-59 are obliged to fast; those 14 and up are obliged to abstain from meat. Those who are ill are not obliged; anyone above the age of 59 may continue to fast as an act of devotion. Parents are reminded of their duty to introduce children to the understanding and practice of penance. Adult example will be the greatest influence.

Sixth Week in Ordinary Time

February 16 – February 21

Ash Wednesday + **Beginning of the Season of Lent** +
9:00 a.m. + Fr. Norbert Cybulski *by Eddie & Diane Etmanskie*
(7:00 pm. at Holy Canadian Martyrs in Combermere)
Friday 9:00 a.m. + Phyllis Bernie *by Dwyer Family*
+ Bernice Bleskie *by Monique Perry*

+ **First Sunday of Lent** +

February 22, 2026

Saturday 4:00 p.m. + Peter Brotton *by Karen Yakabuski*
Sunday 10:30 a.m. Mass for the People

Liturgical Appointments	February 21	February 22
Readings	<i>Karen Yakabuski</i>	<i>Beverly Glofcheskie</i>
Communion	<i>Neil O'Reilly</i>	<i>Terry Recoskie</i>
Offertory	<i>Bruce Sullivan</i>	<i>John Jeffrey</i>
	<i>Richard Luckasavitch</i>	<i>Jamie Prince</i>

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturday 3:15 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. in sacristy.
Weekdays – before weekday Masses in sacristy or by appointment during office hours.

IN YOUR PRAYERS, PLEASE REMEMBER:

- for the victims, the families of the victims and the entire community of Tumbler Ridge, BC as they try to cope from a horrible tragedy.
- that these 40 days of spiritual renewal may help us turn away from sin, be faithful to the Gospel, and receive new life in Christ Jesus.
- for those who celebrated the Rite of Commitment to Gospel Life in the Secular Franciscan Order: *Morris and Virginia Korneluk, Mary-Ann McCrae and Joseph Rideout.*
- for parishioners and friends who are sick, especially: *Shirlee Etmanskie, Diane Green, Jean-Paul Patenaude, Ray Vananburg, Carmel Rumleskie.*
- for those who have died, especially: *Jeannette Bonnette Stoppa, Joan Florent, Percy Coulas, Joseph Gutoskie, George Cadieux, Darinka Lucic, Leo Marquardt, McGregor King Madigan.*

ROMAN CALENDAR:

Tuesday - Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order
Wednesday - ASH WEDNESDAY
Saturday - St. Peter Damian, bishop, doctor

IN THIS SUNDAY'S LITURGY we continue to read Jesus' so-called "Sermon on the Mount". After the Beatitudes, which are the programme of his life, Jesus proclaims the new Law, his Torah, as our Jewish brothers and sisters call it. In fact, on his coming, the Messiah was also to bring the definitive revelation of the Law and this is precisely what Jesus declares: "Think not that I have come to abolish the Law and the Prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them". And addressing his disciples, he adds: "unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven" (Mt 5:17, 20). But what do this "fullness" of Christ's Law and this "superior" justice that he demands consist in?

Jesus explains it with a series of antitheses between the old commandments and his new way of propounding them. He begins each time: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old...", and then he asserts: "but I say to you"... For example, "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'you shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment'. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment" (Mt 5:21-22). And he does this six times. This manner of speaking made a great impression on the people, who were shocked, because those words: "I say to you" were equivalent to claiming the actual authority of God, the source of the Law. The newness of Jesus consists essentially in the fact that he himself "fulfils" the commandments with the love of God, with the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells within him. And we, through faith in Christ, can open ourselves to the action of the Holy Spirit who makes us capable of living divine love.

So it is that every precept becomes true as a requirement of love, and all join in a single commandment: love God with all your heart and love your neighbour as yourself. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law", St Paul writes (Rom 13:10). With regard to this requirement, for example, the pitiful case of the four children, who died last week when their shack caught fire on the outskirts of this city, forces us to ask ourselves whether a more supportive and fraternal society, more consistent in love, in other words more Christian, might not have been able to prevent this tragic event. And this question applies in the case of so many other grievous events, more or less known, which occur daily in our cities and our towns.

Dear friends, perhaps it is not by chance that Jesus' first great preaching is called the "Sermon on the Mount"! Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the Law of God and bring it to the Chosen People. Jesus is the Son of God himself who came down from Heaven to lead us to Heaven, to God's height, on the way of love. Indeed, he himself is this way; all we have to do in order to put into practice God's will and to enter his Kingdom, eternal life, is to follow him.

Only one creature has already scaled the mountain peak: the Virgin Mary. Through her union with Jesus, her righteousness was perfect: for this reason we invoke her as Mirror of Justice. Let us entrust ourselves to her so that she may guide our steps in fidelity to Christ's Law. ~ *Pope Benedict XV; February 13, 2011*

OUR LENTEN DAY OF REFLECTION: for parishioners of the pastoral family of St. Lawrence O'Toole, Holy Canadian Martyrs, and St. Francis de Sales, with Most Reverend Michael Brehl C.Ss.R., Bishop of Pembroke. At St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish Hall on Saturday, March 21, 2026, beginning at 10:00 a.m. and ending at approximately 2:30 p.m. Doors open at 9:00 a.m. Refreshments will be served. Lunch will be onsite at 12:00 with soup and sandwiches. There is no fee. A free-will donation will be accepted. Formal registration is required so we have an idea of how many will be there for lunch. Please call St. Lawrence O'Toole parish office at 613-756-2037 or e-mail at stlawrenceotoole@hotmail.com. Last date to register will be Friday, March 13.

LAST WEEK'S SUNDAY OFFERINGS:

Total: \$3,220.00 (Envelopes: \$2,470.00; Loose: \$77.00; Initial: \$5.00; Fuel: \$50.00
E-transfer: \$150.00; Building Fund: \$433.00; Easter Flowers: \$15.00;
Easter Offering: \$20.00).

2025 CHARITABLE DONATION RECEIPTS: will be issued early in February along with a Financial Report. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity and financial commitment to the parish.

EVENING OF PRAISE, WORSHIP AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER:

Thursdays at St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish Hall from 7:00 until 8:30 p.m. All are welcome.

PRO-LIFE HOLY HOUR: Fridays at 9:45 a.m., following the 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. Lawrence O'Toole Parish.

DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE PASTORAL PLANNING: Parishioners of the Barry's Bay Deanery are invited to **save the date of Sunday, March 1**, to attend a meeting at St. John Bosco School, Barry's Bay - 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. - to attend a pastoral planning information meeting. Bishop Brehl and members of the diocesan steering committee will present relevant pastoral, statistical and financial data to help equip parishioners in ongoing dialogue and discernment on the future of the diocese.

DIOCESAN EARLY LENTEN RETREAT: The Office of Faith Formation and Leadership Development invites you to the next Diocesan Lenten Retreat **on Saturday, February 21, 2026**, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Registration at 9:00 a.m.) at St. James the Less Parish, Eganville. Author and speaker: Patrick Sullivan. Cost: \$15.00 (lunch provided). Registration: dcadrienchaput@pembrookediocese.com or 613-732-7933 ext. 206. **Deadline: February 18th.**

KofC SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER: from 4:30-7 p.m. in St. Hedwig's Parish basement.