

Sample Bulletin Announcements for CatholicsComeHome.org (These are only samples and parishes are encouraged to modify as necessary)

1) Before or during Lent:

This Lent as we prepare to strengthen our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ we remember our call to share our faith with one another. We remember the words of St. Peter who tells us "to always be ready to give witness to the reason for our hope" (1Pet 3:15). Sharing our love for Jesus Christ and spreading the Good News is a necessary part of our life in Christ. This Lent the Diocese of Phoenix will be part of a Catholics Come Home commercial campaign, and advertisements will air during Lent on all local channels. We encourage each of you to invite those who may not be practicing their faith or may have never encountered Christ to join us for this Holy Season. Our parish will be offering (classes, flyers, etc) _____ for those who are returning home (or want to learn more about their faith) and for those who want to help information will be in the bulletin, or contact _____. We lovingly invite all those who have fallen away, to come home, to find healing, answers and support. *There is always a place for you here.*

Visit CatholicsComeHome.org for more information.

2) Sunday's During Lent

Week 1: Resources for Returning Catholics

This week as we hear the account of Jesus' 40 days in the desert (Matt 4:1-11) we remember what it means to fully depend on God. We celebrate our Catholic faith by entering into the 40 day's of Lent, fasting and praying as Christ did. Christ in His journey models the experience of Israel in the desert, He hungers, He thirsts, He's tempted by the Devil, but He responds with love and patience, modeling for us what it means to trust fully in God's love of His creation. Trusting in this love we can enter into Lent asking God to forgive our sins and strengthen our trust in Him. Read more about forgiveness of sins and the sacrament of reconciliation in Chapter 18 of the US Catholic Catechism for Adults.

Week 2: Resources for Returning Catholics

This week we hear the account of the transfiguration of Jesus (Matt 17:1-9). While on the mountain with our Lord, Peter, James and John saw a glimpse of Jesus' future glory. Peter offered to pitch tents hoping that the moment would never end. However like all glimpses they are only passing moments. We see glimpses of God in an answered prayer, a child's smile, a tender moment, a beautiful sunset. The transfiguration is a glimpse of future glory that will only come after the scandal of the cross. As Catholics we celebrate those glimpses in a very real way when God's grace enters our lives through the sacraments. Read more about God's grace freely given through the Sacraments in Chapter 14 of the US Catholic Catechism for Adults.

Week 3: Resources for Returning Catholics

This week we hear the account of the Women at the Well (John 4:5-42). Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan at the well is a beautiful story about how God reveals Himself to us. Jesus is the "Living Water" and once encountered must be shared with others. The woman at the well models this as she leaves to go "testify" to others who come to "believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified" (vs. 39). Read more about how we come to know Jesus and our call to share the Good News in Chapters 2 & 3 of the US Catholic Catechism for Adults.

Week 4: Resources for Returning Catholics

This week we hear the account of the Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41). The prophet Isaiah tells us that “the people who walk in darkness will see a great light” (Isaiah 9:2). Jesus is “the light of the world” (John 9:5) and wherever He is darkness is dispelled. Everyone suffers from various forms of blindness, whether it is prejudice, ignorance, or indifference we do not see the world as it always is. We don’t always see the poor, the immigrant, the widow, or the unborn as we should. Christ our redeemer heals us as He healed the man born blind, and opens our eyes to His love so that we might respond to the injustices in our world. Read more about how we are invited to open our eyes and respond to the injustices in our world in Chapters 23 & 24 of the US Catholic Catechism for Adults.

Week 5: Resources for Returning Catholics

This week we hear the account the raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-45). As Lent draws towards its close we reflect on our own death and resurrection. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead physically in his body. Jesus had previously raised the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:41-42,49-56) and the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-17) and in the Old Testament Elijah and Elisha raised people from the dead (1 Kings 17:17-24; 2 Kings 4:17-37). But nowhere is there an instance of someone being raised from the dead after four days. This is the crowning miracle of Jesus’ ministry. In fact in John’s Gospel it becomes the main reason leading to Jesus’ death. If Jesus can restore a body that had been in the tomb for four days and has begun to decompose he can certainly mend the brokenness and wounds of our lives. Jesus said to Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes in me, even if he dies will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” Jesus asks the same question of us also, “Do you believe this? Do you believe that I am the resurrection and the life? Do you believe that I can mend all the brokenness and wounds of your life? Do you believe that I not only offer you resurrection in the future but also the fullness of life now in the present?” Jesus proclaims that he is both the resurrection and the life. He promises future resurrection but also invites us to share now in the fullness of his life. The resurrection of Lazarus is not just a promise about the future of each of us. It is also an invitation from Jesus to enter into the fullness of his life in the present, now. (Taken from a Homily by Fr. Thomas Lane). Read more about our eternal destiny in Chapter 13 of the US Catholic Catechism for Adults.

Week 6: Resources for Returning Catholics

This week we celebrate Palm Sunday, when Jesus triumphantly entered into Jerusalem and endured the passion for our sake (Matt 26:14-27:66). We hear the account of the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist, when Christ; the sacrificial lamb gives us His Body and Blood so that we might participate in the “new and everlasting covenant.” We enter into God’s word and place ourselves there at His betrayal, at Gethsemane, at Peter’s denial, at the trial, when the crowds called for His crucifixion, when the soldier mocked Him, when He was nailed to the cross, when He took the sins of the world upon Himself and died so that we might live. These are great mysteries that call for deep reflection and prayer. How does the Eucharist strengthen the community? What does Christ’s passion, death and resurrection mean for me? Read more about the Eucharist and the Pascal Mystery in Chapters 17 and 8 of the US Catholic Catechism for Adults.

