

WHAT DOES LENT MEAN TO ME?

By Mary Lou Olsen-Loomis

As a child it was always 40 days of doing without something that would be difficult to give up. However, as one matures, I see Lent as much more than this. It is a time to do whatever is needed to strengthen our relationship with Jesus. Eleven years ago, I decided to attend daily Mass as a Lenten activity. Once the Easter season was over, I could not justify discontinuing this activity. I did feel closer to Jesus and did not want this feeling to end. Today, I still try my best to attend daily Mass and love starting my day showing Jesus how important He is in my life. This increases my awareness of how much I need this spiritual strength to get through the demands of daily life.

In addition, I do take more time during Lent to reflect on the daily readings. I do this with the aid of Daily Gospel Reflections by Bishop Robert Barron. I also sign up for THE BEST LENT EVER from Dynamic Catholic. Together these two resources have really helped keep me focused on Lent. Everyone just needs to find what will help them strengthen their relationship with Jesus. Have a Blessed Lent!

About Mary Lou

Mary Lou and Jay Loomis have lived in Mundelein for the past 20 years. They are blessed with three grown sons

and seven grandchildren. Mary Lou serves as Co-Chair of the Parish Council and is a member of St. Vincent de Paul, the Human Concerns Commission, and Military Ministry.



Mary Lou recalls her experience when she first was looking for a Catholic church to join. She had attended numerous Catholic churches in the area before learning of the “little white country church” during a conversation at the grocery store. When Mary Lou and Jay attended Sunday Mass in Diantha Hall that first weekend, they were asked to bring up the Offertory Gifts.

She said, “Never having been asked to do this before. I truly felt the Holy Spirit was guiding me to make St. Mary of the Annunciation my parish.” She added, “Shortly afterward, I heard another call to get more involved with this welcoming parish during a ministry fair. It was time to give back and thank God for the blessings in my life. Today I can say I feel so blessed that I was receptive to this Divine intervention 20 years ago.”