

Weekly Bulletin

ST JOSEPH, LYNDEN AND ST PETER, DEMING

February 1, 2026 – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.
-Matthew 28:19-20

Part of the Whatcom Catholic Churches: For comprehensive information regarding all Catholic Churches in Whatcom County, including priest schedules, Mass times and locations, please visit whatcomcatholic.org.

New staff page launched on Whatcom Catholic Website: Be sure to visit www.whatcomcatholic.org/staff to look at the staff directory for the entire county. This streamlined directory will allow those across the county to get in contact with parish staff and access the contact information for parish offices.

Pastor's Note

Demographic Survey

This and next weekend, we will be taking the demographic survey that allows us to move to the next phase of Partners in the Gospel. A few notes:

1. This next phase is **data-driven**. In addition to the demographic survey, the PFAC is also preparing a report on the state of our parish finances and buildings. These three things together help us better understand what we need to be planning for. If we have a bunch of buildings that are about to fail and we do not have the money to fix them, that requires planning. If our survey tells us that 40% of our parishioners are aged 70-80, that required planning. There are few things that we can know about the future, but knowing about the practical, present realities of our churches at least gives us a starting point for future discussion.
2. I am particularly excited about the demographic survey because it allows us to check our assumptions. Some churches *feel* particularly young or old. Some of our churches *feel* like most members are from the immediate neighborhood or like many people are driving in. Some of our churches *feel* like we have more or fewer households than previously. I am ready to get beyond what we feel about our churches or what we have been telling ourselves about our churches. I am ready to know! And then we can start responding to the realities of the present moment.
3. It is really important that **each household** take this survey. (Not each individual, please.) Data is only as good as its collection, so if a significant number of our Mass-goers do not take the survey, then the decisions we make based on this data will be flawed.

Tentative Ash Wednesday Schedule

This is a tentative schedule. There are still a few i's to dot and t's to cross, so **this is subject to change**. But we are so close to the day that I figure I need to publish the draft. As always, the **official** schedule should be checked closer to the day at <https://www.whatcomcatholic.org/mass>.

Please note that **Ash Wednesday is not a Holy Day of Obligation**. As such, attending a Word & Ashes service is perfectly appropriate, and even then is more than required. And, because it is not a Holy Day of Obligation,

priests are restricted to only two Masses that day, per [Canon 905](#). I tried to make sure each of our churches had one Mass, and to add Word & Ashes services at our three churches with multiple Masses each Sunday.

Bellingham

- 7:15 am, Mass, Sacred Heart – Fr. Tyler
- 10:00 am, Word & Ashes, Assumption – Dcn. Larry
- 12:30 pm, (School) Mass, Assumption – Fr. Moore
- 5:00 pm, Mass, WWU Campus – Fr. Tyler
 - Held in the Multipurpose Room in the Viking Union Building, but open to parishioners
- 5:30 pm, Word & Ashes, Assumption – Dcn. Larry

Northwest Corner

- 7:15 am, Mass, Ferndale – Fr. Stephan
- 12:30 pm, Mass, Blaine – Fr. Albie
- 5:00 pm, Mass, Lummi – Fr. Moore
- 6:00 pm, (Spanish) Mass, Ferndale – Fr. Manuel

North / East County

- 8:00 am, Mass, Lynden – Fr. Albie
- 5:30 pm, Mass, Deming – Fr. Stephan
- 5:30 pm, Word & Ashes, Lynden – Dcn. Dale

Easter Vigil Changes

I have made a decision that I know is going to be controversial, so please allow me to explain my reasoning.

The Decision

Here is the decision I made, after multiple consultative meetings with regional staff:

- The Easter Vigil at Assumption (Fr. Gerardo) will only be in Spanish.
- The adult baptisms in English will occur at the Vigils at St. Joseph, Ferndale (Fr. Moore) and Sacred Heart (Fr. Tyler).
- The Easter Vigil in Lynden (Fr. Stephan) will not have any adult baptisms.

Bilingual vs. Monolingual

This decision was primarily driven by my desire to have one Spanish-only Vigil rather than two bilingual Vigils.

And this for two reasons:

- The Easter Vigil is incredibly complex, and trying to navigate it in two languages just adds to the complexity. Having two bilingual Vigils seems like an unnecessary stumbling block when it is possible to have all our Vigils be in only one language.
- We have been pushing very hard for our Spanish-speaking community to think and act as one united community, rather than two communities split between Assumption and St. Joseph, Lynden. A significant part of this push is fueled by the (increasingly certain) long-term presence of the Claritian priests in Whatcom County. Because I am fostering a model of having one of our priests serve as a Spanish ministry specialist, I need to be deliberate in having common Spanish-speaking liturgies, including this most important liturgy of the year.

Location Decisions

At our last count, we are baptizing 46 people at our combined Easter Vigils this year (praise God!); 17 are Spanish-speaking and 29 are English-speaking. Dividing these up between Vigils was not easy. Here is the reasoning:

- Our Hispanic parishioners seem to bring more people with them to Vigil baptisms. A standard English-speaking adult might have 10 people (spouse, a few siblings, a few friends) come to witness their baptism. That same person from a Spanish-speaking family might have 20. As such, I think we need to use our largest church to house the Spanish language Vigil.
- Of the 9 people seeking baptism at St. Joseph, Lynden, 8 of them are Spanish-speaking. The addition of adult baptisms at a Vigil adds significant complexity to the ritual, so it did not make sense to me to have that one person be baptized in Lynden. Hence the Vigil with no baptisms.

Final Notes

First, this does not affect Holy Thursday or Good Friday, which should be the same as they have been in previous years.

Second, a sadness – this change most directly affects our liturgical and faith formation ministers, many of whom are very used to and blessed by their different roles during Holy Week. The English-speaking ministers at Assumption and the Spanish-speaking ministers in Lynden may feel homeless during this change and I am really sorry for that. I had to make a growth-oriented decision, but I wish I had a better way to help these folks feel integrated into the other Vigils.

Finally, this is a big change with a lot of assumptions. As I am sure all of you know by now, I do not shy from change or experimentation (in practicalities, never in doctrine!), because I think it is necessary to give God space to help us grown. That said, I will want all of us to watch closely how this goes to see if this is a worthwhile approach to our Easter Vigils, or if maybe my assumptions were wrong and we need to go back to a different system.

Thank you for your openness to what the Lord is doing in Whatcom County (either through or in spite of these changes).

May the Lord bless you and your families

F. Moore

Archdiocesan News

A Well-Ordered Society Rooted in Truth, Justice, and Peace

A Pastoral Letter by Archbishop Paul D. Etienne
+January 26, 2026, Feast of Saints Timothy and Titus

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Grace and peace to you in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

In these turbulent times — marked by conflict abroad, fragmentation at home, and profound questions about our shared moral life — the Church once again lifts high the Gospel as the light by which we must walk. [The Second Vatican Council](#), [Catholic Social Teaching](#) and the [Jan. 9, 2026, address of Pope Leo XIV](#) to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See illuminate our path with clarity and a renewed urgency. In his address, the Holy Father framed the challenges of our age through the lens of St. Augustine’s “[City of God](#),” offering a deeply Christian vision of peace, justice, and right order.

I wish to reflect with you on these themes, especially as they touch two essential pillars of any Christian society:

1. Charity — love of neighbor

2. Respect for the rule of law

These do not stand apart from the principles of our social teaching, but they flow directly from them.

Our Catholic Social Teaching makes clear that rights also come with corresponding duties. Every person has the right to what is necessary for human decency — food, work, safety, health care — but also the responsibility to ensure these rights for others.

The purpose of this pastoral letter is to help us understand these basic principles and to commit ourselves to building a better society.

Continue reading Archbishop's Pastoral Letter: [PDF](#) | [Flipbook](#)

Parish News

First Friday Confession

When: Friday February 6th, 4:30 to 5:30 pm

Where: Assumption, Bellingham

Volunteers needed

St Joseph Lynden is need of volunteers to join our greeter and usher ministries. If you are interested, please call the parish office.

Stations of the Cross

We will be having stations of the cross every Friday of Lent after the 9 am Mass in English and at 6 pm bilingual. We are looking for volunteers to help coordinate soup suppers after the 6 pm stations. Please call the parish office if you are interested.

Statewide Second Collection for PREPARES program on February 7th and 8th

On February 7th and 8th our parish family will participate in the statewide PREPARES Open Your Heart Second Collection. The PREPARES (Pregnancy & Parenting Support) ministry is a nurturing, parish-based response to mothers and fathers who, regardless of religious belief, have chosen life: the promise of support and care from pregnancy to their child's fifth birthday. Your gift, no matter the amount, will have a real impact in fulfilling the promise to families in need to provide life-affirming, life-changing support. Watch Bishop Shuster's video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngM87egtkdU>.

The program was initiated in 2014 by the bishops of Washington state to offer parishes the opportunity to live out Catholic teachings about the value of all human life and the preferential option for the poor. Since then, statewide, the program has been adopted by 197 parishes, and in 2025 trained 1,070 Volunteers and Companions providing 27,218 family encounters, offering one-on-one companionship, children's essentials, and social and educational events for young parents. To learn more, volunteer, or donate visit preparesforlife.org. Whatcom Catholic currently has 2 PREPARES programs, one at Church of the Assumption and one at St. Joseph, Lynden. This campaign will help support the state-wide program, which provides support to our 2 PREPARES programs.

End of year Giving Statement

End of year giving statements were emailed to all parishioners that have an email this week and mailed to all other parishioners. If you received your statement by mail and would like to add your email address, please call the parish office.

Coffee Hour

If you are interested in hosting a coffee hour at St Joseph Lynden after the 11 am Mass, please contact Marilyn Wyss at (360) 961-1168 or wysm@outlook.com.

Legacy of Faith and Family Protection Seminar

When: Friday February 6th, 2026, 7:00 pm

Where: St Joseph Ferndale

All Catholic families are invited to participate in an educational seminar that the Knights of Columbus in Whatcom County are organizing. This event aims to guide Catholic families through the complexities of aging, and financial preparation. Presentations will feature an elder law attorney discussing family transitions. A Knights of Columbus insurance representative will explain protective financial products that honor the charitable legacy of the organization's founder, Father Michael J. McGivney. Attendees will learn how to strengthen communal bonds and secure their loved ones' future through these various legal and fiscal resources. All Catholic families are invited to participate.

School News

ENROLLMENT SEASON OPEN HOUSE!

When: Sunday, February 1st, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm

Where: Assumption School

Current Assumption families are welcome, and we encourage you to share the information with your friends and family who may be interested (kids get a FREE DRESS PASS if they do!). Parent and student ambassadors will be on hand to help provide tours and answer questions.

DON'T FORGET! If you refer a new family who enrolls for 2026-27, you're eligible to receive a tuition credit of \$275 (registration for one child)! The new family must remain enrolled through November, at which time your account will be credited (December 1, 2026). Please contact the office if you have any questions about this incentive!

In case you missed it

Jesus Day Camp

June 22-26, 2026

Jesus Day Camp at St Joseph, Ferndale.

St Anne Altar Society No-host Galentine Dinner

When: February 7, 2026, after 5pm Mass

Where: Paso Del Norte, Blaine

All ladies are welcome to gather after Mass for fellowship, no-host dinner, and gathering.

St Anne All Church Chili Contest

When: February 21, 2026, after 5pm Mass

Where: St Anne Hall

Please share your talents

Bring the Heat! Enter our annual Chili Contest for a chance to be crowned the Chili Champion.

Show us what you've got and take home the title of Best Chili or bring a side or dessert to share.
Everyone is welcome.

Valentine's Party

February 14th, 6:00pm to 10:00pm

Assumption Church gym

You are invited to our annual Valentine Party!

Sponsored by the Bellingham Knights and the Catholic Daughters.

Live band for listening and dancing.

Food for snacking and a no host bar –CASH or CARD available.

Cover charge for the whole night: \$10 per person.

Adults 21 and older only please.

Upcoming

Sunday, February 1, 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

- St Peter – 8:00 am to 8:15am Confession
- St Peter – 8:30 am Mass
- St Joseph – 11 am Mass
- St Joseph - 5pm Spanish Rosary
- St Joseph – 7pm-9pm Youth Group

Monday, February 2

- St Peter – 9am Mass

Tuesday, February 3

- St Joseph – 9-11am Morning prayer group

Wednesday, February 4

- St Joseph– 5pm Confession
- St Joseph – 6pm Spanish Mass
- St Joseph – 6:30pm-7:30pm Faith Formation Classes

Thursday, February 5

- St Joseph –11:30am Patriotic Rosary
- St Joseph – 6:30pm-7:30pm Faith Formation Classes
- St Peter – 3pm-5pm Social Action

Friday, February 6

- St Joseph – 9am Mass
- St Joseph – 2pm Divine Mercy Chaplet

Saturday February 7

- St Joseph -11 am Little Giants
- St Joseph - 4pm Confessions
- St Joseph – 5pm Mass
- St Joseph – 6pm Spanish Rosary
- St Joseph – 7pm Spanish Mass

Sunday, February 8, 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time

- St Peter – 8:00 am to 8:15am Confession
- St Peter – 8:30 am Mass
- St Joseph – 11 am Mass
- St Joseph – 12:30pm – 2pm OCIA classes
- St Joseph– 5pm Spanish Rosary
- St Joseph – 7pm-9pm Youth Group

