

MOM TO MOM GROUP

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Dedication and Preparation



The month of February is dedicated to the Holy Family but is also a time of preparation for the upcoming

Lenten period. As Christ is presented in the temple to the Lord on Candlemas, it is only fitting that we should celebrate a candle festival to remember that moment when the Light of the World was received, when the old yielded to the new.

Spring might be showing its first signs of little flower buds coming through the ground, like Glory-of-the-snow, snowdrop or iris'. The journey of springtime, with its familiar landmarks

takes us into Lent. Now the pretty gifts of February begin to move aside to make space for the prophetic simplicity of bare twigs. These can be taken inside as a simple decoration alongside a small dish of earth and an unlit candle. In the silence of their austerity is heard the urgent call to life, to light, to fruitfulness.

February/ March Holidays

The February festivities start with *Candlemas*, where Christ is presented in the temple and the Prophet Simeon meets Him and foretells Christ as the Lords Salvation.

On the 14th of February we celebrate *St. Valentine's Day*, best done by making some Valentines crafts with the children and baking some cookies. Yum!

At last we can get ready for the Lenten time by preparing our homes and hearts first with a feast of two days, which is also known as *Shrovetide*, or *Mardis Gras*. We eat up all the left over sweets and candies from the previous festivities and mark this day by a special pancake feast. This tradition dates back to the early Middle Ages, where all rich foods

such as sugar, eggs and milk were used up in preparation for Lent. In Europe, South America and some of the southern States in the US this is celebrated with lots of parties, floats and parades.

Now we can truly prepare ourselves for *Ash Wednesday*, which brings us into the somber time of *Lent*.

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS:

- ◆ Candlemas (2. Feb.)
- ◆ Valentines Day (14. Feb.)
- ◆ Shrovetide (3./4. Mar.)
- ◆ Ash Wednesday (5. Mar.)
- ◆ Beginning of Lent

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St. Valentine Hearts

Materials:

- ◆ Red or pink felt
- ◆ Matching embroidery floss
- ◆ Fleece or cotton wool for stuffing



Felt is a great material to make all kinds of crafts and gifts from, especially for Valentines Day, everybody loves hearts, in either pink, as shown, or in my favorite color red.

These felt hearts can be given in various sizes just

like that, or strung to a garland or to a heart chain, as for this craft.

Cut out three sizes of hearts using a simple heart pattern in three different sizes, two pieces per size, from the felt.

Sew together the hearts of the same size using a blanket stitch. Start stitching at the top of the heart, ending at the same place. Just before closing up each heart, stuff it lightly with fleece or cotton wool.

Make a chain of hearts and hang them from the front door or above the table.

You could make several 'heart chains' and hang them on a wreath or branch, with a little bell attached at the bottom.

It is customary to bring candles from home to be blessed for Candlemas - candles that one uses for devotional purposes (candles for the family altar, Advent candles, etc.). They can be lit after dusk on All Saints' Day (1 November), during the Sacrament of Unction, and during storms and times of trouble. This bit of old poetry summarizes the use of blessed candles to ward off troubles:

A bit of Candlemas poetry

This done, each man his candle lights,
 Where chiefest seemeth he,
 Whose taper greatest may be seen;
 And fortunate to be,
 Whose candle burneth clear and bright:
 A wondrous force and might
 Both in these candles lie, which if
 At any time they light,
 They sure believe that neither storm
 Nor tempest cloth abide,

Nor thunder in the skies be heard,
 Nor any devil's spide,
 Nor fearful sprites that walk by night,
 Nor hurts of frost or hail.

Next Months Topic

Our topic for the month of March will be:
“Mindful/ Simple Living”

Please Note

- Moms Night Out — potluck on the 18th of February at Michelle’s!
- Please feel free to send me pictures from your baptisms, communions or other religious cele-

brations with some text so I can add them into the newsletter. If there are any other additions that you would like to see in the newsletter, please feel free to mail them to me!

For more information contact the Cathedral Office or Maggie Kaska at 603.203.8300

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