



Established
July 5, 1840

St. Michael the Archangel Parish

We are disciples who act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with God.

Churches: † Immaculate Conception-Holualoa † Holy Rosary-Kalaoa † St. Paul's-Kawanui † St. Peter's by-the-Sea-Kahalu'u

St. Michael's Church 75-5769 Alii Drive | Kailua-Kona, HI 96740 | Phone: (808) 326-7771

Email Address: stmichaelarchangel@rcchawaii.org / Office Hours: Monday through Friday | 9am—4:30pm

WEEKDAY MORNING MASSES: 7am Monday through Saturday at St. Michael the Archangel

WEEKDAY EVENING MASSES: 5pm Mon Tues Thurs Fri (English) & 6pm Wed (Spanish) at Immaculate Conception

Adoration: Wednesday 7:30am—4:45pm / Confessions: **Saturday 9am at St. Michael's Church**

WEEKEND MASSES: Sat 4pm, Sun 7am, 9am, 1:30pm, 4pm / SPANISH MASS: Sun 11:30am

Gift Shop Hours: Mon - Tue - Wed - Fri 9:30am - 1:30pm & Sun 6:30am - 2:30pm

Website: saintmichaelparishkona.org March 3, 2024 | 3 de marzo 2024

Third Sunday of Lent

Reading I - Exodus 20:1-17 | Psalm - 19:8,9,10,11 | Reading II - 1 Corinthians 1:22-25 | Gospel - John 2:13-25
Primera Lectura - Éxodo 20:1-17 | Salmo - 18:8,9,10,11 | Segunda Lectura - 1 Corintios 1:22-25 | Evangelio - Juan 2:13-25



3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

Since the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there. He made a whip out of cords and drove them all out of the temple area. - Jn 2:13b-15a

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD

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Prepare for Next Week's Scripture Readings

1st Reading: **2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23**

Primera Lectura: **2 Crónicas 36:14-16, 19-23**

Psalm/Salmo: **137(136):1-2, 3,4,-5,6**

2nd Reading/Segunda Lectura: **Ephesians (Efesios) 2:4-10**

Gospel/Evangelio: **John (Juan) 3:14-21**

THE PATH TO FREEDOM

Most of us, if we were asked “Does the phrase ‘the Ten Commandments’ appear in the Bible?” would likely get it wrong, because the answer is “no.” “The Ten Commandments” is a post-biblical, phrase that developed along with an image of God as police officer that is not found in today’s passage from Exodus. The first phrase is the key: God is the one who brings us out of slavery; following God’s law or commands is our path to freedom. The money-changers whom Jesus drove from the temple were not explicitly breaking any of the commandments, but neither were they helping people to find God’s path to freedom as they came to worship at the temple. This is an important Lenten lesson for us. We need to stop asking ourselves whether or not we are breaking specific rules or regulations and instead examine our lives to see if we are truly following a path to God’s freedom through Christ.

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I am the Lord your God. You shall not have other gods beside me.
-Exodus 20:2-3

Aloha! Welcome to Our Parish - We hope you will find our parish community a place where your faith will be nourished. We encourage you to register with the parish. Registration forms are available in the kiosk, or can be completed online at saintmichaelparishkona.org. To our visitors, we pray that you enjoy your stay in Kona and are blessed with safe travels home.



March 3, 2024

Third Sunday of Lent

Ex 20:1-17 | 1 Cor 1:22-25 | Jn 2:13-25

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

When I was a kid, my older siblings used to tell me what to do (no surprise there!) and often backed up their, ahem, “commands,” by saying, “Mom and Dad said so.” Interestingly, sometimes that statement was not true (!), and I would get the right information – what to do and the correct way to do it – directly from my parents. My experience is not unlike that of the Israelites in today’s first reading. As they escaped from bondage in Egypt and followed the Lord through the guidance of Moses, they developed their own ways of doing things, listened to the wrong people and acted as if they were indeed conveying truth. But the Lord steps in to correct them, and in “a direct, unmediated communication” of truth to them, gives them commandments to follow. (USCCB commentary) These instructions for how to live a moral life in relationship with God and with one another are the basis of the covenant they made there with the Lord. They are the foundation of the new covenant in which we partake through Jesus Christ, who came into our history as the perfect, unmediated communication of God.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

How do you envision Jesus? It’s easy to think of him as kind and easy-going – the type of person who never lets his feathers get ruffled, no matter how many times the Pharisees question and challenge him. However, we see a different side of Jesus today – one in which he is flipping over tables and brandishing a whip. He is driving out those who are using his Father’s house as a place to make money rather than as a place to worship. In the drama of that scene, let’s not overlook what comes next in the reading. The people there at the temple, obviously taken aback by what they have seen, ask for a sign to justify what authority Jesus has to drive people out of the temple. Jesus says, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” That confused people then, but we know today that the true temple is Jesus and that his rising from the dead would be the sign they sought. Just as the commandments of God have authority, so does Jesus who came as perfect obedience to those commandments to help us follow them ourselves.

PRAY It’s easy for us to think we’re doing a good job keeping the Lord’s commandments, but at the same time the line between right and wrong can seem blurred at times and we may relax a bit on some of their finer points. Try this week to dig deep within ourselves and turn to prayer for the strength to do what is right, seeking the wisdom of God rather than relying on human wisdom.

Life of Stewardship

Our readings call us to roll up our sleeves and persevere through the remainder of Lent by committing to a more faithful life with Christ.

In today's Gospel, Jesus purifies the temple area because it is being misused as a marketplace. He becomes angry at their lack of reverence for God. He spills the coins of the money changers and overturns tables, saying, "Take these out of here, and stop making my Father's house a marketplace."

Jesus witnessed the way people mistreated the temple - the place to worship God and God alone. He drives out evil and works to purify all that is sinful in that place. This is what Jesus wants to do for us this Lenten season. He wants to remove all impurity and evil in our lives and hearts so that we may have a proper dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Let us ask ourselves, what areas of our life need cleansing? Let us name those areas and invite Jesus to purify us. He became man to carry our burdens and wipe away our sins. He has given us boundless mercy, but we must do our part to seek it and commit to living a more faithful life as a disciple of Christ. With this knowledge, let us seek to be purified from our sins so that our hearts might be a true temple of the Holy Spirit.

This season of Lent is only halfway done - there is still time to work through our shortcomings and purify our hearts for Easter morning. But let us not waste another moment. Let us name our shortcomings, seek God's mercy and invite Him to transform our hearts. - *Stewardship Reflections by Catholic Stewardship*

Parish News

Malasadas Muito Obrigado!

Muito Obrigado to everyone for supporting this successful event! You did it again! We were sold out! Total funds raised toward our *Grace Parish Center debt reduction* was **\$1,200!** We are very grateful to the team who made it happen by supplying all of the ingredients in addition to preparing the hot fresh delicious malasadas: Fanny Gouveia, Doris Sanborn, Sally Fukunaga, Renee-Mae Ota, Chris & Kristen Kam, and Mike & Cheryl Appleby. Extra Mahalo to Barbara Kossow for making this event happen every year!

Catholic Relief Services

Next week our parish will take up the **Catholic Relief Services (CRS)** collection. Funds from this collection provide food to the hungry, support displaced refugees, and bring Christ's love and mercy to vulnerable people here and abroad. Next week, please give to the collection and reveal Christ's love to those most in need. Learn more about the collection at www.usccb.org/catholic-relief. Envelopes have been inserted in this week's bulletin. (This is not to be confused with CRS Rice Bowl that is done throughout the Lenten season and collected on Holy Thursday.)

AARP Tax Aide Offers Free Tax Preparation

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide provides in-person and virtual tax assistance to anyone, free of charge, with a focus on taxpayers who are over 50 and have low to moderate income.

- Hale Halawai on Thursdays from 8am - 12noon serving clients in-person; first-come/first-served walk-in basis.

- Yano Hall on Wednesdays from 10am - 4pm. Both walk-ins and appointments accepted. APPT. LINE for Yano Hall location only: (808) 765-9141

Visit <https://hi1.taxaide.aarpfoundation.org> for more info.

40 Cans for Lent

The Knights of Columbus have started their annual "40 Cans for Lent" campaign. **Please consider donating one can for each day of our Lenten season.** Donations can be left in the carts near the front entrance.

St. Michael's 14th Annual Golf Tournament

St. Michael's 14th Annual Charity Golf Tournament will be held on **Saturday March 23rd** at **Kona Country Club**. It will be a 2-person Scramble Format, \$150.00 per player. Call Don David 808-756-6912 to sign up.

New Parishioner Orientation Luncheon

You are invited to our **New Parishioner Orientation on Sunday, March 17th after the 1:30pm Mass.** *Come learn the history of our Parish, meet our priests, ministry coordinators, and receive a welcome gift!* We will meet in the Church after Mass with lunch to follow in the Grace Parish Center. Please call the Parish Office to **RSVP** with your name, phone number and number attending.

To Our Parish Members

The **presence of children** is a gift to the Church and they are a **reminder** that **our parish is growing**. Please **welcome** our children and give a **warm, supportive** smile of **encouragement** to their parents.

To Families with Small Children:

RELAX: God put the wiggles in your little ones. No need to suppress it! **SIT CLOSE AND EXPLAIN:** Sit towards the front where it's easier to see and hear. Quietly explain the parts of the Mass. **PARTICIPATE:** Your child learns by imitating you. Sing, pray, and respond. Your child will follow your lead! **WANDER:** If you need to leave Mass, feel free to step outside, but please be sure to come back! Your St. Michael's Parish Ohana is happy you are here!

Faith Formation

Grades K-5

Congratulations to the Faith Formation students who received the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday. Please pray for them as they continue to prepare for the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

Faith Formation/Youth Ministry (Grades 6-12)

Our next class is also the Mandatory Safe Environment Training for Youth in grades 6-12 on Sunday, March 3rd.

Lenten Stations of the Cross

Every Friday during Lent, the **Stations of the Cross** will be prayed **at 5pm at St. Michael's in English** and at **6pm at Immaculate Conception in Spanish.**

Life in Spirit Seminar (Feb 13 - Apr 2)

The Charismatic Prayer Group presents **Session #4- Receiving God's Gift** on Tuesday, March 5 from 6:30-

Stewardship of Treasure

Feb 19th - Feb 25th, 2024

ONLINE GIVING	\$ 2,230.00
SUNDAY OFFERINGS / MAILED-IN OFFERINGS	\$ 13,027.00
GRACE PARISH CENTER CAMPAIGN	\$ 15,582.00

Parish Center Update

We have collected **\$4,876,142.68** for the Parish Center Campaign, which includes pledge payments.

Mahalo for your continued generosity.

Offerings can be mailed directly to the parish office; or click on our website's "Online Giving" to share your blessings.

STEWARDSHIP OF OUR TREASURE FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2024

MONTHLY DIOCESAN ASSESSMENT: **\$10,831.00**

MONTHLY 'OHANA IN CHRIST ASSESSMENT: **\$1,724.18**

The above amounts fund Diocesan ministries, as listed in *'Ohana in Christ* to help support our parishes, pastors, schools, service agencies, and communities within the Diocese of Honolulu.

Online Giving

St. Michael's Church provides **Online Giving** - a convenient and safe way to make a one-time or recurring donation. Getting started is easy - visit saintmichaelparishkona.org and click our **ONLINE GIVING** tab. Your gift will be securely transferred directly to the parish bank account.

8pm at St. Michael's. We will discuss steps that will help in the Baptism in the Holy Spirit-Week #5.

Consecration to God the Father Ministry

Please join us in prayer to honor God Our Father, **Sunday, March 3 on St. Michael's South Lanai after the 1:30pm Mass.** We will pray Consecration Prayers to God Our Father and Divine Mercy. The prayer of Consecration helps us to acknowledge God as our Eternal Father, to honor Him, and to give Him our commitment to follow His commandments.

Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

OCIA classes continue on **March 4th & 18th** from 5:45 to 7:15pm in the Grace Parish Center.

Deacon Formation Program

The Deacon Formation Program is actively recruiting for its 12th Cohort. Applicants who meet the requirements will be accepted into their formal Aspirancy in 2025. If you are contemplating submitting an application, attendance at one of the Inquiry Weekends is mandatory. They are scheduled on Oahu on April 12-14, May 3-5, and June 14-16. Please see Deacon Craig or Deacon Sándor for more information.

Third Sunday of Lent

Paul reminded the Corinthians, "We proclaim Christ crucified." Christ's weakness is stronger than any human strength. The power of the cross is greater than anything the world or evil has to combat it.

The Lenten season is one of repentance, self-denial, almsgiving, and prayer. Many in our modern world do not see

any wisdom in denying themselves anything. Those swept away in a consumer culture want more and they want it faster, bigger, and better. They also are looking for easy and quick satisfaction, unwilling to wait long.

Paul speaks of the "foolishness of God" and how it is wiser than any human wisdom. Lent is a time to put aside that which we feel and think as humans and put on the attitude of Christ. The cross of Christ is neither easy nor fleeting, and it will ask us to deny our very selves for him. To the human mind it makes no sense. However, by putting on Christ and seeing with his eyes, we see reality with clarity. Our sacrifice can lead to riches that only a "foolish" man would covet. But it is exactly there that we are satisfied and fulfilled.

Treasures From Our Tradition

Participating in Lent, we are engaging in patterns that have endured across the centuries. From very early times, we have the sense of accompanying the elect on their journey to the font. From as long ago as the fourth century, we receive Lent as forty days to shake the dust from our spirituality and reorder our conduct. Then, fasting was not seen as a strict duty, yet it seems it was widely observed. Think of the rules of politeness and courtesy that everyone agrees on. Fasting was also seen as a social duty, since food was in short supply as winter wore on, and the weak and the sick had the first claim on what remained on hand.

As a boost to the fasting of the body, the church developed a richer spiritual fare, including celebration of the Eucharist every day. This practice began in Rome by the sixth century. Weekday Mass was only at designated "stations." The pope would arrive on horseback at the station church. In those days, although the catechumenate was already in eclipse, there were pre-baptismal activities at the station Masses: the giving of the Lord's Prayer, prayers for the godparents, and constant references to baptism.

- Rev. James Field, © Copyright, J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.

Everyday Stewardship - Go Beyond Recitation

Can you recite the Ten Commandments by heart? Several years ago a national US survey found more people could identify the ingredients in a Big Mac and name the children in the Brady Bunch television show than recite the Ten Commandments. Of course, being able to recite them is not nearly as important as living a life in harmony with them. However, if we simply live to not break them then we are only living out half of our discipleship.

Every commandment calls us to action beyond the simplicity of its words. We are not to kill, but we are also called to support life. We are not to steal, but we are also to share what we have freely. We are to have no other Gods before our God, but we also need to actively praise and glorify Him.

To live a moral life is to do more than follow rules and laws. It is to actively live in a way that gives witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ. This way of living is

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stewardship. As we focus more on the penitential message of Lent, we need to not just reflect on what we have done wrong, but equally what we have failed to do. To be given so much by a loving God and not share those things with God and His people is wrong as well. Perhaps as we reflect on these things we might find ourselves adding something to our lives that will last for many Lenten seasons to come.

- Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS © LPI

Recognize God in Your Ordinary Moments - *The Merciful Anger of Jesus*

Watch your fellow churchgoers today as the priest or deacon reads the story of Jesus raising hell (or perhaps he's raising heaven?) in the temple square. Dollars to donuts, they will be squirming.

As Catholics, we have become very uncomfortable with Angry Jesus. He makes us cringe in the same way that the Old Testament God does when He calls Himself "jealous" and talks about punishment. That level of intensity makes us recoil. If it were present in a human relationship, it would be toxic and abusive, because in humanity, fierceness and love rarely coexist in a healthy way.

But what a tragedy it would be for us to mistake our relationship with God for our relationship with our spouse, our best friend, or even our human father. Because we cannot see clearly, we would mistake His zeal for anger and His law for diktat.

The strong and sure movement of a wave against a rocky cliff will, over time, erode its surface, just as an overabundance of raindrops will flood a city. We do not call the water callous and cruel. We still luxuriate in its coolness and refreshment. Its destructive powers don't negate the life-giving properties of water. We do not demand that water apologize to us for being strong.

Fierce, uncompromising - but also, soft and merciful. How can God - and God's law - be both, at the same time? How can Christ cast a whip at someone's foot, overturn a table and scatter coins? How can the law of God be perfect, as the Psalm says, and refresh the soul - while demanding so much of it?

All I can say is, thank God for Angry Jesus. We need his fierceness and thank God it does not wane because it confuses us. Thank God his mercy does not decrease because we doubt it. - Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman, ©LPi

*"For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength."
- 1 Corinthians 1:25*

Mass Intentions

SATURDAY, MARCH 2ND

- 4pm - Alfred Lacro, 8th Anniversary of Death

SUNDAY, MARCH 3RD

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

- 7am - Frances Acol, Rest in Peace
- 9am - Dr. John & Monica Choe, 40th Wedding Anniversary
- 1:30pm - Deacon Michael Ross, Anniversary of Death
- 4:00pm - Etienne Anori Galindo, For Health and Strength

MONDAY, MARCH 4TH

- 7am - Louis Padayan, Rest in Peace
- 5pm - Bob Rumer, Rest in Peace

TUESDAY, MARCH 5TH

- 7am - Pepe Bouchard, Rest in Peace
- 5pm - Denise Brocille, For Healing

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6TH

- 7am - MISSA PRO POPULO

THURSDAY, MARCH 7TH

- 7am - Robert Pawelski, For Healing
- 5pm - Carmen Lacro, 12th Anniversary of Death

FRIDAY, MARCH 8TH

- 7am - Greg Croall, For Healing
- 5pm - Ken Kindt, For Healing

SATURDAY, MARCH 9TH

- 7am - Angel Oakins, For Healing

Requesting a Mass Intention

A Mass intention can be scheduled by calling the Office at **326-7771**. If you'd like to request a specific day and Mass time, ***please call well in advance of the date to secure it.***

Mass cards are available.

"For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat..."

—Matthew 25:35

The Food Pantry Ministry

The Food Pantry is open the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month from **9 - 9:45am** at **Immaculate Conception Church Parking Lot.**

It's Not About Marriage

This Week's Readings at Mass

- ▶ Exodus 17:3-7 - Water from the rock
- ▶ Romans 5:1-2, 5-8 - Faith, hope, and love
- ▶ John 4:5-42 - The Samaritan woman at the well

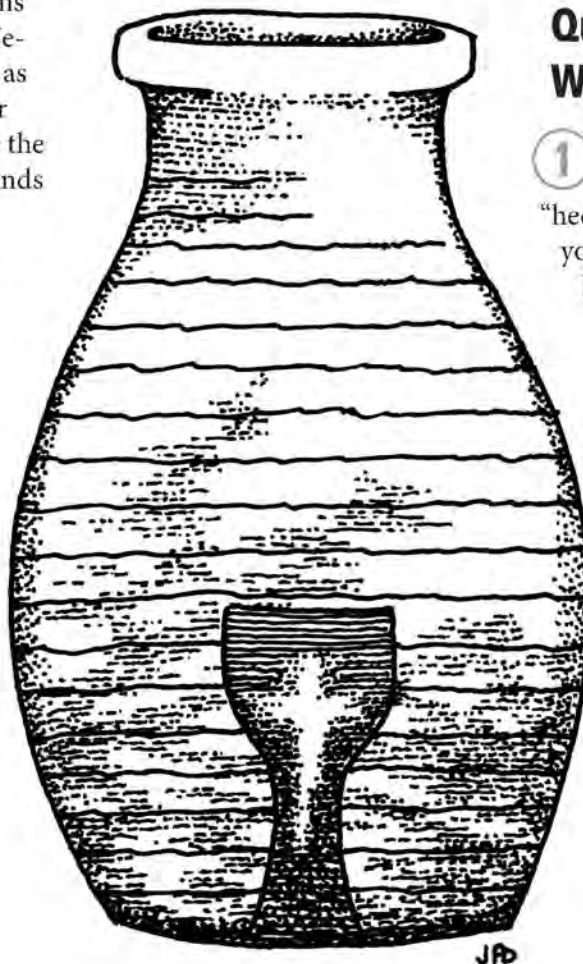
The Samaritan woman stays with Jesus through a dense theological conversation in the Gospel today. Christians often don't recognize the references the two are making to the Old Testament and to Jewish and Samaritan history in their dialogue. The woman proves herself to be very intelligent and knowledgeable here, especially when Jesus notes that she has been married five times already. She immediately recognizes him as a prophet at that moment.

In the Old Testament, prophets accused the people of marital infidelity when they worshiped other gods. Interestingly, the Samaritans had been ruled by five foreign nations who worshiped other gods. So Jesus isn't calling this woman out as a sexual sinner. He is calling her people out for unfaithfulness to the one true God, and she understands what he means by this.

Unlike Nicodemus, who questioned Jesus the night before and left still confused about who Jesus was, the Samaritan woman goes from seeing Jesus as "just" a Jew, to a prophet, to the Messiah—all in the course of one conversation. Then she does what all of the apostles do in John's gospel: she leaves behind the symbol of her livelihood (her water jar) and urges others to come and spend time with Jesus so that they can get to know him themselves.

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Sheepish Question:
What gifts in my life does God expect to keep on giving?



Questions of the Week

- 1 In what ways have you been unfaithful to God? Have you "hedged your bets" by trusting in your money, your career, your home, etc. as other sources of security besides God? In other words, what other gods have you worshipped?
- 2 In what area(s) of your life might Jesus be calling you to greater trust and faithfulness?

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PARISH EVENTS

(may change without advance notice)

MONDAY

- Friendly Place Lunches 10:30am-12pm
- OCIA (Feb 19, Mar 4,18) 5:45-7:15pm
- Knights of Columbus 5:45pm
(2nd Monday of the month)
- Church Cleaning 6:00pm

TUESDAY

- Coffee & Sweets with Fr. Lio 7:30-9:00am
- Life in the Spirit Seminar/
Charismatic Prayer Group 6:30-8:00pm

WEDNESDAY

- Adoration 7:30-5:00pm
- Kupuna Ministry 8:30-10:30am
- Benediction/Evening Prayer 5:00pm
- Men of Faith 5:00-6:30pm

THURSDAY

- Spiritual Book Club 4:00-5:30pm
(2nd & 4th Thursday of each month)

FRIDAY - NO EVENTS

SATURDAY

- Church Cleaning 7:30am
- Grounds Maintenance 7:30am
- Confession 9-10am

SUNDAY

- Children's Rosary Group After 9am Mass
(Last Sunday of each month)
- Consecration to God the Father After 1:30 Mass
(1st Sunday of each month)
- Faith Formation (K-5) 10:20-11:20am
- Faith Formation (6-12) 5:15-7:15pm
(See the Faith Formation section of bulletin for class dates)

PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do you, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

Parish Life Photos

Be featured in our bulletin, website, social media, newsletters, etc. Send your ministry/parish life photos to smkonamedia@rcchawaii.org

40 DAYS FOR LIFE™

February 14th to March 24th

Join this international event to end abortion through 40 days of peaceful prayer vigil, fasting and community outreach. Sign up online at 40daysforlife.com/kona.



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request to God through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



Journey With Me

Lord God,
fill my heart with love,
so that I can see you in others
and recognize them as the temples
in which you reside on earth.
May your spirit guide my every step.

In my struggles,
give me strength and courage
so that I will be steadfast in faith
as I continue my journey.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 3, 2024

Renewed Temples



Today's readings: Exodus 20:1–17; Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11; 1 Corinthians 1:22–25; John 2:13–25. Lent is a time for interior and exterior cleansing. Jesus was outraged when he saw what was taking place in the temple. The moneychangers failed to show reverence for the house of God when they used it as a marketplace. While some could not understand Jesus' overturning of the moneychangers' tables, the disciples recalled the words of Scripture, "Zeal for your house will consume me." Jesus' reaction to the sales in the temple make it apparent that such zeal was missing from others.

In baptism, we become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Our consideration of Christ's care for the temple in Jerusalem is an opportunity to reflect on how we care for all human beings, who are made in the image and likeness of

God. Do we treat them with the dignity that a child of God deserves, remembering each person is sacred?

Just as you show concern for others, you need to care for yourself. How do you care for your interior life? Do you seek reconciliation with God through the sacrament of penance? Do you take to heart that God's mercy is for you as well as for others? In the remaining weeks of Lent, be especially attentive to the words of the penitential act. During this part of the Mass, the faithful may pray the Confiteor, after which the priest calls on God's mercy. The other option is for the faithful to pray the Kyrie, saying, "Lord, have mercy / Christ have mercy" to the priest's invocations. Seeking mercy, our zeal for God is apparent.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 4 Faith and Humility

When Jesus is asked to perform signs in his hometown as he did in other places, he refuses, saying, “No prophet is accepted in his own native place.” Jesus accepted that his former neighbors would not believe and so did not seek to prove himself. Sometimes we face humbling situations; we, too, do not need to prove ourselves. It is necessary only to accept that all we have is by the grace of God. *Today’s readings: 2 Kings 5:1–15ab; Psalm 42:2–3; 43: 3–4; Luke 4:24–30.*

Tuesday, March 5 Love and Kindness

In today’s Gospel, Jesus tells Peter that he must forgive another “not seven times but seventy-seven times.” From that instruction, we may ascertain that we are to forgive over and over again. Such forgiveness is an act of kindness, one which any of us would hope to receive after our own transgression. When wronged, we have an opportunity to create enmity or to nurture love. Who needs your forgiveness? From whom do you need to request forgiveness? *Today’s readings: Daniel 3:25, 34–43; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 6, 7bc, 8–9; Matthew 18:21–35.*

Wednesday, March 6 Praise the Lord

“Praise the Lord, Jerusalem,” we sing today in the refrain for Psalm 147. In recognizing all that God has done, the psalm is a reminder that prayers of praise should be part of our prayer life. During these remaining weeks of Lent, schedule a time at the end of the day to recall the ways that God has blessed you. Compose your own prayer of praise and thanksgiving. You might include today’s refrain in your prayer. *Today’s readings: Deuteronomy 4:1, 5–9; Psalm 147:12–13, 15–16, 19–20; Matthew 5:17–19.*

Thursday, March 7 Soften Your Hearts

In the reading from Jeremiah, the Lord speaks of how his people have ignored his voice and his commands. The Lord tells the prophets: “But they obeyed not, nor did they pay heed. They walked in the hardness of their hearts.” Hardened hearts are still noticed, as people are concerned with many things. Efforts can be made to soften hearts. Today, tell someone that God loves him or her, and that you do too. Do not expect a response. *Today’s readings: Jeremiah 7:23–28; Psalm 95:1–2, 6–7, 8–9; Luke 11:14–23.*

Friday, March 8 Listen with Your Heart

Sometimes we ask questions when we already know the answer. Are we hoping for a different answer from what we know is from God? The third week of Lent is winding down. Have you committed to a process of transformation? Have you set aside time for discernment and reflection? As the Lenten season continues, take courage and listen with your heart. *Today’s readings: Hosea 14:2–10; Psalm 81:6c–8a, 8bc–9, 10–11ab, 14, 17; Mark 12:28–34.*

Saturday, March 9 Spring Cleaning

The phrase “Practice makes perfect” is kept in mind while seeking to improve performance. In today’s readings, we hear that God desires our love and mercy, not our sacrifice. Each season of the liturgical year is a new opportunity to grow in our love for God and others and to learn to be generous with our mercy. Lent’s emphasis on penitence and baptism is an invitation to discard what keeps us from God and bring to the fore those practices that conform us to the promises of our baptism. Some might call this an interior spring cleaning. *Today’s readings: Hosea 6:1–6; Psalm 51:3–4, 18–19, 20–21ab; Luke 18:9–14.*

