



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-Kahalua
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, 4pm / SPANISH MASS: Sun 12 noon

Gift Shop Hours: Sun 7:30am - 11:00am

Website: saintmichaelparishkona.org **March 23, 2025 | 23 de marzo de 2025**

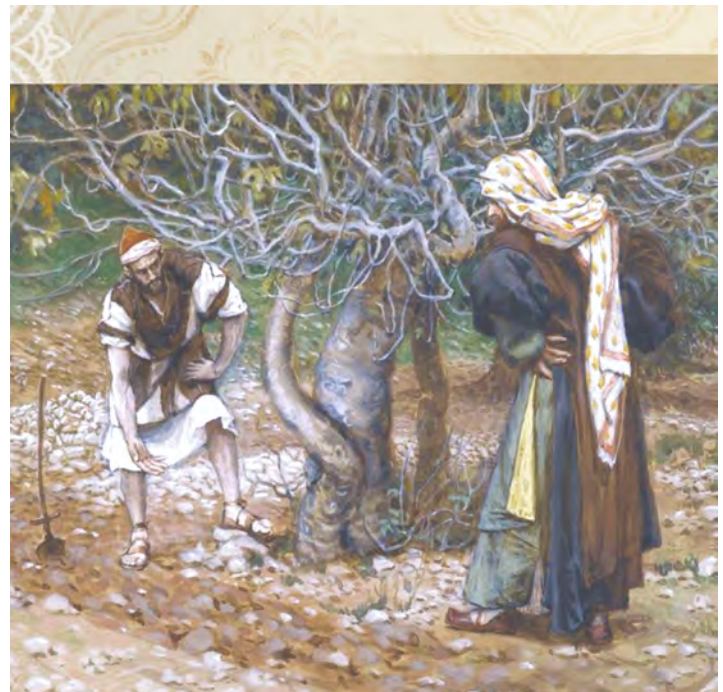
Third Sunday of Lent

Reading I - **Exodus 17:3-7** | Psalm - **103:1-2,3-4,6-7,8,11** | Reading II - **1 Corinthians 10:1-6,10-12** | Gospel - **Luke 13:1-9**
Primera Lectura - **Éxodo 17:3-7** | Salmo - **102:1-2,3-4,6-7,8,11** | Segunda Lectura - **1 Corintios 10:1-6,10-12** | Evangelio - **Lucas 13:1-9**

MID-LENT CHECK-IN

God says to Moses, "This is what you shall tell the Israelites: I AM sent me to you . . . The LORD, the God of your [ancestors], the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:14, 15). As Jesus would later say, God is not a God of the dead, but of the living, and so we believe that the dead will one day rise. At this mid-point of Lent, we pause to consider how our repentance is leading us to the Resurrection, to our reunion with the great "I AM." Part of our repentance involves working to secure justice for all and helping our neighbor to live in God's ways. We encourage each other and nurture each other, like the compassionate gardener of today's Gospel, who tells the owner of the orchard that he will nurture the tree, fertilize it, and perhaps it will bear fruit.

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3rd Sunday OF LENT

"He said to the gardener, 'For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none. So cut it down.'" - Lk 13:7a

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1996, 1970 CCD.

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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.

Prepare for Next Week's Scripture Readings

1st Reading: **Joshua 5:9a,10-12**

Primera Lectura: **Josué 5:9,10-12**

Psalm/Salmo: **34 (33):2-3,4-5,6-7**

2nd Reading: **2 Corinthians 5:17-21**

Segunda Lectura: **2 Corintios 5:17-21**

Gospel/Evangelio: **Luke (Lucas) 15:1-3,11-32**

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 23, 2025

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Third Sunday of Lent

Ex 3:1-8a, 13-15 | 1 Cor 10:1-6, 10-12 | Lk 13:1-9

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

Meaningful human relationships rarely last if only one party makes an effort to maintain a connection. The same is true in our relationship with God. In the scene recorded in today's first reading – arguably one of human history's "Top Ten" most important events – God takes the initiative, but the encounter is two-sided. God causes the bush to burn and Moses approaches; God calls Moses and he responds, "Here I am!"; finally, Moses asks God his name and God reveals himself as "I am who am." Moses' cooperation with God throughout is essential for them to arrive at this monumental revelation which would allow Moses (and, by extension, all of the Israelites) to call upon God by name. Despite our many technological achievements, a free, generous, loving response to God's initiative is still the only "fruit" we can bear for him that he cannot procure himself. This is the fruit which the fig tree in Jesus' Gospel parable is meant to produce. If we truly desire and seek this relationship, God will reveal himself to us so that, no matter our stage or state of life, we can bear this fruit *even now*.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

In his encounter with God, Moses exhibits an exemplary combination of boldness and humility which teaches us how we should approach our relationship with God. This is our "roadmap" which will help us fertilize the "ground" of our hearts. Consider Moses' bold, inquisitive spirit: "I must go over to look at this remarkable sight," and his prompt response to God's call: "Here I am!" Consider the audacity Moses must have had to ask God for his name. At the same time, however, consider his humility in removing the sandals from his feet and hiding his face before the majesty of God. The God who revealed himself to Moses is the same God who invites us into relationship with him. We can and should have Moses' boldness to ask God to teach us about himself. But we should also approach God with a spirit of reverence and awe. Our humility will be the fertile soil that God can use to make us his intimate friends and his representatives before others.

LISTEN

Sometimes we have habits or attitudes that prevent us from hearing God's voice. Like Moses removing his sandals, choose something you can forgo this week (for example, social media or music in the car) so that you can hear and respond to the Lord. Make sure you dedicate your extra quiet time to talking to God.



Life of Stewardship

Today's Gospel passage reminds us that life is precious and the gift of time on this earth is just that - a gift. None of us knows how much time will be granted to us, so we must use this gift intentionally to glorify God and serve our neighbor.

Jesus offers the parable of the fig tree to further illustrate this truth. The owner of the orchard came searching for fruit on a fig tree he had planted in his orchard. Finding no fruit on the tree after three years, he told the gardener to cut it down. But the gardener intercedes and asks for one more year to cultivate and fertilize the tree in hopes it would bear fruit in the future. The fig tree was not dying; it simply wasn't doing much of anything at all. Can this be said of us and our lives as well?

The season of Lent is a time to carefully reflect on the way we spend our time. Do we make God our first priority, tending to our spiritual growth and sacramental life with diligence? Do we give the next priority to our loved ones, focusing intentionally on them each day without distractions from phones, screens, or thoughts of work? If not, now is the moment to repent of our waste of time or of misplaced priorities on our use of time. God is merciful but just. Let's turn to Him and ask Him to make our lives fruitful while we still have time to do so.

- Stewardship Reflections by Catholic Stewardship

Parish News

10th Year Anniversary - Saturday, March 29

Come celebrate our 10th year anniversary on Saturday, March 29! Mass will be at 10am followed by lunch in the Grace Parish Center. No 7am Mass. Confessions at 9am. Vigil Mass at 4pm.

40 Days for Life

The Respect Life Committee continues their 40days For Life prayer vigil that started on Wednesday, March 5 until Sunday, April 13 in front of St. Michael's Church. 40days For Life is a peaceful prayer vigil to end abortion occurring nationwide and internationally. Sign up at: www.40daysforlife.com/en/kona.

40 Cans for Lent

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

Lenten Soup Supper

Come and spend an hour of adoration between 7:30 and 5pm. Then join us for Benediction at 5:00pm. After Benediction, ministries will provide a simple soup supper with bread in the Grace Parish Center. We look forward to seeing you as we come together to embrace the Lenten season.

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.**

Lenten Fish Fry Friday - March 28

After attending the Stations of the Cross, meet fellow parishioners on Friday, March 28th for Lenten Fish Fry Fridays from 5:45pm to 7:15pm, for just \$10 per person, in the Grace Parish Center, hosted by the Knights of Columbus.

12-day Pilgrimage to the Philippines

Join Bishop Larry Silva and Monsignor Gary Secor on a 12-day pilgrimage to The Philippines from July 20 to 31. Use QR code for the detailed pilgrimage itinerary.



Grief Recovery Method Program

The Grief Recovery Method program provides a safe environment for you to look at your old beliefs about coping with loss, which losses continue to affect your life, and take effective actions that will lead you to complete unresolved emotions that may still be causing you pain. This is an "action-based" program, involves reading and writing assignments outlined in *The Grief Recovery Handbook, 20th Anniversary Expanded Edition* (book provided). This program is not a drop-in group, and registered participants meet for 8 weekly sessions. There is **no cost for this program**, but it does require a firm commitment and attendance at all sessions, for success in learning to recover from unresolved grief. The 8-week program will be held **Wednesdays, April 2 - May 21, 2025**, from **10 am-12 noon**, at St. Michael the Archangel Parish Center. For more information, please see the *Grief Recovery Method Overview flyer* on the church kiosks. Registration before April 2 is required. To register, contact **Suzanne Zaw**, Certified Grief Recovery Specialist, at (808)339-7980.

Marriage & Family Life Enrichment - Languages of Love

Based on the book, *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman, please join us on Saturday, April 5th from 10am to 4pm in the Grace Parish Center. \$5 per person registration fee includes light lunch & materials. Open to everyone! For more info and to register:



Jubilee Days of Study

The Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis is scheduling Days of Study throughout the year to help people learn more about the Jubilee Year, the history of the church and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The next day of study scheduled on **Hawaii Island is on Saturday, April 12 from 9 am to 3 pm at the Annunciation Church in Waimea.** The themes of the Days of Study are broad, covering the Jubilee Year's emphasis on hope, the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism. The general outline of a Day of Study will include prayer, a keynote talk, thematic workshops, group discussions and refreshments. Open to all ages. The workshops align with the Jubilee Year's focus on spiritual renewal and also offer an opportunity to receive a plenary indulgence.



Faith Formation

Faith Formation Classes Grades K-5

Classes for March are on March 23, and 30.

- Margaret Essex, Catechist

Youth Ministry Classes Grades 6-12.

Happy Lent! Enjoy your Spring Break, next session March 30th. First Confession Saturday, April 5th meet at 8:30 am for instruction on the plaza. April Youth Ministry classes on April 6, 13, & 27 from 5:15-7:15. Parent meeting for Sacraments, April 6. -Edwina Fujimoto, Youth Minister

Stewardship of Treasure

March 10th - 16th, 2025

ONLINE GIVING	\$ 2,905.00
SUNDAY OFFERINGS / MAILED-IN OFFERINGS	\$ 12,202.00
GRACE PARISH CENTER CAMPAIGN	\$ 7,592.20

Parish Center Update

We have collected **\$5,769,185.99** 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 MARCH 2025

MONTHLY DIOCESAN ASSESSMENT: **\$11,525.00**

MONTHLY 'OHANA IN CHRIST ASSESSMENT: **\$2,446.33**

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.

Third Sunday of Lent - Learn from the Gardener

Death stares out at us from our newspapers and TV screens. Apart from natural deaths, somewhere in the world there's always some natural calamity, a terrorist attack, ethnic brutalities, murder for gain, epidemics, tsunamis, earthquake or famine. Death does not predict its calendar, but is a certain fate for us all. People who were expected to live to old age die suddenly while others whose childhood was marked by illness often survive to a remarkable age.

Our reactions to other people's death can be either a philosophical acceptance like, "Maybe it was his/her time to go" or a more shocked sense of loss: "It should not have happened so soon!" When people told Jesus how some Galileans died, victims of Pilate's anger, they wondered how God could have let this happen; but instead of explaining it, Jesus asks "do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem?" He goes on to warn about the need of repentance.. "unless you repent, you will all perish as they did!" and illustrates this with the parable of the fruitless tree. Real repentance is a reflection about whatever is unfruitful in our lifestyle. Jesus' words "Repent or you will perish" remind us of what Socrates said at his trial, after he had opted for death rather than exile: "*The un-examined life is not worth living.*" The parable of the fruitless fig tree is thought-provoking. It is not about doing wrong but about failure to do what is positively right. The fig tree that bore no fruit is like a Christian who attempts no good work and lives a purely selfish life. Francis of Assisi once invited a young friar to go with him into town to preach. Francis and the young friar spent all day walking through the streets and then came home. When the

day's journey was done, the young friar was disappointed and asked "Weren't we supposed to preach today?" Francis replied, "Son, we have preached. We were preaching while we were walking. We were seen by many and our behavior was noted. It is of no use walking anywhere to preach unless we preach wherever as we walk!" He summed up his idea in these words "Preach the Gospel everywhere, and if necessary, use words." To him witnessing to Jesus wasn't merely quoting some words out of the Bible from time to time but one who lives by the word of God each day.

The gardener in the Gospel asked the owner of the vineyard to give the barren fig tree another chance to produce fruit. He promised to dig around it and manure it, to give it one last chance to prove itself. It suggests that we too need to nurture our faith and commit ourselves to being helpful to the lives of others. Are we nurturing our faith and trying to love, so as to bear the kind of fruit God wants from us? - <https://associationofcatholicpriests>

Treasures from our Tradition

Hollywood has given us an image of Moses slipping off his shoes before a burning bush. God has just called Moses by name, and so that Moses doesn't miss the meaning of this breakthrough in human history, God requires that all barriers to the experience be eliminated. If you've ever tried to maneuver barefoot across hot sand, or pick your way along a rocky beach, you know how sensitive feet can be.

Within the Church, there are religious orders with a custom of going barefoot, not merely to show poverty, but to be an outward sign of a desire for connection with creation, a desire to go through life alert to what God is doing. In early days, when reconciliation was a once-in-a-lifetime possibility, penitents often went barefoot for a long period of time as a sign of their conversion. Even today, people follow an ancient practice of slipping off their shoes to walk in the procession to the cross on Good Friday. It is striking that the first use of our newly-scrubbed feet from Holy Thursday night is to walk resolutely in the footsteps of Christ to the cross.

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

Everyday Stewardship - It's Time For Some Weeding

Perhaps this Lent you are working hard to stick with your devotions, avoid hamburgers on Fridays, and fight your temptations for soda since you gave it up for Jesus. You are planting seeds in your spiritual life in hopes of growing them into something beautiful and meaningful. However, you have been trying this approach now for many years, and it is hard to say that much has grown during all that time. You could deduce that what you are doing is not as worthwhile as you once believed. There is no fruit because these things don't matter. Or you could take a real hard look at your life, see where you are planting those seeds, and finally notice what the problem has been all along. WEEDS!

Too often, we plant seeds over and over again in soil that is not rich in nutrients and is filled with weeds. The weeds choke the life out of any growth that comes to the

YOU ARE INVITED

(schedule may change without advance notice)

MONDAY

- Friendly Place Lunches 10:30am-12pm
- Knights of Columbus 5:45pm
(2nd Monday of the month)
- Church Cleaning 6:00pm

TUESDAY

- Coffee with the Priests 7:30-9:00am
- Charismatic Prayer Group 6:30-8:00pm

WEDNESDAY

- Adoration 7:30-5:00pm
- Kupuna Ministry 8:30-10:30am
- Benediction/Evening Prayer 5:00pm
- Soup Supper (after Benediction) 5:30pm
- Hula Ministry Practice 5:30-6:30pm
- Men of Faith 5:30-6:30pm

THURSDAY

- Spiritual Book Club 4:00-5:30pm
(3rd Thursday of each month)
- Young Adults Group 6:00-7:00pm

FRIDAY

- Stations of the Cross - English 5:00pm
(St. Michael the Archangel)
- Stations of the Cross - Spanish 6:00pm
(Immaculate Conception)
- Lenten Fish Fry 5:45-7:15pm

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)
- Immigration Seminar 1:00-2:00pm
(Last Sunday of each month)
- Consecration to God the Father 3:00pm
(1st Sunday of each month)
- Faith Formation (K-5) 10:15-11:50am
- Faith Formation (6-12) 5:15-7:15pm
(Please refer to the Faith Formation section for class dates)
- Order of Christian Initiation of Adults After 9am Mass

Baptism

Classes are held once a month. Parents and Godparents must attend class. To register, please email baptism.stmichaelkona@rcchawaii.org

Marriage

Please notify the office and allow six months before the date of marriage for preparation

seeds planted. We think that adding good things to our life will change it, and removal of sin will not be necessary. It is like eating two large hamburgers and a large fries and believing you won't gain weight because you drank a Diet Coke.

As good stewards who are called to discern how we respond to the call of Jesus Christ, we must be about ripping those weeds out of our lives so the good seeds we plant can grow. For each of us, the weeds are different: money, ego, sex, greed, etc. If we don't take a good honest look at our lives and make some tough choices, no amount of devotion or good works will make us better disciples. We will simply wait for the next Lent to do the same things all over again. -Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS © LPI

Recognize God in Your Ordinary Moments - The Patient Gardener

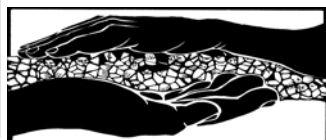
I have garden beds on the side of my house that I don't deserve. When we bought the property, this was one of the features that was highlighted in the listing. "Professional landscaping! Tri-level garden beds that bask in the southern exposure!"

But I'm so terrible at weeding these garden beds - they become overgrown quickly, and I shudder to imagine what the previous owners would think of me if they drove by. I'm afraid they would write me off as lazy or disinterested, when really I'm just exhausted and busy. Every time I try to garden, one of my little assistant gardeners runs near the road and I must abandon the project to save them.

So, my husband, bless his heart, is the savior of these garden beds. He goes out there in the cool of the evening to pluck up the weeds that threaten to overtake this beautiful little garden. Patiently and tenderly, he restores it to a presentable state. Without him, they would be lost.

Perhaps I love these garden beds so much because I identify with them. If I were a garden, I would also be a mess, and people who have no time for messes would write me off as hopeless. We all need a savior to stick up for us, to come and quietly prune the unsightly growths that have taken root in our souls and turn the soil that has sat undisturbed for too long.

What I love most about our Savior is that he didn't - doesn't - give up on us. "Give me more time," he says to the Master. "I can still fix this one." - Colleen Jurkiwicz Dorman, ©LPI



The LORD secures justice and the rights of all the oppressed.
Psalm 103:6



SATURDAY, MARCH 22ND

4pm - Repose of the Soul of Jean Viernes

SUNDAY, MARCH 23RD THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

- 7am - Diego and Josephine Padillio, May they rest in Peace
- 9am - Poor Souls of Purgatory
- 4pm - JP Urgino, deceased, Birthday Remembrance

MONDAY, MARCH 24TH

- 7am - Patty Jo Hart, Rest in Peace
- 5pm - Robert Leopoldino Rest in Peace

TUESDAY, MARCH 25TH

- 7am - Steve Age, Br. Boniface (Greg) Bateman, Carl Ester, Robert Brown, Janet Ester, Steve Age, Roy Peloquin, Surang Bunrasi, Necitas Revilla, Rest in Peace
- 5pm - Lynette Hanato Rest in Peace

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26TH

- 7am - MISSA PRO POPULO

THURSDAY, MARCH 27TH

- 7am - Ayla Mammadova, Birthday Blessings
- 5pm - Noel Boylan, For Healing

FRIDAY, MARCH 28TH

- 7am - Sean, Lorraine and David Wilkinson, deceased
- 5pm - Mary Pat Gannon & Necitas Revilla Rest in Peace

SATURDAY, MARCH 29TH

- 7am - Jerry Schultz, Rest In Peace

Requesting a Mass Intention

A Mass intention can be scheduled by calling the Office at **808-326-7771**.

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.**

Let's Start Growing

This Week's Readings at Mass

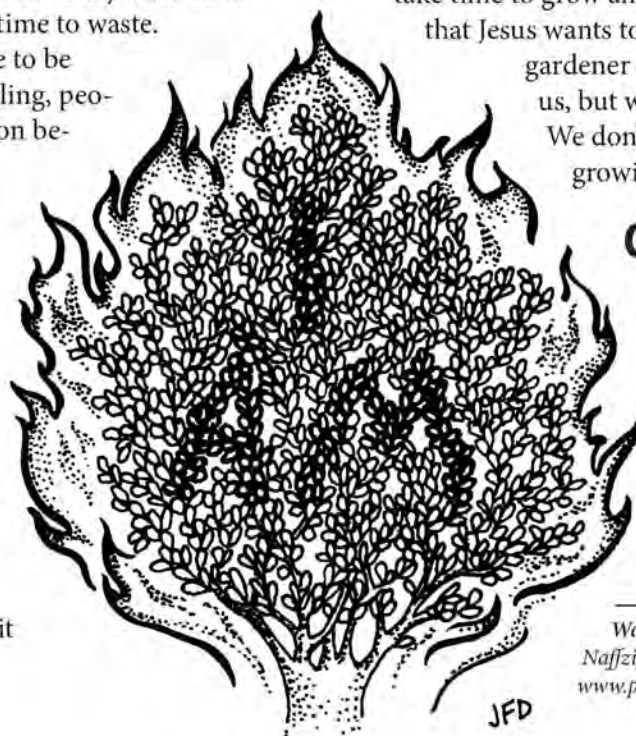
- ▶ Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15 - The call of Moses
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12 - Against overconfidence
- ▶ Luke 13:1-9 - Calls to penance; parables of the Reign of God

The first reading from Exodus takes place with Moses standing at the burning bush. It is when God reveals himself to Moses and declares that he will lead them out of slavery into their own land. We can imagine Moses' puzzlement when God reveals his name as the cryptic "I am who I am."

The phrase in Hebrew, which gets translated into "Yahweh," is a mystery to translators. The thrust of it seems to be that God is who God is, not who humans say God is. Also, there is a sense that God is in the *present*, not the past or future, but always present. In the Gospel of John, Jesus declares several times "I AM," using the exact same words that God used in speaking to Moses. All of his listeners understood then that he was equating himself with God.

In the Gospel, John the Baptist and Jesus both had a sense of urgency about them. They were serious about spreading their message quickly: "Repent! The Kingdom of God is near!" They seemed to understand there was no time to waste.

There were hungry people to be fed, people in need of healing, people suffering discrimination because of their culture or religion, people trapped in sin, and people used as pawns in unjust economic and military systems. There wasn't time to stand around and wait for God to swoop in and make everything right in the world. Jesus came ready to do God's work in the world, and he was eager for others to begin doing it with him "right now!"



Panel 1: A sheep says, "I LOVED THE WAY YOU CAME AS A BURNING BUSH YESTERDAY, AND WE HAD THAT LONG TALK ABOUT MY DEEPEST, DARKEST SECRETS..."

Panel 2: The sheep says, "I didn't come as a burning bush yesterday..."

Panel 3: The sheep says, "YOU MEAN I JUST CONFESSED ALL MY SINS TO A MULBERRY?!!" A voice from the bush replies, "Actually, mulberries tend to be very forgiving."

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"Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."

Sheepish Question:
Where do I look for — and respect — God's presence?

Was Jesus impatient like the owner of the fig tree? Does he want results now? Or was he like the gardener, ready to demonstrate more trust and patience and give people more time to bear fruit?

Maybe Jesus was both. He has little time for laziness or excuses. But he also knows that as humans we take time to grow and mature. The point seems to be that Jesus wants to see movement. We all have a gardener tending to us and advocating for us, but will we allow ourselves to fruit? We don't have unlimited time. Let's start growing.

Questions of the Week

- 1 What do you think Jesus feels most urgent about in the world today?
- 2 How do you need to begin bearing fruit in your life now?

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THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



Patiently Cultivating

God our Redeemer,
you are merciful and gracious.
We often find ourselves grumbling,
struggling in our desire of evil things.
We are slow to repent,
yet your kindness abounds.
You tend to us
as a patient gardener
continues to cultivate and fertilize
his tree
as he waits for his orchard to bear fruit.
Grant that we might remember
that you make us holy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Repent!



Today's readings: Exodus 3:1–8a, 13–15; Psalm 103: 1–2, 3–4, 6–7, 8, 11; 1 Corinthians 10:1–6, 10–12; Luke 13:1–9. Jesus continues to teach on repentance in today's Gospel. He instructs that the Galileans who died at the hands of Pilate and those who died at Siloam are not greater sinners because of their death. Jesus clarifies that their death was not a punishment. If the victims are not greater sinners than those gathered (or any of us), then all must repent and return to the Lord.

Jesus then tells a parable about a gardener. Though many of us are not surrounded by agriculture as were people in Jesus' time, we can still relate to the gardener. Have you ever tended to a plant, a pet, or even cared for a child with a specific hope in mind? Perhaps you hoped your plant would

blossom, unlike another plant that did not do so well. You may have hoped that your pet would eat the food set out instead of getting into yet another article of clothing. Or you may have hoped your child would play with the toys you purchased instead of rummaging through the trash again.

It is easy for us to become frustrated or impatient when our hopes are unmet. God, unlike us, meets our continued sinfulness with kindness and compassion. Like the gardener who tirelessly cares for the fig tree, God continues to tend to us. Though grateful for God's abundant grace, we are still called to repent and work to be better. This week, consider how you can actively choose to allow God to cultivate your heart. As we continue our Lenten journey, say yes to God so your heart can blossom.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 24 Being Prophetic

Today we are reminded that responding to the call to Christianity is not easy. Jesus tells the people in the synagogue at Nazareth that “no prophet is accepted in his own native place.” We know he will be rejected and crucified for his ministry. We are called to repent, to see God in all things, and to share our faith with others. This week, reach out to someone you love, and ask to share a prayer with him or her. If your invitation is accepted, lead with a simple prayer. If the invitation is declined, lift up the individual in your personal prayer. *Today’s readings: 2 Kings 5:1–15b; Psalm 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4; Luke 4:24–30.*

Tuesday, March 25 Annunciation of the Lord

Understandably, Mary is “greatly troubled” when the angel Gabriel appears. Still, Mary courageously and faithfully responds yes to God’s request. Her response is much like the words in today’s psalm: “Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.” Set aside time to pray the Rosary. As you pray, ask for the humility to hear God and the courage to respond to God. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 7:10–14, 8:10; Psalm 40:7–8a, 8b–9, 10, 11; Hebrews 10:4–10; Luke 1:26–38.*

Wednesday, March 26 Teach Them

Moses reminds the Israelites to observe and teach the Lord’s commandments, to share the goodness of the Lord that they have witnessed with their children and their children’s children. Jesus tells his disciples that “whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called the greatest in the Kingdom of heaven.” Say a prayer in gratitude for someone who taught you about your faith. Consider how you can teach others the way of the Lord with your actions and your words. *Today’s readings: Deuteronomy 4:1, 5–9; Psalm 147:12–13, 15–16, 19–20; Matthew 5:17–19.*

Thursday, March 27 Harden Not Your Hearts

We are reminded not to harden our hearts when we hear God. Jesus powerfully claims that “whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” Reflect today on your Lenten journey. Have you taken time to listen to God? How have you responded? Commit to an action that will help open your heart to hear God’s voice: consider attending daily Mass a few times during the week, praying at a consistent time daily, or journaling with regularity. *Today’s readings: Jeremiah 7:23–28; Psalm 95:1–2, 6–7, 8–9; Luke 11:14–23.*

Friday, March 28 Sinners Stumble

Though we stumble, we are challenged to walk the path of the Lord. Jesus’ answers to the query about the greatest commandment guides us in walking the path of the Lord. We are to love God with all our being and, from that, love our neighbor. Before going to sleep tonight, pray the examen. For information on doing so, visit [The Daily Examen at IgnatianSpirituality.com](http://TheDailyExamenatIgnatianSpirituality.com). Focus on how you have loved God and your neighbor today and how to resolve to love God and your neighbor tomorrow. *Today’s readings: Hosea 14:2–10; Psalm 81:6c–8a, 8bc–9, 10–11ab, 14 and 17; Mark 12:28–34.*

Saturday, March 29 A Heart Contrite and Humbled

Jesus’ parable encourages us to give God “a heart contrite and humbled.” The Pharisee, haughty and overly confident in being justified, compares his goodness to the tax collector and shares that he fasts, pays tithes, and keeps the commandments. The tax collector, on the other hand, repents and asks for God’s mercy. Acknowledging our sins frees us and gives space for God’s mercy. This weekend, offer God “a heart contrite and humbled” by going to confession. *Today’s readings: Hosea 6:1–6; Psalm 51:3–4, 18–19, 20–21ab; Luke 18:9–14.*



THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

(YEAR A)



Living Water

Holy God, font of all life,
in the waters of new birth
you brought us to life through Jesus,
your Son.

Look with favor upon your people,
who, like the woman at the well,
desire never to thirst again.

Soften our stony hearts
so that the Holy Spirit
might fill us with your love and peace.
May our lives proclaim
your glorious name
amid a parched and anxious world.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 23, 2025

Living Water



Today's readings: Exodus 17:3-7; Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9; Romans 5:1-2, 5-8; John 4:5-42. The story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman invites us to ask, "For what do we thirst?" Societal pressures can keep us busy and become an easy distraction from what matters. It's not hard to fill our day with insignificant things. When Jesus questions the woman, she doesn't seem to quite understand that he is the "gift of God," the living water. Is she too distracted to notice? Not until he reveals her history does she begin to see that he is the Messiah, the one who comes to unite the nations. Here is a moment of conversion and faith. She quickly runs to tell the others, who also come to believe. Like the Woman, we are thirsty for the living water. The question is, What keeps us from quenching our thirsts? During your Lenten journey, have you become acquainted with your thirst for Jesus, the living water?

This reading is always proclaimed on the Third Sunday of Lent when a parish community has candidates preparing to receive the initiation sacraments on Holy Saturday. On this Sunday, the elect participate in the first scrutiny. The aim of the scrutiny is to uncover the sins that keep us from a life in Christ.

As we examine ourselves this Lenten season, we are asked, just like the elect, to uncover the sins in our lives and expose them so they might be healed and transformed. We have a choice: Do we die to ourselves so that we might embrace Christ? Or do we continue to look in all the wrong places and never quench our thirst? Consider taking a moment to share your story with one of the elect.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 24 Being Prophetic

Today we are reminded that responding to the call to Christianity is not easy. Jesus tells the people in the synagogue at Nazareth that “no prophet is accepted in his own native place.” We know he will be rejected and crucified for his ministry. We are called to repent, to see God in all things, and to share our faith with others. This week, reach out to someone you love, and ask to share a prayer with him or her. If your invitation is accepted, lead with a simple prayer. If the invitation is declined, lift up the individual in your personal prayer. *Today’s readings: 2 Kings 5:1–15b; Psalm 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4; Luke 4:24–30.*

Tuesday, March 25 Annunciation of the Lord

Understandably, Mary is “greatly troubled” when the angel Gabriel appears. Still, Mary courageously and faithfully responds yes to God’s request. Her response is much like the words in today’s psalm: “Here I am, Lord; I come to do your will.” Set aside time to pray the Rosary. As you pray, ask for the humility to hear God and the courage to respond to God. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 7:10–14, 8:10; Psalm 40:7–8a, 8b–9, 10, 11; Hebrews 10:4–10; Luke 1:26–38.*

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