



January 21, 2024

## Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jon 3:1-5, 10 | 1 Cor 7:29-31 | Mk 1:14-20

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

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

Sometimes I feel like I need a Jonah in my life: someone who will come along and shake things up; someone who will nudge me and say, *hey, you're doing it wrong!* No one wants to be criticized, but I know I need loving guidance to help me when I am not at my best. It's easy to get caught up in the swirl of life and neglect (even if unintentionally) what's important. Jonah was given the unpleasant task of pointing out to the people of Nineveh their failings. Unlike many communities who resisted God's words, by the end of the first day of Jonah's anticipated three-day trek across the city, "the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast and all of them, great and small, put on sackcloth." For all the evil they had done, and the rebellion they had demonstrated, the people there weren't irredeemable. They simply needed Jonah to point out how they had gone astray, and the grace of open ears and hearts to receive the message. Who has the Lord placed in our lives in the role of Jonah? How has he blessed us with the ability to receive, and repent where necessary?

### **GO** EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We don't seem to have obvious prophets like Jonah nowadays, but that doesn't mean God has left us without guides. We have the Church, Christ's body on earth, and the ever-present help of the Holy Spirit. In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus selected his first followers: men who would become the Twelve Apostles, anointed to spread his word and speak in his stead even after Jesus left the earth. We know that there were other followers: men, women and children who became his disciples; Jews and Gentiles who were baptized. We are part of that apostolic tradition, each one of us baptized into the common priesthood "exercised by the unfolding of baptismal grace - a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit." (CCC 1547) The call to holiness can be hard to hear in the din of today's busy and secular world, but it is not impossible. We can pray for the grace to hear how God is asking each of us to live out his commands and proclaim the Good News to the world.

**PRAY** Today's psalm (Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9) is a wonderful way to ask God for this favor. Make it part of your morning or evening prayer for the next week. "Your ways, O Lord, make known to me; teach me your paths."

## Church of the Ascension

Saratoga, California

[www.ascensionsaratoga.org](http://www.ascensionsaratoga.org)

408-725-3939

Mass Schedule

(Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p

(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

## Sunday of the Word of God

Jan. 21

The timing seemed right. In September 2019, on the 1,600th anniversary of scripture scholar Saint Jerome's death, Pope Francis launched a new observance on the church calendar. Today's "Sunday of the Word of God" is deliberately placed within the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. All who follow Jesus are invited to unite around the happy gift of our sacred story contained in the Bible's pages. On this occasion, we celebrate, study, and spread these good words we never possess merely for ourselves. Enthroned the Bible in your home—and heart.

- [Takefiveforfaith.com](http://Takefiveforfaith.com)

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Jan. 18-25

This Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed annually from January 18-25. Since 1966, the week has been jointly sponsored by the Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. The theme for this year is "You shall love the Lord your God... and your neighbor as yourself" (cf. Lk 10:27). The commitment to love can help others know that we are Christians and lead us closer to the day when Christians are more united than divided.

## National Catholic Schools Week

Jan 28 - Feb 3

Since 1974, National Catholic Schools Week is the annual celebration of Catholic education in the US. It is entering its 50th anniversary this year. The theme for this week is *Catholic Schools: United in Faith and Community*.

## Faith Formation Collection

Jan 21

This semiannual collection will benefit the Faith Formation of our Ascension youth. You can also give to this fund *anytime* through WeShare online giving platform. Thank you for your generous support.

## Mass with Anointing of the Sick

-Saturday, **February 3, at 11 am** at **St Joseph Cathedral**:

Mass with Anointing of the Sick with Bishop Cantú.

-Saturday, **February 10, at 9 am** at **Ascension Church**.

We will also pray for God's blessing on caregivers and ministers to the homebound.

## Vocation Discernment

Jan 26-28: Men's Discernment Retreat at St. Patrick Seminary, Menlo Park. Contact: 408-983-0155.

## MASS INTENTIONS

Jan 20	Sat	05 pm	Robert Fischer (L)
Jan 21	Sun	11 am	Marietta Gloria R. Martinez+
Jan 24	Wed	08 am	Romulo B. Sison +
Jan 25	Thu	08 am	Koon Shum Wong +

## WEEKLY OFFERING - JAN 14

-\$4,873 (baskets: \$3,475; online: \$1,398).

Weekly goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: **\$174,906**. Budget: \$188,500. Shortfall: \$13,594.

Thank you for your generous support.

## Eucharist Small Group Study

The "Jesus and the Eucharist" small group study is held every Sunday (Jan. 14 - Feb. 25) right after the 9:00 am Mass in our church. In preparation, you can watch the series free of charge at FORMED. Just type "Formed.org *Jesus and the Eucharist*" into a search engine.

## Jesus and the Eucharist

SESSION 2: WHO IS JESUS?

It is without question that no person has changed the world like Jesus of Nazareth. Time is measured from his birth, churches were built to worship him in every corner of the world, cities were named after his followers, and his life has captured countless works of art and literature. Is he a legend, a liar, a lunatic? Or is he who he claimed to be—God in the flesh? Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15). He invites us to answer the question too.

### STUDY OVERVIEW

1. What's Our Story?
2. Who Is Jesus?
3. Am I Saved?
4. Why a Church?
5. God Is with Us
6. Story of the Eucharist
7. Bread for the Journey

## Annual Diocesan Appeal 2024

Kickoff: Feb. 3-4

Your ADA gift will enable our Diocese and Ascension in our mission and ministries.

Your contribution will also benefit Ascension in another way. We intend to turn the area in front of the church, where there are different elevations and materials, into a level terrace that is safe and good for parish gatherings after Mass or picnic, etc. More details will be provided. ADA 2024 surplus will return to Ascension for this terrace project.

Please prayerfully consider making a gift to this year's ADA in gratitude for all the ways that God has blessed you. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

## What's Happening on February 11?

### Lion Dance right after the 11 am Mass

Celebrate Lunar New Year of the Dragon with the Lions and Kids Dancing outside Worner Hall, organized by the Chinese Catholics at Ascension.

### Valentines for Seniors at 12 noon

Come join us for a few fun hours of socializing, music, dancing, lunch and bingo, in Worner Hall, hosted by Ascension Fil-Am & Youth Faith Formation.

RSVP by February 1. Contact Marie Maraschin at 408-218-2704 or Parish Office at 408-725-3939.

## Guadalupe Hope Society

February 9 Rosary & Faith Talk Luncheon at 11:30am with Fr. Matthew Stanley, Pastor at St. Nicholas & St. William Parish. Register to attend by emailing [admin@ghswomenscenter.com](mailto:admin@ghswomenscenter.com) or call 408-447-5433.