



March 10, 2024

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## Fourth Sunday in Lent

2 Chr 36:14-16, 19-23 | Eph 2:4-10 | Jn 3:14-21

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

“The floor is lava!” We used to play this game as children, and it still seems popular today: you arrange furniture and other objects in such a way as to make it from point to point, and even room to room, without touching the floor. There may be more than one way to go, but the crux of the matter is that you have to use these waypoints to stay alive in the game. Following Jesus is somewhat similar, although obviously infinitely more serious and important! He himself, through his sacrifice on the cross, opened the doors of salvation to us – he has provided the ways and means to live free from death. His sacrifice is the only thing that makes it possible for us to enter heaven. In other words, he has arranged the spiritual furniture, made clear those waypoints, and, differing from children who play the lava game, is ready and willing to help us at any time to move safely and confidently along the journey. St Paul writes, “we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.”

### **GO** EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

St. Paul also writes, “by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God.” And in today’s Gospel, St. John writes these words we know so well. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.” Both testaments include words of comfort, but John here also includes a call to action. Notice the word “might.” Like “may,” which is found in other translations, it indicates possibility, probability, and contingency. In other words, it is offered – freely given! – but we must accept. And acceptance means, just as the prophets shared with the Israelites, we need to follow God’s commands. It means that in our words and deeds we act from and in love of God and love of one another. For “whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.”

**ENGAGE** Today we are about halfway through Lent. If you haven’t yet taken advantage of the rich opportunity to pray the Stations of the Cross with your family, do so this week. Most parishes pray the stations on Fridays during Lent, and perhaps other days as well. This ancient tradition of our Church is a beautiful and meaningful way to walk the Way of the Cross with our Lord.

*We adore you, O Christ, and bless you. Because by your holy cross you have redeemed the whole world.*

## 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

**Ephesians 2:1-10**



**Agnus Day Comic Strip**

With the permission of [www.agnusday.org](http://www.agnusday.org)

**Joyful/Laetare Sunday**

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is known as Laetare Sunday—*laetare* is Latin for “joy.” In a season of fasting, prayer, and abstinence, it’s easy to forget that one of the liturgical prayers for Lent thanks God, saying, “Each year you give us this joyful season.” The Lenten project recalls the fact that God chooses to restore, heal, forgive, raise up, and save rather than what we might expect: punish for sin. God’s plan is “that the world might be saved through [Christ].”  
 - *Takefiveforfaith.com*

**Quotes**

“Joy, with peace, is the sister of charity. Serve the Lord with laughter.”  
 -*Saint Pio of Pietrelcina*  
 “The gospel is a proclamation of joy. Ideologies don’t make people smile, but the gospel is a smile. It makes you smile because it touches your soul with the Good News.”  
 -*Pope Francis*

**Lenten Reconciliation & Adoration**

Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and pray in Adoration, **Saturday, March 16, at 9:30 am** (after the 9:00 am Mass).

**Weekly Lenten Reflection** by Fr. Hao

**Journeying with Jesus**

During the **8:00 am Mass every Wednesday.**

**Paschal Mystery: Dying and Rising**

by Fr. Maurice & Fr. Hao

During the **5pm Saturday Mass on March 6, 13, 19.**

**Collection for Catholic Relief Services**

March 10

Funds from this collection support the work of Catholic organizations that aid victims of war and natural disasters, help build peace in places of conflict, and minister to migrants and others with specific pastoral needs.

**WEEKLY OFFERING - MAR 03**

-**\$5,387** (baskets: \$4,274; online: \$1,113). Goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: **\$220,693**. Budget: \$234,000. Shortfall: \$13,307.

Thank you for your generous support.

**MASS INTENTIONS**

Mar 09	Sat	05 pm	Sek-Ha Lee +
Mar 10	Sun	09 am	Brandon Biala +
		11 am	Remedios Doria +
Mar 14	Thu	08 am	John Viet Nguyen +
Mar 15	Fri	08 am	Gloria De Souza (L)

**Ascension New Photo Directory**

It is time for our new pictorial church directory to mark our Parish 60th Jubilee. The current directory was published in 2014 during our Golden Jubilee. We need a coordinator of the project. Please let Fr. Hao know if you are interested or someone else may have the talents and skills for this project.

**Ascension 60th Jubilee Reception**

**May 18, 2024**

Our Jubilee will close on May 18, at the 5:00 pm Mass, presided by Bishop Cantú, followed by a Reception.

**Help us plan the Closing Reception.** Please sign up to (1) join the Reception Committee, or (2) be volunteers at the Reception. Sign-up sheets are near the main entrance to the church. Thank you.

**Holy Week Special Schedule**

-Holy Thursday: 7:30pm Mass of the Lord’s Supper

-Good Friday:

12pm Passion Liturgy; 1:30pm Stations of the Cross

7:30pm Passion Liturgy

-Holy Saturday:

8:00pm Easter Vigil

No 8am Mass on these Sacred Triduum.

We are planning the Divine Mercy devotion. Stay tuned!

**Saint Joseph’s Table**

In gratitude to Saint Joseph for his intercession with God during a devastating drought that hit Sicily in the 1600’s, Sicilians erected tables overflowing with food at homes then in the churches. This year once again Ascension will honor Saint Joseph, the patron of our Diocese, with a St. Joseph table in our church during the 8:00am Mass on March 19.

SUGGESTED ITEMS OF FOOD FOR THE HOMELESS:

- Granola Bars and Protein Bars
- Peanut Butter
- Fruit cups and applesauce cups
- Cheese Crackers
- Beef Jerky and dried fruit
- Juice Boxes
- Pop-Top cans of Tuna, Chicken, Chili, Ravioli, Pork, Beans
- Trail Mix and Packaged Nuts

NO GLASS CONTAINERS, PLEASE



**ADA Week 5 Report**

**Number of pledges to date: 83**

**Amount pledged: \$63,735**

**Percent of goal: 85%**

Thank you to those who made their pledges. Please help us reach our goal soon!

**Seasons of Hope - Grief Discussion**

March 13 - April 17 on Wednesdays from 1pm - 2:30pm  
 Sacred Heart Parish Center, Saratoga

Grief and sorrow are meant to be shared. Seasons of Hope provides a place to share grief and sorrow for the loss of a loved one. To sign up, contact Carolyn Orasin, 408-867-3634 or [c.orsin@sacredheartsaratoga.org](mailto:c.orsin@sacredheartsaratoga.org). Or call Nancy Crowley at 408-209-6118. Please include your name, phone number, and email.