

Church of the Ascension

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Pastoral Staff

Rev. Hao Dinh, Pastor
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Mark Rose, Bookkeeper
Wayne Purdy,
Maintenance Supervisor

Catechetical Ministry

Loy Oppus-Moe,
Youth Faith Formation
Coordinator
RCIA Rev. Hao Dinh,
Pastor

Masses

Saturday

9:00 a.m.
5:00 p.m. (Vigil)

Sunday

7:00 a.m.
9:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.
5:00 p.m.

Weekday

M—F 8:00 a.m.

Holy Days

Mass times as announced

Reconciliation

Saturday
4:00 pm—4:45 pm

FEBRUARY 19, 2023 — SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

TODAY'S READINGS

First Reading — Take no revenge and cherish no grudge; love your neighbor as yourself.
(Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18).

Psalms — The Lord is kind and merciful!
(Psalm 103).

Second Reading — You are the temple of God, and holy (1 Corinthians 3:16-23).

Gospel — Offer no resistance; love your enemies (Matthew 5:38-48).

DISCIPLES TOGETHER

Today's readings reflect on our communal identity as disciples. Before we begin Lent together in a few days, we take time to appreciate what God has done by giving us our family of faith. In Leviticus, God tells Moses to "speak to the whole Israelite community" and give them instructions for living in love. Moses passes along the message—to each and every believer—that God's people must strive together for holiness.

Saint Paul echoes this message, insisting that we are indeed God's holy children. As temples of the Spirit, we belong to Christ and to one another. This mutual belonging is a blessing and a challenge. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus sets a high bar for Christian community: his followers must love not only those who are easy to love, but also the people who upset us. Together, let us ask God to give us this kind of love.

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Lent begins on Wednesday, February 22

Ash Wednesday:

—2 Masses with distribution of ashes—
8:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

Lent is a season for growth and spiritual renewal, a time to deepen our experience of God. Every step that takes us out of ego and selfishness takes us a step closer to God, to holiness.

How to slay the ego? The recommended way of Lent is through **PRAYER**, **FASTING** and **ALMSGIVING**. Easy to understand; more difficult to implement. We face so many spiritual challenges: lack of time, lack of desire, lack of knowledge of our faith; lack of purpose; and too many appealing distractions. The important thing to consider is where do I need to change and how best to tackle that challenge.

If **PRAYER** is not a part of your life—make it simple: a short "thank you, God" for your blessings, a quiet moment of thought for others, a prayer before meals.

If **FASTING** is not a part of your life—make it simple: can you give up the Danish and substitute dry toast, turn off the cell phone or TV for a moment of prayer?

If **ALMSGIVING** is not a part of your life—make it simple: how about a smile instead of a frown, sharing a treat, helping a neighbor, biting your tongue instead of arguing.

Lent can mold us into new and improved selves. Having walked a journey of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, we can be more aligned to our Lord and that's holiness!

Ashes

There are three major Biblical traditions concerning ashes: **repentance, mourning, and mortality**, and they are interrelated. Repeatedly throughout the Bible we encounter the use of ashes (often together with sackcloth) as a penitential practice. A similar practice is seen when someone is in mourning or distress. And ashes are a metaphor for human life, which is seen as brief and destined to end in death

Ashes are the result of fire, the complete burning of something that was alive. They are ephemeral; the slightest puff of air can send them away into nothingness. It is easy to see how ashes came to symbolize fleeting human life or the humility of repentance. Ashes can represent other things as well. For example, ashes are often used to fertilize our gardens and fields. Ash is therefore necessary to bring about and nourish life.

We can now begin to see how appropriate a symbol ashes are for the season of Lent. For Lent is not only a time of repentance, of sorrow for our sins. It is a baptismal season of preparation for the new life of our catechumens and of recalling the new life of our own baptism. We start Lent in ashes, and end it in Easter. What will the ashes mean to you this Lent?

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Liturgy Notes

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SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Monday	Presidents Day
Tuesday	St. Peter Damian (11th cent. Roman cardinal & doctor of the church; patron of free runners) Mardi Gras (the last night of feasting before the sacrifices and fasting of the Lenten season.)
Wednesday	Ash Wednesday (day of fasting & abstinence)
Thursday	St. Polycarp (2nd cent. Greek martyr, Church father & bishop of Smyrna)

A chip on the shoulder is the heaviest load anyone can carry.

—Anonymous

Salinas Valley State Prison (SVSP) Kairos #9

Dan Bryant, Gene Plevyak and Harry Stice of Ascension, who are active in the SVSP Kairos Prison Ministry, will be at the Kairos table outside after Mass Saturday evening **February 25** and after each Mass Sunday **February 26** asking for your support to this important ministry. You may do this in one or more of the following ways:

- Add your name to the Prayer Scroll list and pray for the inmate attendees
- Make Hands of Love – a cut out of your hand with words of encouragement.
- Please make a tax deductible donation to defray the cost to conduct this retreat. Make checks payable to SVSP Kairos.

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Feb 18	Sat	9 a.m.	Johnny Netto +
		5 p.m.	George Chrisman +
Feb 19	Sun	7 a.m.	All Parishioners
		9 a.m.	All Parishioners
		11 a.m.	Joyce Nunes +
		5 p.m.	Bob Leano (L)
Feb 20	Mon	8 a.m.	Maria Felicitas Bunag +
Feb 21	Tue	8 a.m.	Kerry Kleinen +
Feb 22	Wed	8 a.m.	All Parishioners
		7 p.m.	All Parishioners
Feb 23	Thu	8 a.m.	Shannon Borromeo & Family
Feb 24	Fri	8 a.m.	Paul Lenarduzzi +
Feb 25	Sat	9 a.m.	All Parishioners
		5 p.m.	Maria Leano (L)
Feb 26	Sun	7 a.m.	All Parishioners
		9 a.m.	All Parishioners
		11 a.m.	Mark Anthony Baylon +
		5 p.m.	Martin Leano (L)

ADA 2023

The ADA 2023 theme is:

“Supporting Our Mission Together.”

You are invited once again to participate in the **Annual Diocesan Appeal**.

Our parish goal is **\$74,109** and the average gift from Ascension to the ADA in the past four years was \$609.

Please prayerfully consider what you can give to assist the ministry and mission of both our Diocese and our Parish.

**To want to be more than we are is earthly;
to want to be less than we are by spending ourselves on others is heavenly.**

—Archbishop Fulton Sheen

THANK YOU

Feb. 12, 2023	Our Weekly Offering
NEEDED	\$6,500
COLLECTED	\$4,365
WESHARE	\$2,454
Total	\$6,819