



February 25, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Second Sunday of Lent

Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 | Rom 8:31b-34 | Mk 9:2-10

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

Just two weeks ago, when Christians walked around all day with a cross of ashes on our foreheads, we may have received puzzled looks. Who bothers with fasting and almsgiving for 40 whole days? Many of us live with great abundance in this country; the only time we actually *need* to fast might be for lab work. With this in mind, it's helpful to remember the *why*: because Christ sacrificed himself for us, and he calls his followers to participate in his redemptive mission through our own sacrifices. Without sacrifice, we simply cannot be like Christ, nor will we see our own transfiguration in the resurrection to come. So Lent is a blessed season of reorienting our lives to Christian sacrifice: that of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Perhaps this season can also dispel some of the complacency that has a tendency to creep into our lives. The poor and hungry and disenfranchised still exist, and Christ depends on us to be his hands and feet to serve them. But how can we serve them if we do not embrace Christ's example as a living sacrifice? Ask the Lord for the grace to see and hear what he is asking us to do for him.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Today's readings show an incredible arc from Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son for God to Christ's Transfiguration after his Passion. Without Abraham's willingness to give up that which he wanted most and finally obtained, he would not have earned his greatest blessing from God in having countless descendants; and without Christ's sacrifice on the cross, all of mankind would not have been saved. Maybe we aren't called to great sacrifices such as these in our own lives, but we as Christians are called to offer our lives as a living sacrifice to our family, our neighbor, those in need, and God himself. Lent is a reminder not only to help us reorient our lives to God and his call for our lives, but to live it, too. By our own witness and prayer we have the ability to help bring others to the Lord and his promise of eternal life.

ACCOMPANY What is something you have always appreciated being done for you? What is a specific sacrifice, large or small, that you know has been made on your behalf? Make an effort this week to identify a specific need you know someone has, pray for that person/need, and offer to God a sacrifice of treasure, time or even your suffering for the fulfillment of that need.

Church of the Ascension

Saratoga, California

www.ascensionsaratoga.org

408-725-3939

Mass Schedule

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

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

Along for the Ride

When you choose to follow God, amazing things can happen. The journey, though, takes faith. It requires listening and surrender; it means recognizing you're not in charge. You follow in the footsteps of a God who leads. Moments of transfiguration give guidance, while sacrifice challenges and fosters trust along the way. Life isn't a journey straight to the top. You can find yourself led to the highest of heights by the most unusual of paths. Being able to honestly declare, "Here I am, Lord," you give God the liberty to take you higher than you ever imagined possible. - *Takefiveforfaith.com*

Quotes

"God had one son on Earth without sin, but never one without suffering." -*St. Augustine of Hippo*

"The cross is the school of love." - *St. Maximilian Kolbe*

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.**

Gaza Strip Christian Community

The situation in Gaza is increasingly desperate. Despite difficulties, one priest and seven women religious are working to support the Christians who found refuge in the Catholic parish of the Holy Family. At one point, 700 people were in its compound, which belongs to the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, but that number has decreased due to migration and death. At present, there are 560 people, including both Catholic and Orthodox Christians, 140 children under the age of 18 (60 with disabilities), and 84 people over the age of 65. - *Abouna.org (Catholic Center for Studies and Media - Jordan)*

ADA Week 3 Report

Number of pledges to date: 58

Total amount pledged: \$40,740

Percent of goal: 54%

We have achieved 54 percent of our parish goal in 3 weeks! Thank you to those making pledges. Please help us reach our goal in a few weeks! Thank you for your support.

MASS INTENTIONS

Feb 24	Sat	05 pm	Paul Lenarduzzi +
Feb 25	Sun	07 am	Edward Gembala +
Feb 27	Tue	08 am	Terry Lynch +
Mar 01	Fri	08 am	Dennison Raval +
Mar 02	Sat	09 am	Louisa Whelan (L)

WEEKLY OFFERING - FEB 18

-**\$4,417** (baskets: \$3,095; online: \$1,322). Goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: **\$207,564**. Budget: \$221,000. Shortfall: \$13,435.

-Church in Central & Eastern Europe (Ash Wed): **\$1,256**.

Thank you for your generous support.

Jesus & the Eucharist

Session 7: Bread for the Journey

Just as manna was the bread for the Israelites on their journey to the Promised Land, so the Eucharist is the bread for our journey to heaven. The Eucharist is our daily bread, our sustenance. As Pope Francis highlighted in a homily on Corpus Christi in 2021: "To celebrate the Eucharist, we need first to recognize our thirst for God, to sense our need for him, to long for his presence and love, to realize that we cannot go it alone, but need the Food and Drink of eternal life to sustain us on our journey."

First Reconciliation Celebration

Pray for four children in our community who have been preparing for their First Reconciliation celebration on **Saturday, February 24: Austin, Antonio, Jessica, Alek.**

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)

Ascension 60th Jubilee

Closing Reception

May 18, 2024

Our Parish 60th Jubilee will close on May 18, 2024, at the 5:00 pm Mass, presided by Bishop Oscar 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.



Retirement Visualization Seminar

Are you financially ready for your retirement years? We invite you to a seminar to discuss about the retirement planning and general guidance. The conversation covers:

- Retirement Age vs Life Expectancy Estimate
- General source of income and expenses in retirement
- Retirement Vision and Planning Framework.

Date & Time: March 9, 2024, from 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Place: Classrooms in the Worner Hall.

Presenter: David Fung (parishioner),

Investment Adviser Representative, NEXT Financial Group

R.I.P - May They Rest in Peace

Rachel Arreola Mikl: Died Feb. 13, 24.

Funeral: Feb. 23, Friday, at 9:30 am.

Betty Ryan: Died Jan. 27, 24.

Funeral: Feb. 29, Thursday, at 11:00 am.

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.

Or call Nancy Crowley at 408-209-6118. Please include your name, phone number, and email.