



February 4, 2024

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jb 7:1-4, 6-7 | 1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23 | Mk 1:29-39

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

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

Why me? It could be a flat tire, a lost job or a serious illness. When inconvenient, unpleasant or even downright horrible things happen, it is understandable to wonder why God allows it. I know that is what goes through my head in extreme adversity. God can do all things, so why wouldn't he change "this thing" for me? In the Gospel, we see Jesus curing Simon Peter's mother-in-law of her illness, but many of us don't have our prayers answered like that. Instead, we may relate more to Job in today's first reading when he says life is a "drudgery" and he "shall not see happiness again." The reality is that God's ways are not our ways, so we can't know why some people endure hardship while others receive miracles. But we can change how we respond to those hardships when they arrive. Just as this passage from Job is understood better within the context of the whole book, discrete events in our lives are part of something larger than ourselves. Praying with Scripture, including reading more of Job, can help us understand how God is molding, refining, and yes - always loving us.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

When we are tempted to feel like Job is a good time to embrace the age-old practice of "offering it [suffering] up." As a child, my parents explained that offering it up meant I was telling God I would happily suffer in exchange for it helping someone else. What does this really mean? Everything stems from our being united to Christ in our baptism and being participants in his priestly, prophetic and royal office. We offer ourselves, our whole being, including our worship, praise, joy, gratitude, bodies and even sufferings to God as sacrifice. So, to "offer it [suffering] up" is a powerful way of taking a bad situation and allowing it to be used for something good; to give our inconvenience, pain and grief to the Lord and ask him to unite it to Christ's suffering for the good of others. It is a redemptive act, a form of love-in-action. St. Paul is a great example of someone who suffered gladly, and in today's second reading he shares that "to the weak [he] became weak, to win over the weak."

PRAY Offering up our sufferings and difficulties is a way to participate in the redemptive work of Christ. It is a simple way to pray and can keep our focus on God throughout the day. There isn't any one specific prayer for doing this. Instead, when something unpleasant or painful happens, take a moment to acknowledge it and give it to the Lord. It can be as simple as saying, "Lord, I am happy to endure this for the benefit of others." You may want to insert a specific intention or offer it for the souls in purgatory. It's not always easy - especially when your suffering is great - but give it a try this week.

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

The Healing of Peter's Mother-in-Law by James Tissot, CCO

"Everyone is looking for you"

Everybody was looking for Jesus, the wondrous preacher and healer. In today's world, many are also searching for meaning, healing, etc. Are you ready to lead them to Christ? That's evangelization, the church mission.

- "To teach in order to lead others to faith is the task of every preacher and of each believer" (St Thomas Aquinas)

- "An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral!" (Pope Francis)

Mass with Anointing of the Sick

Saturday, February 10, at 9 am at Ascension Church. We will also pray for God's blessing on caregivers and ministers to the homebound.

Introduction to Lent by Fr. Maurice

Saturday, February 10, at 5pm Mass

Ash Wednesday

Mass Schedule

February 14

8:00 am; 7:00 pm

Stations of the Cross

Every Friday

after the 8:00 am Mass



Lenten Mission by Fr. Michael Moore

Jesus Christ Is with Us and Within Us

Queen of Apostles Church

February 5, 6, 7, 8 (Monday - Thursday)

9:00 am & 7:00 pm (repeat).

Weekly Lenten Reflection by Fr. Hao

Journeying with Jesus

At the 8:00 am Mass every Wednesday

Starting from February 21.

Paschal Mystery: Dying and Rising

by Fr. Maurice & Fr. Hao

March 9, 16, 23 at the 5pm Saturday Mass.

February Special Collections

Feb 11: Ethnic Minorities & Church in Latin America

Feb 14 (Ash Wed): Church in Central & Eastern Europe

MASS INTENTIONS

Feb 03	Sat	05 pm	Maxine Stice +
Feb 04	Sun	07 am	Josephine Gembala +
		09 am	Remedios Doria +
		11 am	Chuck Schoppe (L)
		05 pm	Marietta Estilo +
Feb 07	Wed	08 am	Rodolfo G. Zabala +
Feb 08	Thu	08 am	Mark Anthony Baylon +
Feb 09	Fri	08 am	Louisa Whelan (L)
Feb 10	Sat	09 am	Natividad P. Rios +

WEEKLY OFFERING - JAN 28

-\$4,710 (baskets: \$4,186; online: \$524). Weekly goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: \$189,179. Budget: \$201,500. Shortfall: \$12,321.

Thank you for your generous support.

Eucharist Small Group Study

Join us 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. Type "Formed.org Jesus and the Eucharist" into a search engine.

Jesus & the Eucharist

Session 4: Why a Church?

We uniquely encounter the love of God in the Church Jesus established for us.

Jesus didn't simply leave us a message or instructions to follow. Jesus offers us the Church, his Mystical Body, so that through her we may share with him in his divine life. She makes Jesus present to us through a profound,

unbreakable, mysterious continuity with him. She offers trustworthy and authoritative teaching, handing on all that God has revealed, and helps us apply it to our lives today. She contains and communicates his grace, manifesting God's love for us and helping us on our earthly pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. What a gift!

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

Last year ADA was a success with close to \$20,000 surplus, earmarked for our Spiritual Renewal.

You can help make the ADA 2024 another success. We plan to use the ADA 2024 surplus for the Terrace project turning the area in front of the church, where there are different elevations, into a level surface that is safe and good for parish gatherings. More details will be provided. Thank you for your gift to this year's ADA, which benefits Ascension and other 50+ parishes/missions in our Diocese.

Lion Dance after the 11 am Mass on February 11

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

Men's Club

Men's Club Meeting In-Person

Worner Hall/Lounge Room

Friday, February 9 at 6:00pm

International Day of Human Fraternity

February 4

It was inspired by the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together signed by Pope Francis and Grand Imam Sheikh Ahmed el-Tayeb on February 4, 2019, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

"In today's world, the sense of belonging to a single human family is fading, and the dream of working together for justice and peace seems an outdated utopia. What reigns instead is a cool, comfortable and globalised indifference, born of deep disillusionment concealed behind a deceptive illusion: thinking that we are all-powerful, while failing to realise that we are all in the same boat" (Document §30)