



March 16, 2025

Second Sunday of Lent

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Gn 15:5-12, 17-18 | Phil 3:17-4:1 | Lk 9:28b-36

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

As humans, we are often burdened with heavy crosses. Experiences of loss, lack, failure, and betrayal can riddle our existence, leaving us fatigued and with a weary question in our hearts: What is this all for? And then, we look up. We raise our gaze and see before us the transfigured face of Christ. Having taken on our human form, Jesus stands before us in radiant glory. As we take in the scene, our senses mingling somewhere between admiration and alarm, we remember the promise he made to us. The promise that we, too, will be made new. The promise that our bodies will also be redeemed, and our burdens will be relieved. And as we remember, we respond, like the disciples, “It is good that we are here.” The life of discipleship, at times, can seem to require more than it rewards. But in these moments of intimate encounter, when we see glimpses of Jesus’ beautiful face, he reminds us why we are here on this mountain: to love, to serve, and eventually to reap our eternal reward.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We see why we are here on the mountain, but today’s readings also reveal a weighty reality: before we are transformed, we must *climb* that mountain. The whole story of Jesus’ life is this: before a promise is fulfilled, sacrifice is offered. Our human existence, without the mercy and mission given us by Christ, is empty. But taking up the cross of Christ and following him toward glory, we find our purpose. Earth is our pilgrimage, and our journey will most certainly be punctuated by peaks and valleys. But today, St. Paul reminds us in his Letter to the Philippians that we won’t be carrying around these crosses forever. Though strapped with suffering for a time, we know our eternal destination: “Our citizenship is in heaven.”

REFLECT

Lent is inherently a season of waiting for the fulfillment of a promise. In our own lives, we may be aching for transformation, perhaps for ourselves, or for another. Remember: God enters deeply into our lives, dwelling so intimately with us that he syncs his every breath with ours. Take the next week to think and pray about how the Lord may be asking you to be transformed. Pray today’s Psalm each day, and “Wait for the Lord with courage.”

Church of the Ascension

ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

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

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

Confessions: (Sat) 4p – 4:45p

A Show of Faith

Faced with a glimpse of Jesus' glory, (Peter's) first instinct is to memorialize it with a shrine. We can understand that desire. Today we take countless photos and videos, hoping to capture something—a person, place, or moment—that can never be truly held, except in our own hearts. In Lent, we remember our faith is more than a memory of God's glory to be preserved. It is an eternal act of love. As we know from Sunday Mass, the best way to memorialize Jesus is to "go in peace to love and serve the Lord."

- *Takefiveforfaith.com*

Saint Patrick - March 17

After turning his life toward God and serving the church, St. Patrick humbly admitted: "May none of them ever say that whatever little I did or made known to please God was done through ignorance. Instead, you can judge and believe in all truth that it was a gift of God. This is my confession before I die."

Saint Joseph - March 19

Trust—even when risky—is at the heart of any good and lasting close relationship. Saint Joseph chose to trust a messenger from God, and he also chose to trust Mary at a time when many would have walked away claiming infidelity. Joseph too often fades into the background when biblical heroes are held up as role models, but he deserves to be front and center. Saint John Henry Newman sings Joseph's praises: "He is Holy Joseph, because no other Saint but he lived in such and so long intimacy and familiarity with the source of all holiness, Jesus, God incarnate, and Mary, the holiest of creatures." Your own (relations) built on trust can lead you to holiness.

- *Takefiveforfaith.com*

Funerals

-March 22 at 10am: **Susan Haag** (died January 22).
-March 28 at 11am: **Vincent De Luca** (died March 2).
Please keep them and their families in your prayers.
May they rest in peace.

ADA Report - Week 6

-Number of Pledges: 89
-Percent of Goal: **83%**.
Help us reach our goal next week! Thank you.

WEEKLY OFFERING - MARCH 9

-Total **\$6,759** (\$4,220 + online: \$2,538). Goal: \$6,500.
-YTD: \$232,321. Budget: \$234,000.
-Building/Maintenance Fund: **\$400**.
-Black & Indian Missions: **\$1,166**.
-Central & Eastern Europe Church: **\$1,203**. Thank you.

MASS INTENTIONS

Mar 15	Sat	05 pm	Fr. Rey Sarmiento +
Mar 16	Sun	05 pm	Crislucia Borromeo +
Mar 18	Tue	08 am	Shirley & Luis Rodriguez (L)
Mar 20	Thu	08 am	The Gerrard Family
Mar 22	Sat	09 am	Jack Sutcliffe +

Lenten Call for Just Peace in Ukraine

Archbishop Timothy Broglio, leader of the US Archdiocese for the Military Services and president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, invited American Catholics to offer their prayers and sacrifices for "a truly just peace in Ukraine" this Lenten season, noting the annual collection for the Church in Central and Eastern Europe on Ash Wednesday. He also pointed out that "As Catholics, we are acutely aware that every past occupation of Ukraine has resulted in various degrees of repression of the Catholic Church in the country; we must not tolerate the forcing of our brothers and sisters underground again."

Prayer for Peace in Ukraine

"O God, grant Ukraine Your just, heavenly peace, founded on truth, dignity, and freedom. O God, bless Ukraine with Your righteous peace."

- *His Beatitude Sviatoslav, major archbishop of Kyiv-Halych, head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*

"How To Lent"

"How to Lent" is a new series from the Augustine Institute that helps us understand and practice prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Guided by Solenne Santiago and with the help of priests and religious, this series will lay out a roadmap for the season with a purpose. Heed the call of St. John the Baptist by preparing for the Lord, using "How to Lent" to transform your spiritual life this Lenten season.

- *Daily.Formed.org/Lent*



Rite of Election & Rite of Scrutiny

Last Sunday, **Isabella Ramirez** and **Lin Takahashi**, two catechumens in our community, and those in other parishes, were enrolled among "the elect" at the **Rite of Election** presided by Bishop Cantú at Saint Joseph Cathedral. The rite signifies their readiness for Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. Earlier that same day, they received the affirmation at Ascension through the Rite of Sending and Call to Continuing Conversion along with **Gen Takahashi**, who was baptized a Lutheran and is ready to be admitted into the Catholic Church.

During this phase in their journey, the **Rite of Scrutiny**, which helps their self-searching, purification and enlightenment, will be celebrated on March 23; March 30; April 6. Please support them through your prayers and words of encouragement if you have chances to see them.

Lenten Confessions

Our community will celebrate God's mercy through the sacrament of Reconciliation on **March 29**, Saturday, from **9:30am to 10:30am**.