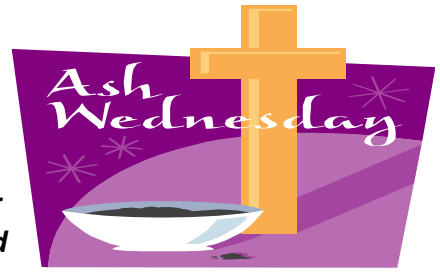


Lent – Year of Grace, 2015

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish – Palo Alto, California



“Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each of our communities and every believer. Above all it is a 'time of grace'. God does not ask of us anything that he himself has not first given us. We love because he first has loved us. He is not aloof from us. Each one of us has a place in his heart. He knows us by name, he cares for us and he seeks us out whenever we turn away from him. He is interested in each of us; his love does not allow him to be indifferent to what happens to us.”

Pope Francis' Lenten Message 2015

Ash Wednesday, February 18 is the Church's annual wake-up call. Our celebrations of the Eucharist on Ash Wednesday, which include the blessing and distribution of ashes, will be at **7:15 AM, 12:15 PM, 6 PM & 8 PM (Gregorian)** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church; **8:30 AM & 7:30 PM (Spanish)** at Our Lady of the Rosary Church; **10 AM (School) & 7 PM** at St. Albert the Great Church.

THE LAWS OF FAST & ABSTINENCE Ash Wednesday and all Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence from all meat (beast or fowl). Except for a serious reason, all persons fourteen years old and above are bound by this law. **Ash Wednesday (February 18) & Good Friday (April 3)** are also days of fast. All persons between the ages of eighteen, until the beginning of their sixtieth year are bound by this law. On these two days, one full meatless meal may be eaten. Two other meatless meals may also be taken sufficient to maintain strength, but together they should not equal a full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juices may be taken between meals.

DAILY CELEBRATIONS OF THE EUCHARIST & ADORATION Attendance at daily Mass and reception of Holy Communion is strongly encouraged of the faithful during the season of Lent. Mass is celebrated **Monday through Friday at 7:15 AM & 12:15 PM** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church; **Saturday at 12:15 PM** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church; and **Monday through Friday at 8:30 AM** at Our Lady of the Rosary Church. **The Stations of the Cross will be offered every Friday after the 8:30 AM & 12:15 PM Mass.** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is provided every Wednesday after the 12:15 PM Mass and Wednesdays from 6:00 PM – 8:00PM at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU - SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION The call to conversion and reconciliation is central to Lent. It is the Church's desire that all Catholics celebrate this sacrament prior to our entry into the Easter Triduum on Holy Thursday. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available in any Catholic Church in Santa Clara County on the Wednesdays of Lent. The opportunity for confession will be available at **St. Thomas Aquinas Church** from **6:00 PM – 8:00 PM** on **February 25, March 4, 11, 18 and 25**. Additional times for confessions are Saturday from **11:30 AM – 12:00 PM** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church & **4:15 PM – 4:45 PM** at St. Albert the Great. We will have three Lenten Penance Liturgies: **Wednesday, March 18 at 6:00 PM** at **Our Lady of the Rosary Church** for faith formation children and their families, on **Monday, March 30 at 7:00 PM** at **St. Albert the Great**, and on **Wednesday, April 1 at 7:00 PM** at **Our Lady of the Rosary Church**.

TAIZÉ PRAYER is a time for connecting with the Spirit in joy and gratitude, nurturing the presence of God within. Candles, melodic chants and inspirational readings will call you to a deeper awareness and appreciation of the beauty of God's presence. Join us on **Thursday evenings during Lent: February 26, March 5, 12, and 19 at 7:00 PM** at **Our Lady of the Rosary Church**.

S.O.U.P (SHARING OURSELVES WITH UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE) is held in the **Our Lady of the Rosary Hall**, on the following **Wednesdays during Lent at 6:00 PM: February 25, March 4, 11, 18 and 25**. There will not be SOUP on Wednesday during Holy Week. Donations will be accepted for Fr. Jack Donald's South American Ministry along with other needy ministries.

ALMSGIVING (Works of Mercy on behalf of the Poor). **Operation Rice Bowl** is a simple way to experience Lenten prayer, fasting and almsgiving and provide assistance to people in need through the work of **Catholic Relief Services**. Bring your rice bowl to Mass on Palm Sunday. On Holy Thursday, April 2 at the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, a collection will be taken up for the work of our local St. Vincent de Paul Conference.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS As our brothers and sisters make their final approach toward the Sacraments of Initiation, we celebrate a number of special rites with them during the period of Purification and Enlightenment. On the First Sunday of Lent, **February 22**, during the **10:30 AM Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary**, all of our catechumens will be sent forth to the Bishop for the Rite of Election at St. Joseph Cathedral Basilica. On the Second Sunday of Lent, **March 1**, during the **9:00 AM Mass** at Saint Albert the Great, the adults and youth seeking Confirmation, Eucharist, and/or Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church will celebrate a Penitential Rite. The Rite of Continuing Conversion will be celebrated for our youth seeking Confirmation at the **6:00 PM Mass** at Our Lady of the Rosary on **March 22**. On the **Third, Fourth, and Fifth** Sundays of Lent, the Scrutinies will be celebrated with the elect (formerly catechumens) during the **10:30 AM Mass** at Our Lady of the Rosary.

LIFE TEEN (HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP) We encourage all families, especially young people, to join us at Holy Mass, at 6:00PM, on Sunday evenings, held in Our Lady of the Rosary Church. Our High School Youth Group, Life Teen, meets almost every Sunday, from 7:00 PM to 8:45 PM. All High School Youth are invited to join us for our **True Beauty & True Strength Semester on Theology of the Body**. On Friday, **March 20**, we will have a viewing of **Mary of Nazareth** at 6:00 PM, in Dermody Center (Our Lady of the Rosary Site); all parishioners are welcome to join us. In addition, we will be having a Shoe Drive for the St. Vincent de Paul Society and other special Service Opportunities throughout Lent.

The EDGE (MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP) All Middle School Youth are invited to join The EDGE for our Spring Semester on **The Saints**. The EDGE meets, almost every Sunday, beginning at 4:15 PM and ending at 5:45 PM. On Friday, **March 20**, we'll have a viewing of **Mary of Nazareth** at 6:00 PM, in Dermody Center (Our Lady of the Rosary Site); all parishioners are welcome to join us. In addition, we will be having a Shoe Drive for the St. Vincent de Paul Society and other special Service Opportunities throughout Lent.

REDISCOVER CATHOLICISM DURING LENT At Christmas, all parishioners were given a book by Matthew Kelly that invites us to rediscover and re-invigorate our faith. You are invited to come together to discuss this book on **Monday mornings from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM**. (right after the 8:30 AM Mass) in the Hall at Our Lady of the Rosary or **Monday evenings from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM** in Dermody Center). We will reflect on the ideas shared by Matthew Kelly and how they may help us to be better disciples of Jesus. Contact Susan suolsen@dsj.org if you have any questions.

SPIRITUALITY TUESDAY ASSEMBLIES Deepen your faith through the following adult faith formation sessions: **February 24**: "Muslims in America: a History", with a speaker from the Islamic Network Group; **March 3**: "The Life of St. Thomas Aquinas" (a video series) with Fr. Matt; **March 10**: "Catholic Interpretation of Scripture" with Fr Jose Rubio; **March 17**: "The Light of Faith" - the 1st Encyclical of Pope Francis with speaker Fr. Arthur Liebscher, SJ; **Wednesday, March 25**: "A Way of the Cross: Journey of Decision", the Passion as seen through the eyes of those involved @ St. Albert the Great Church at 7:00 PM. All other sessions begin at 7:00 PM at St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center.

PARISH SEDER MEAL Enjoy a traditional Seder lamb dinner, Scripture readings and an explanation of the Passover Feast, **Tuesday, March 31 at 6:30 PM, in Our Lady of the Rosary Hall**. The dinner donation is \$10. Any additional donations will be sent to Father Jack Donald. He grew up in our parish and is a missionary in Honduras. Reservations are required. Reserve your place at the table by contacting Anne Morrison: 650-493-2998 or email: ahbert55@aol.com

HOLY WEEK Plan ahead to join us in the celebration of Holy Week, beginning with the traditional **Solemn Procession of Palms on Passion Sunday, March 29**, continuing into the Easter Triduum: **Holy Thursday's Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, April 2 at 7:30 PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Church and 8:00 PM at St. Thomas Aquinas Church (Gregorian); Good Friday's Celebration of the Lord's Passion at 12:00 PM and 5:30p PM (Gregorian) at St. Thomas Aquinas Church and 7:30 PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Church (Spanish); Stations of the Cross at 3:00 PM at Our Lady of the Rosary, with readings and reflection, and 4:00 PM at St. Albert the Great Church with the "Living Stations of the Cross." The "Night of all Nights," the Easter Vigil is on April 4 at 8:30 PM at St. Albert the Great Church**. There, having entered into the Lord's passion and death, we will celebrate the new life of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. We invite every parishioner to celebrate with us this *holiest* of weeks at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish.