

Aloha e Ku'u Hoahanau/ 'Ohana Aloha Nui 'ia

Our Lenten Journey commences in just 3 days with our Ash Wednesday! How quickly the Season of Lent has come upon us!

Now what is Lent about? It is one of the most significant time periods in our Christian Faith. Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday** in a 40-day period of our spiritual journey. The Lenten Season – the spiritual journey holds abundance of importance for all the followers of Jesus Christ.

What do I mean? To start with the Lenten season is an amazingly historical and symbolic time for us Christians. The historic and religious significance can be traced back to Jesus Christ's life on earth and even as He lives forever in the hearts of all His disciples, but the Lenten season is a time to direct our reflections and to focus on the final days of His life on earth and of the Holy Week into the Sacred Triduum, (Holy Thursday, Good Friday & Easter) that eventually led up to Jesus' Crucifixion and Resurrection.

When we as Christians are marked with the Sign of the Cross on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday with the ashes, we are publicly committing ourselves to **"walk in the path"** of Jesus Christ in the spirit of renewal and repentance.

We recall too that the very first time the Sign of the Cross was marked on our forehead-crown of our head, in our Baptism by the Sacred Oil of Chrism consecrated us into Jesus Christ. Now on Ash Wednesday, the Cross (ashes) marked on our forehead reminds us of who we truly are; that we are sons and daughters of God, and the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Most of all the Cross the powerful sign of our redemption, is traced upon us as the sacred words of the Scriptures were invoked **"Repent and believe in the Gospel"** or **"Remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return."** Let us make this Lenten spiritual journey to rekindle in our hearts our commitment to follow the steps of our Lord faithfully.

Yes, we embark on our spiritual journey to recognize our faults as human beings and take the time to repent for the sins we have committed throughout our lifetimes.

This Lent the Church, as in every Lent brings before us the 3 Pillars of Lent, 1) Prayer, 2) Fasting and 3) Almsgiving. These Lenten practices have been a part of the Church tradition for centuries and are still observed and are helpful to us today, for taken to heart they can transform our lives into the image of our Lord.

We are called to Prayer: Prayer is an essential aspect of Lenten season. During this time, we are encouraged to deeply reflect our relationship to God and to seek an ever deeper spiritual ties with God in prayer. This can be achieved through our daily prayers, attending Church services – weekday Mass and Sunday Mass, or participating in devotional activities like, the Stations of the Cross held every Fridays here at the parish. Come and participate in our **Friday Stations of the Cross** prayed here in our parish at **7:00pm** led by the different parish ministries.

Prayer can be verbal, in which we express by our words or songs and even by gestures, or can be meditative, quiet and simply spent in silent time with God. Word or gestures are not necessary, but our presence before God in reflecting and recalling in our minds-hearts and pray. We can all enrich our prayer resources through the Scripture – Bible, the Lives of Saints, or the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The simple secret is to pray, read or be silently present in set time consistently daily as you best can, it is not about the length of time, but in simple discipline, for soon we learn the importance of prioritizing God in our lives.

We are called to Fasting: Fasting is another important aspect of our Lenten journey. It involves giving up certain luxuries or desires for a period of time in order to focus on our spiritual needs that are often forgotten, or we procrastinate from.

Fasting can take place in many forms such as giving up a meal for a day, abstaining from certain foods or drinks for a period of time or giving up or cutting short our time spent on televisions, social media.

The purpose of fasting is to help us draw closer to God by acknowledging our true dependence on God and breaking away from worldly distractions.

We are called to Almsgiving: Almsgiving involves helping those in need. This can involve donating to charities, volunteering time or helping a neighbor in need. Almsgiving is an expression of compassion and love. It is an integral part of the entire season, as it helps us to focus on our obligations to others and to live a life of selflessness and service.

The traditional pillars of Lent; Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving, serve as a reminder of the importance of our spiritual growth and reflection on our temporal earthly life, that is meant for us all to ultimately complete our journey to eternal life in heaven. Through these practices let us deepen our faith, strengthen our relationship with God and live more meaningful and purposeful life.

Lent also offers us all the opportunity to go to Confessions made available with the priests from other parishes of our Leeward Vicariate. Mark your calendar for St. Rita Parish Lenten Confession on Wednesday, March 12 at 7:00pm.

In regard to Lenten Regulation from the Diocese of Honolulu, please read the Lenten insert in the parish bulletin.

Please Welcome Fr. Patrick Pastrano, Fr. Francisco and Fr. Bonfice who are covering the weekend of February 17th – 18th. I am heading back to Guam to officiate at the funeral of my brother-in-law, +Eddie Castro.

Have a blessed week in the Lord!

Fr. Paulo ofm cap.



Sixth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

February 11, 2024

Be my protector, O God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SECOND COLLECTION TODAY IS FOR THE

AUGUSTINE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION – *Make a Student Smile – Give the Gift of Catholic Education Campaign*

Our Catholic schools provide a quality education to students from all ethnic, religious, and financial backgrounds. The Augustine Educational Foundation provides tuition scholarships to students with a financial need in our schools. Money raised in this collection will go to support our parish and vicariate families with tuition assistance for the upcoming school year. You may visit the Augustine Educational Foundation on-line to make a gift or include your check in our parish's offertory. Please take a moment today and help make a difference in a student's life.

MAHALO

GOD & DEMOCRACY: Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. Mystical Rose Oratory at Chaminade University of Honolulu. Join the Marianist Lecture - God & Democracy: Catholic Perspectives on the American Experiment with Dr. Steve Neiheisel. During this election year with so much public discussion about democracy at home and around the world, this topic could not be more timely and important. Dr. Neiheisel is an award-winning lecturer, writer, and national leader in Catholic education. He served as professor of political science at St. Mary's University and the University of Dayton and most recently as Executive Director of the Association of Marianist Universities. Learn more at

www.chaminade.edu/marianist-lecture

WORD OF LIFE: "A society is all the more human to the degree that it cares effectively for its most frail and suffering members, in a spirit of fraternal love. Let us strive to achieve this goal, so that no one will feel alone, excluded or abandoned." **Pope Francis, Message for the 29th World Day of the Sick 2021**
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PARISH CALENDAR

Saturday, February 10 5:00 p.m. Mass
Sunday, February 11 7:00 a.m. Mass
	..... 9:00 a.m. Mass (Live Stream)
	..... 5:00 p.m. Mass
Monday, February 12	..... 7:30 a.m. Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m. Mass
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m. Food Pantry Open
Tuesday, February 13	..... 7:30 a.m. Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m. Mass
Wednesday, February 14	..... 7:30 a.m. Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	.... 8:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday - Mass
	.. 9:30-11:00 a.m. Food Pantry Open
	.... 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday - Mass
Thursday, February 15	..... 7:30 a.m. Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m. Communion Service
Friday, February 16	..... 7:30 a.m. Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m. Communion Service
	..... 7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross - Lectors
Saturday, February 17	..... 7:30 a.m. Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m. No Mass
	..... 3:15-4:00 p.m. Confession - Church
	..... 5:00 p.m. Mass

Strengthen *Faith*.
Support *Catholic Education*.
Make a Student *Smile*.

NOTES ON STEWARDSHIP

The fate of a leper is a great tragedy at any time and place. In Jesus' time, lepers were considered condemned, part of the plagues God sent as punishment. They were cast out of society and abandoned. Saint Mark's Gospel reveals the unthinkable. Jesus reaches out and touches a leper. He risks catching the contagious disease and heals the man. As the Gospel story teaches, no one is abandoned by Christ. Are there those in our society or in our personal lives for whom we ascribe no hope, who we have abandoned, treated like lepers? Or as Christ's stewards of our sisters and brothers, do we risk reaching out and touching those who may seem to us to be "unclean" or not worthy of our time or attention?
(International Catholic Stewardship Council)

WEEKLY READINGS

Feb 11 Sun: Sixth Sunday In Ordinary Time

Lv:13:1-2,44-46; Ps:32; 1 Cor:10:31-11:1; Mk:1:40-45

Feb 12 Mon: Ordinary Weekday

Jas:1-11; Ps:119:67, 68, 71, 72, 75, 76; Mk:8:11-13

Feb 13 Tue: Ordinary Weekday

Jas:1:12-18; Ps:94:3, 4, 5 & 10, 11; Mk:7:1-13

Feb 14 Wed: Ash Wednesday

Jl:2:12-18; Ps:51; 2 Cor:5:20-6:2; Mt:6:16, 16-18

Feb 15 Thur: Thursday after Ash Wednesday

Dt:30:15-20; Ps:1:1-2, 3, 4 & 6; Lk:9:22-25

Feb 16 Fri: Friday after Ash Wednesday

Is:58:1-9a; Ps:51:3-4, 5-6ab, 18-19; Mt:9:14-15

Feb 17 Sat: Saturday after Ash Wednesday

Is:58:9b-14; Ps:86:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Lk:5:27-32

NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Gn:9:8-15: After the great flood, God told Noah of the covenant between heaven and earth. Never again would a flood destroy the earth.

1 Pt:3:18-22: As the ark saved a chosen few in Noah's day, so does baptism by faith save God's chosen today.

Mk:1:12-15: The Spirit sent Jesus to the desert to fast and pray for forty days. Afterwards, Jesus appeared in Galilee proclaiming "The kingdom of God is at hand, Repent, and believe in the gospel."



ASH WEDNESDAY



For the Journey

Loving Father,
during this Lenten journey,
inspire me to meditate on your sacrifice
as I seek to deepen my relationship
with you.

May the ashes on my forehead,
remind me from where I came.

Give me strength,
give me hope.

You who are all-loving,
grant that I may be in communion
with you.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Wednesday, February 14, 2024
Forever Ambassadors of Christ



Today's readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18. Has anyone ever asked you, “What is that on your forehead?” Each year on Ash Wednesday, we Catholics display a sign telling the world that we are followers of Christ, that we are sinful but hopeful in our redemption through the paschal mystery. The ashes remind us that we are in relationship with God, who sent his only Son to redeem humanity through the sacrifice on the cross.

Throughout the Lenten season, as a community, we ask God for his guidance and mercy as we journey together to repentance and prepare to renew our faith at Easter. The

season invites us to return to God with our whole hearts so that we may be not only one with him but also ambassadors for Christ in the world.

The Lenten ethos is one of sacrifice, primarily God's sacrifice of Jesus for the salvation of humankind. Through our meager Lenten practices, we join in the sacrifice of Christ in the hope of sharing also in his resurrection. Jesus goes into the desert before he begins his public ministry to be alone with God as he readies himself for what is to come. Jesus put his complete trust in God. This season calls for a pause in our lives through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving so that we too may grow closer to God.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, February 12 Always by Our Side

Lent gives us the opportunity to deepen our relationship with God. James teaches us what unwavering faith can accomplish, while the Pharisees demonstrate how people of little or no faith live. James shows us how faith can overcome challenges that many of us know wholeheartedly and firsthand. We may know people who have no relationship with God. These people need assurance, “a sign” to believe. Let us be that sign. *Today’s readings: James 1:1–11; Psalm 119:67, 71, 72, 75, 76; Mark 8:11–13.*

Tuesday, February 13 A Spiritual Journey

Have you ever been on a family trip when one member’s sudden exclamation of “I forgot to pack!” is followed by another’s reassuring response, “Don’t stress, we’ll figure something out”? Something similar can happen along our faith journey. In this scenario, God is that voice telling us not to worry, that he will help us prevail. God will give us the fortitude for a spiritual Lenten journey. *Today’s readings: James 1:12–18; Psalm 94:12–13a, 14–15, 18–19; Mark 8:14–21.*

Wednesday, February 14 Symbol of Life

Today the ashes on our foreheads announce to the world that we acknowledge our sin and have faith in the saving cross of Christ. Despite the visibility of the ashes, they are meant to be a sign of conversion rather than an emblem of pride. Matthew encourages us to go about our lives without flaunting our good deeds. It is enough that we know what we have done for the love of neighbor. *Today’s readings: Joel 2:12–18; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6ab, 12–13, 14 and 17; 2 Corinthians 5:20–6:2; Matthew 6:1–6, 16–18.*

Thursday, February 15 Perfect Role Model

Who are your role models? As children, we may name a professional athlete or our parents. As we age and our faith grows along with us, we may begin to be inspired by saints. Today’s Gospel reminds us of our greatest role model, Jesus Christ. Jesus gives us the template for a holy life. He also warns us that his path is not easy and that we must help one another along the journey. Our goal is to continue Jesus’ mission. *Today’s readings: Deuteronomy 30:15–20; Psalm 1:1–2; 3, 4, 6; Luke 9:22–25.*

Friday, February 16 Caring for Others

Look within and discern whether your external actions reflect your internal thoughts. Do you see a relationship between the way you observe the rules of fasting and abstinence and the way you treat others? Is God pleased that a Church law has been observed when you have been unkind to someone you find annoying? When experiencing a problem with another, ask God to fill you with love toward your neighbor. Strive to live a holy life not for recognition by others but for your love for God. *Today’s readings: Isaiah 58:1–9a; Psalm 51:3–4, 5–6a, 18–19; Matthew 9:14–15.*

Saturday, February 17 Saying Yes

Many of us have heard the saying “God doesn’t call the qualified, he qualifies the called.” In today’s Gospel, Jesus called Levi, and Levi followed without hesitation. The other apostles followed the same pattern. Each of them left everything behind to join Jesus’ ministry. How can you act as a missionary disciple, inspiring others to do what is needed to follow Jesus? *Today’s readings: Isaiah 58:9b–14; Psalm 86:1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Luke 5:27–32.*





ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII
DIOCESE OF HONOLULU
WITNESS TO JESUS

Memorandum

TO: All Clergy, Religious Orders, Catholic Schools & Parishes

FROM: Rev. Alfred Omar Guerrero, Director of the Office of Worship

DATE: January 16, 2024

RE: **Diocese of Honolulu 2024 Lenten Regulations (Updated 1/16/2024)**

FASTING

- ❖ In the dioceses in the United States, Catholics aged 18 through 59 are bound to fast on both Ash Wednesday (**February 14, 2024**) and Good Friday (**March 29, 2024**).
- ❖ To *fast* means to consume one full meal a day at most, although taking of other, smaller quantities of food at the other customary mealtimes is permitted. Food and drink between meals (excepting water and medicine) is not permitted on days of fasting.

ABSTINENCE FROM MEAT

- ❖ Catholics aged 14 and up are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays of Lent, and Good Friday.
- ❖ To abstain means refraining from eating beef, veal, pork, or poultry at least, although eggs and milk products are acceptable. The consumption of fish and shellfish is permitted, though the penitential character of the abstinence should be kept in mind.

EASTER DUTY

- ❖ All the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, are bound by the obligation of receiving Communion at least once a year. This precept is to be fulfilled during the Easter Season unless it is fulfilled, for a just cause, at some other time during the year. This period is extended to include all the weeks of Lent and the Easter Season up to Trinity Sunday (**May 26, 2024**).

LENTEN PRACTICES

- ❖ The faithful are encouraged during Lent to attend daily Mass, receive Holy Communion, participate in penance services, and receive sacramental absolution; to take part in public and private exercises of piety, give generously to works of religion and charity, perform acts of kindness toward the sick, aged, and the poor; to practice voluntary self-denial, especially

regarding food, drink, and worldly amusements; and to pray more fervently, particularly for the intentions of the Holy Father.

- ❖ Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls this year on **February 14th**. Ashes are to be blessed as a sign of our entry into a season of conversion, repentance, and reconciliation. Ashes are to be blessed by a bishop, priest, or deacon. Others may be associated with the clergy in the distribution of ashes.
- ❖ Funeral Masses may not be celebrated on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Holy Saturday, nor on the Sundays of Lent. When pastoral reasons require that a funeral be celebrated on these days, only a Funeral Outside of Mass may be held.
- ❖ To afford the faithful opportunities to participate in Lenten prayer services, pastors are encouraged to have such prayer services at least twice a week, including the Way of the Cross on Fridays, Exposition and Benediction, Evening Prayer, and evening Masses. A homily or instruction should be included.

BLESSING OF THE OILS AND CONSECRATION OF THE CHRISM

- ❖ In order to allow participation of Catholics throughout the islands, the Sacred Oils will be blessed during the Chrism Mass to be celebrated in several locations. All are encouraged to join in one of the following celebrations:
 - a. Kauai: **Tuesday, March 5th at 6:00p.m., St. Raphael Church, Koloa.**
 - b. Maui-Lanai: **Thursday, March 14th at 7 p.m., Holy Rosary Church, Paia.**
 - c. Big Island: **Thursday, March 21st at 5:30 p.m., St. Joseph Church, Hilo.**
 - d. Oahu-Molokai: **Tuesday, March 26th at 7 p.m., Co-Cathedral of St. Theresa, Honolulu.**

THE SACRED PASCHAL TRIDUUM

“Since Christ accomplished his work of human redemption and of the perfect glorification of God principally through his Paschal Mystery, in which by dying he has destroyed our death, and by rising restored our life, the sacred Paschal Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord shines forth as the high point of the entire liturgical year” (*Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, #18*). Three major liturgical principles may be of help here:

- a. The Triduum may be viewed a single liturgical action that occurs over a period of three days.
- b. The Triduum is not part of Lent, but in its entirety, celebrates the Easter event.
- c. The entire focus of the Triduum is on the Triumph of the Cross and the Resurrection.

<p>NOTE: The above directives should be published in parish bulletins for the benefit of the faithful, adding any specific parish or vicariate events. What follows pertains only to clergy and liturgy planners and need not be published for parishioners.</p>

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYERS FOR RECONCILIATION

- ❖ Priests should consider using the two Eucharistic Prayers for Reconciliation from time to time during the season of Lent.

THE PASCHAL CANDLE

- ❖ “The Paschal candle should be prepared, which for effective symbolism must be made of wax, never be artificial, be renewed each year, be only one in number, and be of sufficiently large size, so that it may evoke the truth that Christ is the light of the world. It is blessed with the signs and words prescribed in the Missal.”

[Note: Since the Paschal candle is to be lit for all liturgies during the Easter season and during baptisms and funerals, it often happens that the candle burns down so much that it no longer is a sign that clearly proclaims Christ’s victory over the darkness of sin and death. To prevent this from happening, parishes are encouraged to purchase candles that will be able to be proper symbols until the following Easter Vigil. In the Diocese of Honolulu, if the pastor judges that the Paschal candle blessed at the Easter Vigil is no longer able to be the sign it is meant to be, the parish should replace it with a new Easter candle. However, there is no special ceremony for blessing the second candle. It should simply be prepared in the sacristy with the proper date, then placed in the candle holder.]

- ❖ A glass chimney is recommended to shield the flame of the Paschal Candle at the Easter Vigil liturgy from the time it is lit until it is safely standing in its place in the church.

THE EASTER DISMISSAL WITH ALLELUIAS

- ❖ The dismissal, from the Easter Vigil through the Octave of Easter, ending with the Second Sunday of Easter, inclusive, should be followed by a double Alleluia! preferably sung. The same is true for the liturgies of Pentecost Sunday and its Vigil. *The double Alleluia is not added at other liturgies during the Easter season.*

When pastoral necessity requires it, the local Ordinary may allow duplicate liturgies on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, but not the Easter Vigil.

Please feel free to contact me at the Office of Worship, 808-585-3342 or alguerrero@rcchawaii.org, should you have any questions.

Blessings!