

## PARISH CALENDAR

Fourth Sunday  
of Lent

March 10, 2024

Rejoice, Jerusalem,  
and all who love her.

Saturday, March 9	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Sunday, March 10	..... 7:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:00 a.m.	Mass ( <b>Live Stream</b> )
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Monday, March 11	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open
Tuesday, March 12	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 7:00 p.m.	<b>Lenten Reconciliation Service - Church</b>
Wednesday, March 13	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open
	..... 7:00 p.m.	<b>Ministry of Usher - Hospitality Meeting - Church</b>
Thursday, March 14	.... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
Friday, March 15	.... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 7:00 p.m.	<b>Stations of the Cross - Outreach</b>
Saturday, March 16	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 3:15-4:00 p.m.	<b>Confession - Church</b>
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass



### NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

**Jer:31:31-34:** God says, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. . . I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

**Heb:5:7-9:** When Jesus was in the flesh, he prayed constantly to God. Through his prayer and obedience, Jesus became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

**Jn:12:20-33:** Jesus told his followers: "unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. . And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life." John 3:14-15

The line quoted above concludes a dialogue that Jesus had with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin. This is the first of three times Nicodemus is mentioned in the Gospel of John. The second time he appears is when he reminds the other members of the Sanhedrin that a man must be first heard before he is condemned. The third time was when Jesus was killed and Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes to prepare Jesus' body for burial.

Jesus was not accepted by most of the Pharisees and within the Sanhedrin. For that reason, Nicodemus was taking a risk by going to him at night to talk. But Jesus clearly senses faith in the heart of Nicodemus, which is why when Nicodemus asks Jesus about His teaching, Jesus answers him. Unlike the other Pharisees, Nicodemus was not trying to trap our Lord; he sincerely wanted to understand.

At the beginning of this dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus, Nicodemus professes the beginning of faith in Jesus when he says, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him" (John 3:2). Interestingly, Jesus then speaks to Nicodemus in figures of speech, saying that one can only enter the Kingdom of God when they are "born from above" and "born from water and the Spirit." Nicodemus tries to understand but fails. Jesus then gently rebukes him by saying, "You are the teacher of Israel and you do not understand this?" (John 3:10). Jesus then goes on to speak further in symbolic language and figures of speech, concluding with the beginning of today's Gospel quoted above when He speaks in a veiled way about His coming crucifixion.

One thing that is important to understand from this dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus is that Jesus' language is veiled in symbolic language because, even though Nicodemus was on the right path, he was not yet ready for the full revelation of the Gospel. He could not yet fully comprehend all that our Lord came to reveal. Thus, Jesus spoke in veiled language and invited Nicodemus to keep seeking its hidden meaning.

In our own lives, we can come to God and want Him to speak clearly and definitively to us, revealing His perfect will for our lives. But often He doesn't. Why? Because God knows we are not yet ready for the full truth. When He speaks to us and when we gain insight in one way or another, this is good and reveals we are on the right path. But the Gospel, in its fullness, is so radical and so demanding that most people are not yet ready for the full truth. Therefore, in His compassion, God gives us only what we can handle at the moment. But this humble truth should encourage us, as it did Nicodemus, to not give up and to continue opening ourselves to the fullness of the Word of God.

**Reflect, today, upon how open you are to the fullness of God's Word. What would happen if God were to reveal to you, by an immediate personal revelation of divine knowledge, all that was in His sacred mind? Would it be too much for you to handle? Yes, it would be. But that humble admission is an important step toward that very goal. Humble yourself, today, more fully before the mysterious Word of God and pray that you will continue to be changed and open so that the clarity of God's truth will more fully penetrate your soul.**

My teaching Lord, Your sacred Truth is so deep, so profound and so transforming that it remains too much for me to fully comprehend and embrace. For that reason, I thank You for the mercy of speaking to me in veiled ways so as to continually draw me deeper in my faith and knowledge of You. Please continue to open my mind and heart to You so that, one day, I will understand Your Truth most fully. Jesus, I trust in You.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**LENTEN PENANCE SERVICES:** Listed is the Leeward Vicariate Advent Penance Service: **Tue 3/12 St. Rita - Nanakuli / - Thur 3/14 OLPH - Ewa Beach / Mon 3/18 - St. Jude - Kapolei / Thur 3/21 Sacred Hearts - Waianae.** All services begins at 7:00 p.m.

**CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES:** This week we take up The Catholic Relief Services Collection to reveal Christ's love to our brothers and sisters in need. This collection make grants to six Catholic agencies that provide relief and support for struggling communities and work for peace and reconciliation among our marginalized brothers and sisters, both here and around the world. Please prayerfully consider how you can support the collection. Learn more about the collection at [www.usccb.org/catholic-relief](http://www.usccb.org/catholic-relief).

**OPERATION RICE BOWL: INCREASING DISASTERS, INCREASING RESILIENCE:** Located in Southeast Asia between the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Indonesia has beautiful beaches, diverse cultures and the world's fourth largest population. Many of the country's more than 17,000 islands are in the Ring of Fire, where volcanic eruptions and earthquakes are common. Climate-related disasters such as cyclones are also becoming more frequent and destructive. Find out how—with the support of Catholic Relief Services and generous communities like yours—Evita and her disaster preparedness group are working to keep their community safe. Visit [www.crsricebowl.org](http://www.crsricebowl.org) to read this week's Story of Hope.

**WORD OF LIFE:** "We are facing an enormous and dramatic clash between good and evil, death and life, the "culture of death" and the "culture of life". We find ourselves not only "faced with" but necessarily "in the midst of" this conflict: we are all involved and we all share in it, with the inescapable responsibility of choosing to be unconditionally prolife" (*The Gospel of Life* 5).

## WEEKLY READINGS

**Mar 10 Sun: Fourth Sunday of Lent**

2 Chr:36:14-16, 19-23; Ps:137; Eph:2:4-10; Jn:3:14-21

**Mar 11 Mon: Lenten Weekday**

Is:65:17-2; Ps:30:2 & 4, 5-6, 11-12a & 13b; Jn:4:43-54

**Mar 12 Tue: Lenten Weekday**

Ez:47:1-9, 12; Ps:46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn:5:1-16

**Mar 13 Wed: Lenten Weekday**

Is:49:8-15; Ps:145:8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18; Jn:5:17-30

**Mar 14 Thur: Lenten Weekday**

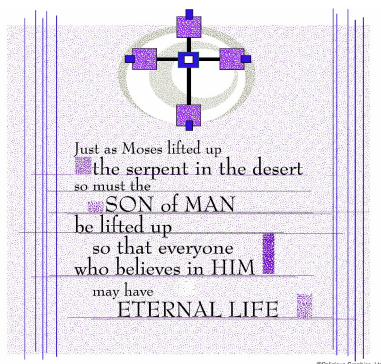
Ex:32:7-14; Ps:106:19-20, 21-22, 23; Jn:5:31-47

**Mar 15 Fri: Lenten Weekday**

Ws:2:1a, 12-22; Ps:34:17-18, 19-20, 21 & 23; Jn:7:1-2, 10, 25-30

**Mar 16 Sat: Lenten Weekday**

Jer:11:18-20; Ps:7:2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12; Jn:7:40-53



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## NOTES ON STEWARDSHIP

This week's Gospel story of Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus, a Pharisee and leader of the Jews who comes to Jesus by night, recognizing Jesus as a teacher from God, but coming in secret for fear of being put out of the synagogue. Jesus rebukes him for his lack of understanding. Good stewards realize that for the sake of this world, God gives his most cherished beloved son. And so they are willing to confess Jesus as their Lord and savior in a public way. They do not keep their faith to themselves, darkness. The Gospel reading challenges us to profess our faith in word and deed publicly, not to hide it away. Are we willing to accept the gospel's challenge? Are we willing to get out of our personal "comfort zone" and confess our faith in Christ Jesus in an open, tangible way? **International Catholic Stewardship Council**

## SECOND CHANCES

You always have another chance. This is the good news of Lent and Easter. God knows our shortcomings. God knows our past. God knows our present inabilities. God knows where the future is headed—if we do not change.

Too often in life people do not give us another chance. If you say or do something inappropriate to a person you're dating, it may end the relationship right there. If you treat a customer disrespectfully, you may never see that person again. If you offend a perfect stranger while driving your car, you never have a chance to make it up. Too often you don't get another chance.

And, sadly, death sometimes gets in the way. You had harsh words with a close friend or family member. You never made up. Now, the person you once loved is gone. You don't have another chance—in this life.

But with God, you always have another chance. If you have sinned, God can forgive. If you sin again—and again—God will still forgive. We know this because God sent Christ into a world absorbed in sin.

The Letter to the Ephesians says, "God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ."

This Lent, confess your sins and rejoice in Christ, who gives you another chance.

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# FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



## Light of the World

Lord God,  
when we were unfaithful,  
you remembered us.  
Your love is so great  
that you sent your Son  
to be the Light of the World.

May I keep my eyes fixed upon your light,  
and never surrender to the dark,  
O Christ.  
Who lives and reigns with you,  
in the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Sunday, March 10, 2024**

## Light of Hope in the Darkness



*Today's readings: 2 Chronicles 36:14–16, 19–23; Psalm 137:1–2, 3, 4–5, 6; Ephesians 2:4–10; John 3:14–21.* Hope and joy are recurring themes in the readings and prayers on the Fourth Sunday of Lent. Midway through Lent, just as we begin to weary in our resolve, the readings remind us of God's love and the eternal life that awaits, and the prayers relate the Christian response of joy. The entrance antiphon begins, "Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her," recalling for us that Lent is also a season for joy.

The liturgical color varies from the season's violet to rose today to visually encourage us. This day points to the

reconciliation that is ours because of Christ's death and resurrection. And we have merited none of this. Only by the mercy of God do we live in Christ. As the reading from Ephesians states, "It is the gift of God; it is not from works so no one may boast."

Some accept the gift of faith, but as the Gospel states, "The light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light." At baptism, we received the light of Christ and, with that light, join Christ in dispelling darkness. This week, be aware that you carry the light of Christ within you and can bring others to it.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, March 11 Blind Faith

John tells the story of a man pleading for Jesus to cure his dying child. The miracle of the cure convinced this man and the others present that Jesus was the Messiah. But what about those of us who have never witnessed such a miracle? Take some time to journal about your faith in Jesus. On what do you base your belief? How much do you trust in the Lord? *Today's readings: Isaiah 65:17–21 Psalm 30:2, 4, 5–6, 11–12a, 13b; John 4:43–54.*

### Tuesday, March 12 Journeying Together

Asking for or accepting help shows courage because it implies that we are not self-sufficient. Recognizing our dependence on God and one another is a virtue. Being in relationship with others requires listening. Today, await the answer when asking someone how he or she is doing. Then really listen. Similarly, make sure that you leave space and time in your prayer for God's voice to bubble up inside of you. *Today's readings: Ezekiel 47:1–9, 12; Psalm 46:2–3, 5–6, 8–9; John 5:1–16.*

### Wednesday, March 13 Blind Faith

While the Lord is a just judge, people are not always so fair or righteous. Are you your worst critic? The idea of self-compassion might seem hedonistic or selfish, yet it can be hard to give what we do not possess. If we desire to extend God's kindness to others, we need to express compassion toward ourselves. Examine how well you practice patience and mercy toward others. To improve, begin with yourself. *Today's readings: Isaiah 49:8–15; Psalm 145:8–9, 13cd–14, 17–18; John 5:17–30.*

### Thursday, March 14 Taking a Pause

During every Mass, we encounter Christ in the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. He is present especially in the consecrated bread and wine, in the Scriptures, in the ministers, and in the assembly. God does not want us to continue wandering in the desert; he beckons us to the promised land of eternal life. This week, meditate on a part of the Mass. Practice being truly present during Mass to allow space for conversion and transformation. *Today's readings: Exodus 32:7–14; Psalm 106:19–20, 21–22, 23; John 5:31–47.*

### Friday, March 15 Genuine Encounter

What does it mean to truly know someone? Have you followed a famous figure or professional contact and felt that you knew everything about him or her without having even met the person? Or perhaps you met the individual and encountered someone different than you had imagined. In today's Gospel, the inhabitants of Jerusalem think that they know Jesus, but their knowledge is on a surface level. They do not know the One who sent him. When you read the Scriptures, invite the words to fill your heart so that you can know the Lord. *Today's readings: Wisdom 2:1a, 12–22; Psalm 34:17–18, 19–20, 21, 23; John 7:1–2, 10, 25–30.*

### Saturday, March 16 The Body of Christ

Many things can distract us as we seek to become closer to God and spread the Good News. How can you stay rooted in a life of discipleship? What are some of the things you can do in your community to continue the ministry of Jesus? Can you read to children at the library? Or volunteer in a soup kitchen? Does your community have a cleanup day for which you could sign up? Strive to be walking testimonies of Jesus' love. *Today's readings: Jeremiah 11:18–20; Psalm 7:2–3, 9bc–10, 11–12; John 7:40–53.*



## Ka Leo O Ke Kahuhipa

Aloha e ku'u hoahananau/ 'ohana aloha nui 'ia

### LAETARE SUNDAY – 4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY of LENT

The color rose surrounds our Liturgical Celebration on this 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent. The color rose is the preferred choice for the liturgy from the drapes on the Altar, the vestments of the priest, deacon, and to the cincture worn by the altar servers.

Like Advent (Gaudete), entering the midway of the Lenten spiritual journey the Church calls the Faithful to joy, now symbolized by the color of rose.

Traditionally, this Sunday called Laetare Sunday, in midway into Lent has been a day of celebration within the austere – penance period of our Lenten spiritual journey. In this celebration – joy, the Church, that is we the faithful are called and reminded of the joyful anticipation of the victory to be soon won – Easter.

Our entrance antiphon for Laetare Sunday is taken from **Isaiah 66: 10-11** that calls out; ***“Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.”***

Laetare Sunday signals to all the faithful that we are now midway through our spiritual journey of Lent and we the faithful are called to joy as disciples of Jesus Christ and most of all to faithfully accomplish our Lenten journey.

***“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.” Hebrews 12:1.***

Whatever we are undertaking in the spirit of penance in this Lent, the Cross we bear is never the end in itself, for the Cross leads us to the glory of Easter. We Christians must never forget that the Cross of Jesus Christ that we bear daily leads to victory as even now we can share in the joy in anticipation of the Easter glory that awaits the faithful.

Laetare Sunday reminds us of all of this truth, and we too must take to heart the encouragement St. Paul gave Timothy and his Church in Ephesus ***“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” 2 Timothy 4:6.***

Two more weeks are all we have left for our Lenten spiritual journey before the Solemn Holy Week enters, let us strive more earnestly to run our spiritual Lenten race well!

## **OUR PRAYERS and CONDOLENCES**

We offer out prayers for the souls of our parishioners; **+Rober McCulloch** who passed away Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup> and **+Anita Latreta** who passed away Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Both **+Robert** and **+Anita** were longtime faithful parishioners who were truly part of our parish ohana kept united through the Eucharistic reception and Sacrament of Confessions, mahalo to the homebound Eucharistic Ministers Karen Victor and Sabastian Lopez who faithfully ministered to them.

We offer our prayers and condolences also to our parishioners **+Louise Ku'uipo Gomes** and **+Georianna A. Kehaulani Soon**. Their funeral masses took place this past week in our parish of St. Rita. **+Louise** on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup> and **+Georgianna** on Friday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Eternal Rest Grant Unto, **+Louise Ku'uipo Gomes, +Georgianna A. Kehaulani Soon, +Robert McCollugh** and **+Anita Latreta**, O Lord and Perpetual Light Shine Upon them. May they Rest in Peace, Amen.

Please keep all our beloved parishioners who passed away in your prayers.

## **ST. RITA LENT RECONCILIATION - CONFESSION**

Our St. Rita Parish Lenten Confessions will be held on **Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm**. All our Leeward Vicariate priests will be here to assist us in celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation - Confession. Take this grace fill opportunity to go to Confession to prepare yourselves for the Solemn Feast of Easter.

Easter Duty for Catholics; the obligation to go to confession and receive the Holy Communion during the Easter season.

## **ST. RITA PARISH GATHERING PLACE – ST. RITA CENTER.**

Please keep in your prayers for God's assistance and blessings be granted so that 3 qualified and reasonable Contractors would be found. We are now in the final phase of selecting 3 Contractors to be chosen and be presented to the Diocese for approval. Then the long-awaited actual construction can begin.

Have a Blessed Week in the Lord!

Fr. Paulo OFM Cap.