



Lent – A Time of Renewal & Grace, 2017 **St. Thomas Aquinas Parish – Palo Alto, California**

“Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each community of faith and for every believer. Each of us has a place in God’s heart. God knows each of us by name, cares for us and seeks us out whenever we turn away from Him. God is interested in each of us. God’s love does not allow Him to be indifferent to what happens to us. Lent reminds us that it is possible to create something new within ourselves and around us, simply because God is faithful. God continues to be rich in goodness and mercy, and God is always ready to forgive and start afresh. Let us not waste this season of Lent, so favorable a time for conversion! Take some time to review the opportunities our parish offers to prepare us for Easter.

Ash Wednesday, March 1 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 **7:15AM, 12:15PM, 6 PM & 8PM (Gregorian)** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church; **8:30AM & 7:30PM (Spanish)** at Our Lady of the Rosary Church; **10AM (School) & 7PM** 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 (March 1) & Good Friday (April 13) 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; however, together they should not equal a full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juices may be taken between meals.

PERMISSION TO DISPENSE FROM ABSTINENCE on Friday, March 17. Bishop McGrath has granted a dispensation from the obligation of abstinence on St. Patrick's Day. Everyone who wishes to accept this dispensation is asked to perform a spiritual or corporal work of mercy on a day that is suitable for them.

DAILY CELEBRATIONS OF THE HOLY MASS & 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 7:15AM & 12:15PM & Saturday at 12:15PM** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church; and **Monday through Friday at 8:30AM** at Our Lady of the Rosary Church. **The Stations of the Cross will be offered every Friday after the 8:30AM & 12:15PM Mass.** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is provided every Wednesday after the **12:15PM Mass** and on Wednesdays from **6PM – 8PM** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU - SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

In Lent 2015, over 20,000 people in the Diocese of San Jose celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation and 5,000 on Wednesdays during the first: *The Light is On for You* initiative. At St. Thomas Aquinas Church, our parish will offer the opportunity for private confessions from **6PM – 8PM: March 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5, 12.** Additional times for confessions are Saturday from **11:30AM – 12PM** at St. Thomas Aquinas Church & **4:15PM – 4:45PM** at St. Albert the Great Church. We will have two Lenten Penance Liturgies: **Monday, April 3 at 7PM at Our Lady of the Rosary,** and on **Monday, April 10 at 7PM at St. Albert the Great.**

LENTEN MORNING OF RECOLLECTION focuses on how we might respond to the call to conversion and transformation, to a more active faith, to compassionate justice in this climate of fear, distrust, anxiety and seeming lack of hope. Let us explore together the Scriptural messages of hope, the current stories of strength, and our own spiritual practices which lead us to be the Lenten “good news” leading to Resurrection. Facilitated by Sr. Marilyn Wilson, BVM on **Saturday, March 11, 9AM – 1PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Hall.** Light refreshments provided. Sponsored by the Thomas Merton Center.

S.O.U.P (SHARING OURSELVES WITH UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE) will be hosted at Our Lady of the Rosary Hall on the following **Wednesdays during Lent at 6PM: March 8, 15, 22, 29 & April 5.** The basic plan for SOUP is simple. Three families bring soup to the meeting and a few bring wine and juice. Each person brings a bowl and crackers or bread. We have about an hour of good conversation and a simple dinner. Donations will be accepted for Fr. Jack Donald’s Central American Ministry, along with other worthy charitable causes.

TAIZÉ PRAYER is a time for connecting with the Spirit in joy and gratitude, and 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: March 9, 16, 23, and 30 at 7PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Church.**

BestLentEver.com – Don't just give up chocolate for Lent. Join *Dynamic Catholic* for the Best Lent Ever, a FREE email program designed to help you have a life changing Lent. Based on Matthew Kelly's latest book, *Resisting Happiness*, this year's program will help you identify what stands between you and happiness, and what you can do about it. When you sign up, you'll get short inspirational videos, practical tips, and a study guide for groups or individuals. Sign up today at BestLentEver.com.

ALMSGIVING (*Works of Mercy on behalf of the Poor*). **Operation Rice Bowl** is a way to experience Lent through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, while aiding people in need through the work of **Catholic Relief Services**. Pick up your rice bowl at church and bring it with you to Mass on Palm Sunday. On **Holy Thursday**, April 13 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 - On the 1st Sunday of Lent, **March 5**, during the **10:30AM** Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary our catechumens will be sent forth to the Bishop for their Rite of Election at St. Joseph Cathedral Basilica. On the 2nd Sunday of Lent, **March 12**, during the **9AM 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. On the 4th Sunday of Lent, the Rite of Continuing Conversion will be celebrated with our youth preparing for Confirmation at the **5PM** Mass at St. Albert the Great on **March 25**. On the **Third, Fourth, and Fifth** Sundays of Lent, the Scrutinies will be celebrated with the elect during the **10:30AM Mass** at Our Lady of the Rosary.

EXALT: PRAISE AND WORSHIP FAMILY NIGHT - The Youth and Young Adult Ministries of St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Nicholas and St. William Parishes invite you to an evening of worship and an inspiring message that will deepen your Lenten experience. People of all ages are welcome. Event will be held at **St. William Church in Los Altos**. Hospitality begins at 6PM. Worship and talk begin at 7PM and conclude by 8:30PM. This night will bring together a talented worship leader, keynote message, and a time of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Make space in your heart for Christ this Lent.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY - Take some time this Lent to learn more about the Gospel of Matthew by attending our Bible Study on Wednesday evenings (March 8, 15, 22, 29) from **7:15PM to 8:30PM in the Dermody Center (Our Lady of the Rosary site)**. Join Chris Mardesich and Susan Olsen for 4 weeks of exploration of the story of Jesus' life through the eyes of St. Matthew. Teens and adults are welcome. Contact Susan (suolsen@dsj.org) if you have questions.

SPIRITUALITY TUESDAY ASSEMBLIES Deepen your faith by attending our Tuesday adult faith formation sessions this Lent. We begin at 7PM at St. Albert the Great Hospitality Center. **March 7th**: The Bible and the Quran: A Comparative Study a video presentation; **March 14**: Saint Hildegard of Bingen, a woman Doctor of the Church; with speaker Susan Olsen; **March 21**: Father Michael Gazzingan's Spiritual Journey and the Church in the Philippines; **March 28**: Our Lady of Fatima with speaker Deacon Peloso. **Wednesday, April 5**: A Way of the Cross: Journey of Decision, the Passion as seen through the eyes of Pilate, Mary, Veronica and others: St. Albert the Great Church, **7PM**.

PARISH SEDER MEAL Enjoy a traditional Seder lamb dinner, Scripture readings and an explanation of the Passover Feast, on **Tuesday, April 11 at 6:30PM, in Our Lady of the Rosary Hall**. The requested dinner donation is \$10. All proceeds will be sent to Father Jack Donald. He grew up in our parish and is a missionary in Honduras. Reserve your place 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, April 9**, continuing into the Easter Triduum: **Holy Thursday's Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, April 13** at 7:30PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Church and 8PM at St. Thomas Aquinas Church (Gregorian); **Good Friday's Celebration of the Lord's Passion** at 12PM at St. Thomas Aquinas Church and 7:30PM at Our Lady of the Rosary Church (Spanish); Jesus' 7 Last Words & Stations of the Cross at 2PM at Our Lady of the Rosary, with readings and reflection, and 4PM at St. Albert the Great Church the "Living Stations of the Cross." **The "Night of all Nights," the Easter Vigil is on April 15 at 8:30PM at St. Albert the Great Church**. 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.