



Lent – A Time of Renewal & Grace, 2018

St. Thomas Aquinas Parish – Palo Alto, California

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

Our forty-day Lenten journey toward Easter is fundamentally an imitation of Jesus’ time in the desert. It’s a time of simplicity, purification, and self-denial, of setting aside our distractions and diversion and getting back to basics: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Lent is also a season for confronting the desert of our own sin. Because God is the source of life, abandoning God forms a desert land around us. We tend to cover up our sins, make excuses for them, or dull our sensitivity to them. But during Lent, we intentionally venture into the desert, realizing the depths of our sin, and repenting, in order that we might find Christ’s path back to life. And so, with our eyes fixed on the coming glory of Easter, let us together enter into this desert time of self-denial, ready to break out of the cramped, barren space of self-absorption. (Bishop Robert Barron in his *Introduction to Lenten Gospel Reflections*).

Take some time to review the opportunities our parish offers to prepare us for Easter.

Ash Wednesday, February 14 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 (February 14) & Good Friday (March 30) 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, February 16**. Bishop McGrath has granted a dispensation from the obligation of abstinence on the first day of the Asian New Year. 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 encouraged during the season of Lent. Mass is celebrated **Monday - 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

Reconciliation (also known as Confession or Penance) is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ in His love and mercy to offer us forgiveness of any sins we have committed against God, our neighbor or ourselves. Sin prevents us from having a healthy, loving relationship with God, others and ourselves. This Lent, experience the healing and freedom of the Sacrament of Reconciliation at St. Thomas Aquinas Church from **6PM – 8PM: February 21, 28 & March 7, 14, 21, 28.** 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, March 19 at 7PM at Our Lady of the Rosary**, and on **Monday, March 26 at 7PM at St. Albert the Great.**

THREE DAY LENTEN MISSION AT ST. SIMON PARISH (LOS ALTOS) - 3 Day Lenten Mission with Sr.

Sharon McMillan, SND. “Lent” literally means “Spring Time.” We invite you to take this special time to see New Life springing forth from our lives with our loving God! **March 5, 6, 7:** morning session from 9:30AM - 10:45AM **OR** evening session from 7:15 PM to 8:30 PM at St. Simon Church.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY - Each Wednesday night Bible Study group meets in Kerry’s Korner at Our Lady of the Rosary Church, from **7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**. Moderated by a volunteer, the group focuses on scripture, using various concordances, reflections, and study texts, as guides to understanding. Anyone

wishing to listen, learn, and contribute is welcome.

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 5:30PM: February 21, 28; March 7, 14, 21 28.** 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: February 22, March 1, 8, 15 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 this Sunday and bring it with you to Mass on Palm Sunday, March 25. On **Holy Thursday**, March 29 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.**

40 DAYS FOR LIFE - A Lenten Campaign runs from Ash Wednesday, February 14, through Palm Sunday, March 25. 40 Days for Life is a peaceful pro-life effort of volunteer Prayer Warriors and Sidewalk Counselors, committed to protecting women and their unborn children. The campaign consists of Prayer and Fasting, Community Outreach and Peaceful Vigils outside of the abortion mills at local Planned Parenthood clinics. Please come pray with us—every innocent life saved is another blessing from God! For more information, visit, <https://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/san-jose/>

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION - On the 1st Sunday of Lent, **February 18**, 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, **February 25**, during the **9AM Mass** at Saint Albert the Great, those 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 11**. On the **Third, Fourth, and Fifth** Sundays of Lent, the Scrutinies for the Elect will be celebrated with the elect during the **10:30AM Mass** at Our Lady of the Rosary.

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. **February 20:** The Book of Jonah with Rabbi Waldenberg. **February 27:** The Uniqueness of the Gospel of Mark with Deacon Hernandez. **March 6:** Contemplative Prayer and Practice with Patricia Clough. **March 13:** St. Catherine of Siena (Pivotal Player series with Bishop Robert Barron.) Wednesday, **March 21:** 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 Carole Brown: caroleabro@gmail.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 25**, continuing into the Easter Triduum: **Holy Thursday's Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper, March 29** 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 from 2PM – 4PM at Our Lady of the Rosary, and at St. Albert the Great Church at **4 PM** the "Living Stations of the Cross." **The "Night of all Nights," the Easter Vigil is on March 31 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.

