

Church of the Divine Love

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 26, 2023 10:15 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please observe silence

Alleluias are omitted during Lent

Prayer before worship – on insert

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

Processional Hymn **#688 – A mighty fortress is our God**

Opening Acclamation for Lent page 351

The Decalogue page 350

The Confession page 353

THE WORD OF GOD

Kyrie page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7**

Psalm 32

Second Lesson: **Romans 5:12-19**

Gradual Hymn **#142 – Lord, who through-out these forty days**

Gospel: **Matthew 4:1-11**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn **#143 – The glory of those forty days**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer D page 372

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 373

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn **#150 – Forty days and forty nights**

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn **#563 – Go forward Christian soldier**

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday February 26, 2023

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11.

Beloved Sisters and Brothers,

Over the last several years I have begun to see and understand Lent and temptations, the struggles in my life, in a different way. It used to be that I thought about those things in terms of self-denial: just say no, don't do this, don't do that; and everything will be fine. But then life got complicated. It wasn't that simple or easy. Just say no and self-denial were no longer enough. I don't mean that I exchanged self-denial for self-indulgence. I am saying that our lives deserve and demand more than just say no. Here's why I say that.

I suspect we have all had times and experiences in our lives when just say no did not apply. It just wasn't relevant because the issue wasn't a yes or no kind of question. Or maybe there were times when the rules simply didn't cover or speak to the situation. What then? Where do we turn? There have also been times when I followed the rules. I did the right thing. I said, no. I was who I was supposed to be and did what I was supposed to do. Despite all that it didn't work out the way I wanted or thought it would. Something was amiss, lacking. There was no sense of integrity or wholeness. I was compliant but not changed or transformed. Other times I claimed particular values and virtues as the things that would

guide my life but then I went out and did the exact opposite of what I claimed to be important to me. Have you ever done that? There was a disconnect between what was going on inside of me and what went on outside of me. It wasn't enough to just say no. I wanted more. I wanted congruency between my inner life and my outer world. So, I have begun to think about Lent and those places of struggle, what we often call the temptations, not so much in terms of self-denial but more in terms of self-knowledge. Maybe those situations offer us important learnings about ourselves.

I think we often hear today's Old Testament lesson, Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7), and today's gospel, Jesus being tempted in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), and we hold them in opposition to each other. On the one hand, Adam and Eve got it all wrong, and on the other hand Jesus got it all right. On the one hand, Adam and Eve were bad, and on the other hand Jesus was good. I don't necessarily think that's wrong; it just seems a pretty superficial, literal, and exteriorized reading of those texts. I'm not suggesting Jesus got it wrong or that Adam and Eve got it right. I simply want us to find a deeper meaning. I want us to find that deep thread that runs through and connects those two stories, and I think that deep connecting thread is self-knowledge. When you move beyond the dualities of good or bad, right or wrong, what you discover is that both stories are about self-knowledge.

Think about Adam and Eve. They eat the forbidden fruit. Do you remember what happens after they eat? Their eyes are opened. So, what does that mean about their eyes before they ate? They were closed. They were seeing with closed eyes, a partial seeing, a blindness. There's something about eating the fruit that opened the eyes of Adam and Eve, that gave them a new awareness, that awakened them, and brought them to a new level of consciousness. So maybe they didn't fall into sin as much as they fell into consciousness. They experienced something of themselves and the world in the same way as does God. They knew good and evil. They saw it all. Life and their world just got a whole lot more complicated, and potentially more real and more beautiful. Think about the times in your life when that's happened for you. There's been a new awareness, a new awakening, a new consciousness, and you see the world and yourself in a brand-new way. More often than not that seems to follow some sort of stumbling and falling, a failure, a turning away from God, another, or ourselves. With that new consciousness we might see beauty and goodness but we also see pain and disfigurement. We see the places of wholeness and integrity, and the places of brokenness and disintegration. And I don't mean that we see that just in the world around us. We see it within ourselves. We see the truth and reality of our lives. We see and understand ourselves to be a mixture of both. We see our contradictions. We are neither wholly good nor wholly bad. We are both. That's why life gets complicated. That's why it's not enough to just say no. If we look beyond their failure to say no, we can see that the garden experience brought Adam and Eve to self-knowledge. By the same token if we look beyond Jesus saying no, we can see his wilderness experience as having brought him to self-knowledge.

This morning marks the beginning of the season of Lent in the Christian church. Lent is a period of 40 days set aside specifically for Christians to reflect on the events leading up to the death of Jesus. It is also traditionally a time for more intentional prayer, self-examination, and confession of our sins. These acts prepare us to celebrate Easter in a more meaningful way. So, as we reflect on our Bible passage today, I hope we do so in a spirit of self-examination and humility. What is God saying to us through this passage, and how can we translate this knowledge into action?

This self-knowledge will take us so much further than will self-denial. The doesn't means self-denial is not important or that it does not have a positive and necessary role in our lives and in Lent. I just want to give self-knowledge a higher priority and put self-denial in service of self-knowledge. So, as you go out into the wilderness once more to face the temptations and challenges of our day, hear these words, spoken first to Jesus at his baptism and then to us at ours, words of identity and blessing that help us face the future with courage and regard each other, all others with compassion: "You are my child, the beloved, and with you I am well pleased." Thanks to be God.

That just might be the start a holy Lent. It would be Lent in which our eyes were opened to the truth about ourselves, who we are, and what we do. It would be a Lent in which, despite things done and left undone, we would rediscover and maybe hear for the first time that we too are God's beloved children with whom he is pleased. Maybe it would be a Lent in which we could let go of judgments and score keeping. Maybe it would be a Lent that would lead us to new life, a fuller life, a life in which we discover that we are God's glory. Have you ever thought of yourself as the glory of God? Most of us probably don't. Maybe that's because we don't really know ourselves in the way God knows us. Maybe if we did, we might see, think, speak, and live differently. The glory of God is a human being fully alive. What are you learning about yourself? And what do you need from God? Let's be God's glory. Today, tomorrow, and the day after. Now and forever. **Amen!**

Easter flower memorial envelopes are enclosed. Please clearly print the names of your loved ones you wish to memorialize and return by Sunday, April 2nd. Make checks payable to

The Church of the Divine Love Altar Guild.

1 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	
	11:15BAM	VESTRY MEETING	
MONDAY	8:30 PM	AA MEETING	
WEDNESDAY	7:00	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:00 PM	AA MEETING	

SATURDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

1 LENT 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Roe Prosser
Coffee Hour	Prossers	Janet Croft

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Lourdes S.	Bob Curley
John Mulligan	Arlene Goodenough	Celeste
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Gabriel
Barbara Stinson	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Anthony
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del

Ciara	Robert Sweat	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
People of Haiti	Christopher & Family	Julia
Mary & Family	People of Ukraine	Tim
Nathan Treadwell	Art	Margaret
Kaylee	Judy	Tor

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

