

**Church of the divine Love.**

**SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT**

**FEBRUARY 25, 2024 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 **#401 -The God of Abraham praise**

Opening Acclamation for Lent page 361

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 17:1-7, 15-16**

Psalm 22:22-30

Second Lesson: **Romans 4:13-25**

Gradual Hymn **#10, vs. 1-3, 5&6 – New every morning**

Gospel: **Mark 8:31-38**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn **#675 – Take up your cross**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 367

Hymn during Consecration - printed on insert

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn – **One Bread, One Body** (on insert)

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn **#473 – Lift high the cross**

Dismissal

**Sermon Sunday February 25, 2024**

Genesis 17:1-7,15-16; Psalm 22:22-30; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38.

**Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

Then Jesus began to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

It's a bit irreverent and certainly not scriptural but I have this mental picture of the disciples. It's several years after Jesus' death and resurrection. The disciples are together. They are talking about the good old days, laughing, teasing, and reminiscing the way friends who have shared a life changing experience often do. Then one of them looks at Peter and says, Hey Satan, tell us about the day you rebuked Jesus! Other joins in, Yeah, how'd that work out for you? Another, what were you thinking about, Peter? Peter begins to speak; you know I just didn't like the whole suffering and dying thing. I didn't get it. That's not what I signed up for. That's not who I thought the Messiah would be." The others become quiet. They recall that day like it was yesterday. They begin to realize that Peter didn't say anything they weren't thinking. Maybe Peter didn't say anything we haven't thought or even wanted to say. Jesus has a very different understanding of discipleship than what most of us probably want. When another's reality and vision begin to conflict with and overtake our own, we rebuke. We take them aside to enlighten them, help them understand, show them the error of their ways. That's all Peter did.

If we are really honest haven't, we, at some point, disagreed with Jesus, asking why he doesn't do what we want? Why won't he see the world our way? It all seems so clear to us. If he can cast out the demons and silence the crazy guy in the synagogue surely, he could silence the voices that drive us crazy. If he can heal Peter's mother-in-law why not those we love? If he can cleanse the leper why does our life sometimes leave us feeling unclean and isolated? If he can make the paralytic walk why are so many crippled by fear, dementia, or addiction? If he can calm the sea surely, he could calm the storms of our world. Yet they rage on; violence, war, poverty. If he can keep Jairus' daughter from dying why not our children, our friends, our loved ones? If he can feed 5000 with a few fish and pieces of bread why does much of the world go to bed hungry? I have wondered about these things. I have been asked these kinds of questions. I know some who have lost faith and left the Church over these things. These are our rebukes of Jesus. He is not being or acting like we want. Sometimes his words challenge and shock us. Maybe we're not so different from Peter.

Just a few verses before today's gospel Jesus asks, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter names him as "the Christ," the Messiah, the Anointed one of God. Jesus is the one of whom the prophets spoke, the one for whom Israel has waited, the one who was supposed to restore God's people. Peter is right and yet he also does not understand. Peter has an image of what the Messiah is supposed to do and who the Messiah is supposed to be. We all have our own images and wishes about who Jesus is and what he should do. All is well when Jesus is casting out demons, healing the sick, preventing death, and feeding the multitudes. We like that Jesus. We want to follow that Jesus. He is our Lord and Savior. Jesus will not, however, conform to our images of who we think he is or who we want him to be. Instead, he asks us to conform

to who he knows himself to be: the one who “must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” He sets a choice before us. It is a choice we each have to make. Again, and again the circumstances of life set that choice before us. We either choose ourselves and deny Jesus or we deny ourselves and choose Jesus. “If any want to become my followers,” he says, “let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” Self-denial is the beginning of discipleship.

I suspect that is not what Peter had in mind when Jesus said, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” I wonder if that is what we had in mind when we came to church today, or what we think about when our baby is baptized, or how often we understand and practice our faith as daily self-denial. Jesus’ words are hard and his way extreme. Surely God did not covenant with his people and bring them out of Egypt into the promised land only to say, “Now let it all go.” The Messiah is supposed to offer security, protection, and put Israel back on top. Faith in Jesus, Peter is learning, is not about the elimination of risks, the preservation of life, and the ability to control. Instead, Jesus asks us to risk it all, abandon our lives, and relinquish control to God. That is what Jesus is doing and he expects nothing less of those who would follow him.

The way of Christ, self-denial, reminds us that our life is not our own. It belongs to God. It reminds us that we are not in control, God is. Our life is not about us. It is about God. There is great freedom in knowing these things. We are free to be fully alive. Through self-denial our falling down becomes rising up, losing is saving, and death is resurrection. As long as we believe our life is about us, we will continue to exercise power over others, try to save ourselves, control our circumstances, and maybe even rebuke Jesus. Jesus rarely exercised power over others or tried to control circumstances. He simply made different choices. Self-denial is not about being out of control or powerless. It is about the choices we make. Jesus chose to give in a world that takes, to love in a world that hates, to heal in a world that injures, to give life in a world that kills. He offered mercy when others sought vengeance, forgiveness when others condemned, and compassion when others were indifferent. He trusted God’s abundance when others said there was not enough. With each choice he denied himself and showed God was present.

At some point those kinds of choices will catch the attention of and offend those who live and profit by power, control, and looking out for number one. They will not deny themselves. They will respond. Jesus said they would. He knew that he would be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes. It happens in every age for those who choose the path of self-denial. When it happened for Jesus, he made one last choice. He chose resurrection over survival. That would be a holy Lent. That would be repentance. And that just might be what Jesus meant when he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me.” It’s not the snapshots of our life that define us. It’s Christ. It’s the love of Christ that sees in us more than we often see in ourselves or one another. **Amen.**

Enclosed are Easter flower memorial envelopes. Please clearly print the names of your loved ones; and return by March 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Anthony Giordano
Coffee	Nolans	Giordanos

## PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Donna Edwards	Jess	
Bob Curley	Beverly Noel	Art	
Chris Dickson		Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Judy	
Christopher	Warren		Kristen
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Celeste	
Jerry & Family	Phil Ryder	Carolyn	
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del	
Robert Hosey	Lourdes S.	Aidan	
Sally & Roger	Sophia		Carol K.
Mary & Family	Ciara	Jan	
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent	
Michael & Family	Matthew Treasure	Mo	
Jean Estinvil Quatorze	Jean Wildy Nicolas		

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.

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.

(To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email Janet Croft at [jmc220@optonline.net](mailto:jmc220@optonline.net).)

### 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 forever. Amen.

