Third Sunday of Lent — March 23, 2025

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

Most children, especially in the "old days," did not like the season of Lent compared to Christmas. The reason was that at the insistence of their parents, they had to give up things they liked, such as eating candy and going to the movies. Not eating candy was hard enough, but not going to movies was really a sacrifice because there was no television. Of course parents had in mind only the spiritual welfare of their children.

The Church, like a good parent, has our spiritual welfare in mind during this season of Lent, but we must rise above childish limitations to appreciate its value. To begin with, the Church sees Lent as related to three realities of our life of faith.

The first reality is the Paschal Mystery, the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus which brings about our salvation. The Church developed Lent precisely as a preparation for the celebration of this great event at Easter. The Paschal Mystery is at the very heart of our faith in Christ.

Through the Paschal Mystery, the Church came into being, Pope Pius XII wrote in 1943: "The Church was born from the side of our Savior on the cross like a new Eve, mother of all living. " (Mystici Corporis 29.) From this truth flows the second reality, Christian initiation. Very early in our history it became clear that the most appropriate time to introduce new members into the Church through the spiritual birth of baptism was at the time when the Church was celebrating her own birth. Lent became a season of special preparation for baptism, and Easter was understood to be the ideal time for the celebration of this sacrament or for its renewal.

The third reality is repentance and renewal. The Church recognizes that Easter is the time for Catholics to become reconciled to God and his Church through repentance and the celebration of the sacrament of Penance. Each year one reality takes on a prominence, and this year it is the turn of repentance to occupy the center of our attention. The Church gives this emphasis through her selection of the Gospels for the Sundays of Lent.

On this weekend's Gospel, we hear Jesus refer to tragedies which had recently occurred. From these two mishaps, he drew a lesson; to judge the victims as guilty of sin is not the correct response, but to think about about one's own need for repentance is. Next Sunday, we will hear Jesus tell a beautiful story which illustrates how eager God the father is to offer forgiveness to all his children when they repent. This story has come to be known as the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

All three realities are present in every Lent. This year maybe we should turn our attention to our need for repentance, and we should begin to make plans to celebrate the sacrament of Penance as an important part of our own preparation for Easter.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**March 25**	**11:00AM**
Junuaria Sinambal †		Buenaflor-Roth Family
Wed.	**March 26**	**11:00AM**
Living Memorial		
Thur.	**March 27**	**11:00AM**
Ray Austria† & Andrew Yoshida		Olivia & Marvin
Fri.	**March 28**	**11:00AM**
Arturo Balagot †		Arturo
Sat.	**March 29**	**4:30PM**
Joseph Noe†		Family
Sun.	**March 30**	**9:00AM**
Jorge, Tomasa, Jose & Manuel †		Family
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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