

Homily Themes

Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday, Year C

Theme is: Leave it there.' (All Verses)

March 5th Ash Wednesday

“Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’ ” (Joel 2: 17 b)

God shouldn't be hard to find! As Christian Pilgrims of Hope, we are called to embody the Lord in our words and actions, in our outreach and our compassion and mercy. Lent is a great time to get back on track if we've strayed. It's a time to learn to better embody the divine Spirit within us and to allow that Spirit to transform our world. Our Gospel suggests three external actions: Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Baskets of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets.

March 8/9 1st Sunday of Lent

“When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, you shall make this response before the Lord your God.” (Deuteronomy 26: 4-5a)

The people would recount the many ways God had saved them from trouble and affliction before placing the first fruits into the basket. It was their way of thanking God for giving them hope in the midst of struggle and uncertainty. As pilgrims of hope, we too are meant to leave our problems and worries with the Lord and to hope in God's promise of salvation.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Baskets in front of the Altar of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets.

March 15/16 2nd Sunday of Lent

“Master, it is good for us to be here.” (Luke 9: 33)

The transfiguration was a blessed encounter indeed! When we encounter the Lord today in prayer, in other people, in the sacraments, or in our world at large, how do we respond? Does it motivate us do great things for God? Does it give us hope that even when things are falling apart in our world, that God is still in charge? Parishioners can be encouraged to find a project in the community and get their hands dirty.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Baskets in front of the Altar of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets.

March 22/23 3rd Sunday of Lent (First Scrutiny) We will use cycle A readings for this weekend.

“Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar...Jacob’s well was there and Jesus, tired out by his journey was sitting by the well. It was about noon.” (John 4: 5-6)

Yes, a great place to leave our burdens behind is at the well with Jesus! It’s there that the Samaritan woman unburdens her life’s struggles to Jesus and where Jesus offers her the gift of discipleship and a fresh start at living her life according to God’s plan for her. Today’s gospel is a great opportunity for our assembly and ourselves to reflect on whether we’re still holding on to things that we need to let go of and whether we’re being honest with our life struggles and are seeking to overcome them with the grace that God provides.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Baskets in front of the Altar of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets.

March 29/30 4th Sunday of Lent (Second Scrutiny) We will use cycle A readings for this weekend.

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him.” (John 9: 3)

Most of us have been born with sight. Most of us have never experienced physical blindness. But many of us may be spiritually blind by our sins or our lack of repentance. Today’s gospel challenges us to remove the spiritual blindness that we have by acknowledging our sins and coming to the Lord for forgiveness and mercy. Let us leave those sins at the foot of the cross and allow the Precious Blood of Christ to take them away.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Baskets in front of the Altar of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets.

April 5/6 5th Sunday of Lent (Third Scrutiny) We will use cycle A readings for this weekend.

“Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” (John 11:27)

Some of the Jews present at the time of Lazarus’s death doubted Jesus’ power over death when Lazarus had died. Jesus obliterates their doubt by doing what only God can do ---raise Lazarus from the dead after being in the tomb for four days. This is Jesus asking us to leave our doubts at the foot of the cross, to trust in God’s ability to raise us to new life in the Spirit and to make us God’s adopted sons and daughters by faith. Are we ready to be ambassadors of God’s resurrection? Do we embrace the new life we’ve received in Baptism?.

Liturgical Art & Environment: Baskets in front of the Altar of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets

April 11/12 Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

“A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest....Jesus said, ‘The greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader, like one who serves.’” (Luke 22: 24, 26)

Jesus asks all Christians today to leave pride at the foot of the cross, to cultivate a humble heart that is willing to serve even in the most obscure, difficult or trying or circumstances. Pope Francis experienced this when he was no longer provincial and was sent to a remote retreat center in the mountains as payback for some of the decisions he rendered. And yet, Francis took the grace of that seclusion to read the lives of the popes, never knowing that one day, he would be pope. The message? Humble acceptance of God’s plan for our lives is what brings the greatest glory to God.

Liturgical Art& Environment: Baskets in front of the Altar of varying shapes and sizes. People will be encouraged to write their worry or struggle on a piece of paper and add it to one of the baskets. Add some red fabric interspersed with the baskets.

-----SACRED TRIDUUM-----

April 17 Holy Thursday

“So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.” (John 13:14)

Jesus takes on the role of a house servant in today’s gospel. It’s not about our titles. It’s not about any action being beneath the scope of a Christian to perform. It’s about serving in love, serving in gratitude for the blessings God has given us, serving as part of our Eucharistic celebration and missioning. Let us leave behind our excuses and rationalizations for refusing service and instead, take up our towel and water basin and minister to the needs of those before us.

Liturgical Art & Environment: A few of the baskets from the previous weeks, plus a basin, towels, and water pitchers displayed and ready for use. After the foot washing, place the dirtied towels in the display.

April 18 Good Friday

“Pilate asked them, ‘Shall I crucify your king?’” (John 19: 15b)

Pilate was looking for a way to save Jesus from crucifixion. Sadly the onlookers were influenced to ask for Jesus’ death instead. Today’s gospel calls us to reflect on whether we stand idly by or go with the flow even when we know what another is proposing is wrong. It invites us to consider our own culpability in not proclaiming Jesus Christ as our King, our Lord, our Redeemer, our Savior with our words and deeds, especially when it may be inconvenient to do so or when we find ourselves in the minority. It is a call to make our voices heard.

Liturgical Art & Environment as prescribed by the Roman Missal.

April 19/20 Solemnity of the Resurrection of the Lord

No particular biblical verse on which to focus.

A recounting of the various ways we were asked to leave our sins, our shortcomings, and our troubles at the foot of the cross, so that we might be freed by the Precious Blood of Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit to be pilgrims of hope and to announce the reign of God anew!

Liturgical Art & Environment flowers, baskets with flowers blooming forth and hands of justice and faith. See theme song below starting on the Easter Vigil.

NOTE:

New Theme Song starting on the Easter Vigil is: With hands of Justice and Faith

Our Easter Theme Song is a recessional hymn:

Go out to the World, by Chris DaSilva # 762 in the Gather