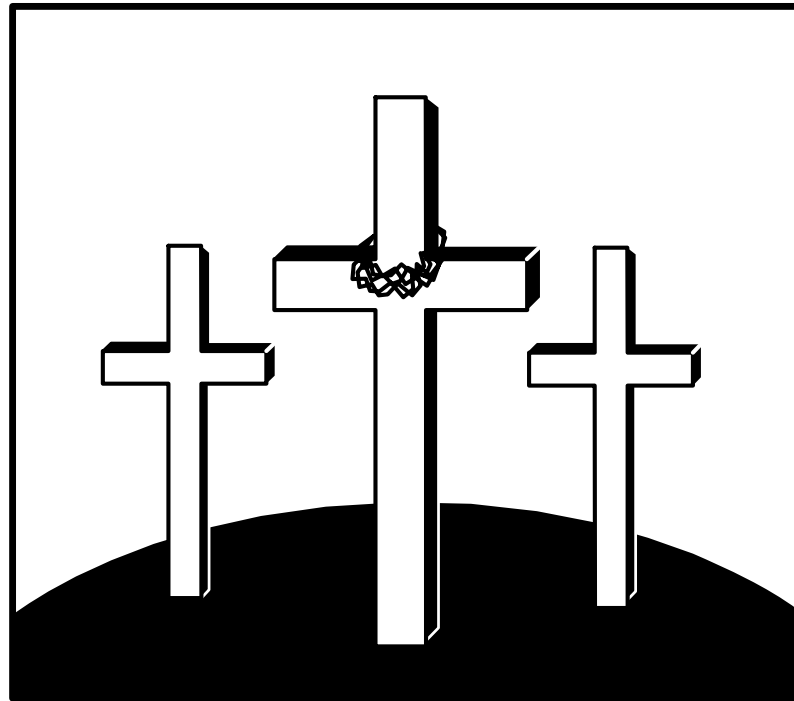


ST. MARY'S CHURCH

A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin



The Season of Lent

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Fresno, California

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About the Season of Lent

The term “lent” comes from an old English word meaning “spring” (similar to *lengthen* – as in the daylight hours are getting longer each day). In church language it refers to the forty *weekdays* before Easter: As Jesus fasted forty days in the wilderness before embarking on his ministry, so Christians have long undertaken a forty day preparation for the Easter celebration.

The services and traditions of Lent are a time-honored way to help us more fully appreciate the significance of Jesus’ sacrifice and truly rejoice in his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

At the beginning of Lent we are called to undergo a period of **self examination** – asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to us areas of our lives where we have fallen short of God’s perfect will. The first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, gains its name from the ashes Christians receive on their foreheads as a sign of penitence.

Our Church specifically sets aside Ash Wednesday and Good Friday as **fast** days, and all the weekdays of Lent as days to be “observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 17). We are all encouraged to make some sacrifice for the Lord during this season (“giving up something for Lent”). This serves as a small reminder of what Jesus did for us—not a way to “earn his favor,” but a tool to help us more fully appreciate his grace.

Lent is also a time when Christians have generally sought to undertake additional **acts of charity** and **religious devotion**. You are encouraged to set aside additional time this season for Bible reading, prayers, attending services and serving others. Perhaps a routine you start this year to draw nearer to God can be one that you will continue and benefit from the rest of your life.

Call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you... When you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the LORD. Jeremiah 29.12-14a

Welcome to St. Mary's

This booklet contains an order for the service of Holy Communion or “Eucharist” – a word meaning “Thanksgiving” in Greek (the language of the New Testament Bible). Since the beginning of the church, Christians have gathered together to break bread and give thanks to God the Father for what he has done for us through his Son Jesus Christ (*Acts 2.42*).

The traditional service of Holy Eucharist is divided into two portions: “The Word of God” and “the Holy Communion.” The first part is modeled after the Jewish synagogue service, and includes readings from the Bible, songs, prayers and a teaching. The second portion of the service, The Holy Communion, is what makes this a distinctively Christian form of worship.

As we prepare for worship, you are invited to reflect upon the following words of scripture:

- Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. *Matthew 11.28*
- For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. *John 3.16*
- If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. *John 8.36*
- I am the way and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me. *John 14.6*
- Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us...with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. *Hebrews 4.14,16*

Come, let us worship the Lord, and enter into his presence as we gather around his Holy Table.

The Holy Eucharist

The Word of God

A hymn, song, or anthem may be sung

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People **His mercy endures for ever.**

The Celebrant then says the following prayer that our hearts may be made pure for worship:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Then the Ten Commandments are said (Exodus 20.1-17; Deut. 5.6-21):

Hear the commandments which God has given to his people, and examine your hearts.

I am the Lord your God: you shall have no other gods but me.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not dishonor the name of the Lord your God.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Honour your father and your mother.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not commit murder.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not commit adultery.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not steal.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

You shall not covet anything which belongs to your neighbor.

***Amen. Lord, have mercy upon us
and write all these your laws in our hearts.***

Here is sung or said:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy

Lord, have mercy.

Or else the following:

**Look around you, can you see?
Times are troubled, people grieve.
See the violence, feel the hardness;
all my people, weep with me.**

Chorus: **Kyrie eleison.
 Christe eleison.
 Kyrie eleison.**

**Walk among them, I'll go with you.
Reach out to them with my hands.
Suffer with me, and together
we will serve them, help them stand.**

Repeat Chorus

**Forgive us, Father; hear our prayer.
We would walk with you anywhere,
through your suffering, with forgiveness,
take your life into the world.**

Repeat Chorus

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The Collect of the Day

The Celebrant says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrant says the Collect.

People **Amen.**

Note - from the Latin: oratio ad collectam, “the prayer at the people’s assembly.” This is our gathering prayer – the focus for our prayers for the day. Collects have been a familiar part of Christian worship services at least since the fifth century.

The Lessons

The people sit for the readings.

At the end of the first two lessons, the reader will conclude with

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

or the Reader may say Here ends the Reading.

Silence may follow.

A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.

At the end of the Psalm is sung or said

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ
according to_____.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Note – The term “Gospel,” a Greek word for “good news,” was used as a description for the message of Christ from the earliest days. It is also a title applied to the first four books of the New Testament—those portraying the events of Jesus’ life, and his words to his followers.

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

*On Sundays and other Major Feasts, at the invitation of the priest or Deacon,
the people stand and share in the following profession of faith:*

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Note – from the latin “credo,” I believe.” The Nicene Creed has been recited in Christian churches for over 1,000 years. It was originally written in the fourth century to outline the minimum standards for authentic Christian belief. The church is described as “apostolic” because we strive to uphold the teaching and practices of Jesus’ original followers (apostles). The term “catholic” (meaning “universal” in both Greek and Latin) refers to the undivided Church and not to any particular denomination. For the first 1,000 years of Christianity there was only one Church—the “body” of Christ (Colossians 1.18; I Corinthians 12.20).

The Prayers of the People

*Jesus assures us: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them,” and “whatever you ask in my name, I will do it.”
Matthew 18.20; John 14.13*

Deacon or other leader

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying “Lord, have mercy.”

For the peace from above, for the loving kindness of God, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the world, for the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and for the unity of all peoples, let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, have mercy.***

For our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord. ***Lord, have mercy.***

For our President, for the leaders of the nations, and for all in authority, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For this city for every city and community, and for those who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For seasonable weather, and for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the good earth which God has given us, and for the wisdom and will to conserve it, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For those who travel on land, on water, in the air or through outer space, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the aged and infirm, for the widowed and orphans, and for the sick and the suffering, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For _____, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the poor and the oppressed, for the unemployed and the destitute, for prisoners and captives, and for all who remember and care for them, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

That we may end our lives in faith and hope, without suffering and without reproach, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Defend us, deliver us, and in thy compassion protect us, O Lord, by thy grace. ***Lord, have mercy.***

In the communion of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life, to Christ our God.

To thee, O Lord our God.

Silence.

The Celebrant adds the following concluding Collect:

O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

Amen.

Confession of Sin

St. Paul writes that we are to carefully examine our consciences before approaching the Lord's Table: "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup." I Corinthians 11.27-28

Jesus teaches that we are first to forgive and to seek forgiveness from one another before coming to the Altar: "If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." Matthew 5.23-24

The Deacon or Celebrant says:

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
I John 1.9

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Trusting the promise of the Lord that he will forgive our sins if we are sorry and determined to change our ways, the Priest or Bishop (acting under the authority of the Church) pronounces what we know to be true: God has forgiven us.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

Having received the peace of God in our hearts through the forgiveness of our sins, the celebrant invites the people to greet one another in the peace and joy of the Lord.

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people

Christ is our peace.
He has reconciled us to God
in one body by the Cross.
We meet in his name and share his Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Announcements

A few notes about Communion

All visitors are welcome to share the Holy Eucharist who have been baptized with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and who have been admitted to Communion in their own church.

When receiving Communion, simply place your hands out, palms upward, laying your right hand over your left. You may choose to receive the bread alone if you would prefer not to drink wine. If you have a touch of a cold or the flu, simply leave the bread in your hands and the minister will dip it in the wine for you.

If you do not wish to receive Communion, you may simply remain in your seat or come forward and fold your arms over your chest and the priest will pray for you.

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst." *John 6.35*

We have heard about God; we have sung his praises and prayed to him; now let us gather to meet him.

The Holy Communion

The Offertory

The Celebrant may begin the Offertory with a sentence of Scripture.

During the Offertory, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.

Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.

The following presentation hymn may be sung:

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Upon receiving the offerings, the celebrant may say

All things come of thee, O Lord,
People **and of thine own have we given thee.**

I Chronicles 29.14

The Great Thanksgiving

Note—The next four pages comprise what is known as the “Eucharistic Prayer” or “Great Thanksgiving.” This is a time when we are supernaturally brought into the presence of the original event of Christ’s death and resurrection nearly 2,000 years ago.

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to the Lord.**
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Note – This ancient song of praise or “sanctus and benedictus” (from the Latin words for “Holy” and “Blessed,” respectively) is taken from Isaiah 6.3 and Matthew 21.9 (see also Revelation 4.8). It has been included in Christian worship services since the first century A.D.

The people kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." *I Corinth. 11.23-24*

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." *I Corinth. 11.25; Matthew 26.27-28*

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6.9-13) has been included as part of the Eucharistic Prayer of the Church since at least the 4th Century A.D.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

The Eucharistic bread is broken with the following words:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

People ***Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.***

The following anthem may be sung or said here

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

or

**Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world: give us your peace.**

The “Agnus Dei” (from the Latin for “Lamb of God”) has been sung at the breaking of the bread since the 7th century. The prayer is based upon the title John the Baptist ascribed to Jesus in John 1.29.

The following prayer may be said by all

**We do not presume to come to this your table,
merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness,
but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not
worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under
your table. But you are the same Lord whose nature
is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious
Lord, so to eat the flesh of your dear son Jesus
Christ and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies
may be made clean by his body and our souls
washed through his most precious blood, and that
we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

The people are invited to the Lord's Table with the following words

The Gifts of God for the People of God.
Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with
thanksgiving.

*The Bread and the Cup are given to the people with the following
or similar words*

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. **Amen.**
The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. **Amen.**

*It is appropriate, upon receiving the bread and wine, to say "Amen,"
acknowledging the truth of the ministers' words. The physical appearance and
taste of the bread and wine do not change; but we accept Christ's words in
faith, believing, although we may not understand, that he is truly present in the
bread and wine, and that we truly receive him.*

*During the ministration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems
may be sung.*

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

**Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out**

**to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Priest, may bless the people, saying

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep
your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; *Philippians 4.7*

and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you
always. **Amen.**

The service may conclude with a song and the following dismissal

Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Jesus said: I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me,
though he die, yet shall he live. *John 11.25*