



**An Exhortation**

**The Second Sunday in Lent  
March 1, 2026  
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist**

Beloved in the Lord: Our Savior Christ, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood as a sign and pledge of his love, for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of his death, and for a spiritual sharing in his risen life. For in these holy Mysteries we are made one with Christ, and Christ with us; we are made one body in him, and members one of another.

Having in mind, therefore, his great love for us, and in obedience to his command, his Church renders to Almighty God our heavenly Father never-ending thanks for the creation of the world, for his continual providence over us, for his love for all people, and for the redemption of the world by our Savior Christ, who took upon himself our flesh, and humbled himself even to death on the cross, that he might make us the children of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, and exalt us to everlasting life.

But if we are to share rightly in the celebration of those holy Mysteries, and be nourished by that spiritual Food, we must remember the dignity of that holy Sacrament. I therefore call upon you to consider how Saint Paul exhorts all persons to prepare themselves carefully before eating of that Bread and drinking of that Cup.

For, as the benefit is great, if with penitent hearts and living faith we receive the holy Sacrament, so is the danger great, if we receive it improperly, not recognizing the Lord's Body. Judge yourselves, therefore, lest you be judged by the Lord.

Examine your lives and conduct by the rule of God's commandments, that you may perceive wherein you have offended in what you have done or left undone, whether in thought, word, or deed. And acknowledge your sins before Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life, being ready to make restitution for all injuries and wrongs done by you to others; and also being ready to forgive those who have offended you, in order that you yourselves may be forgiven. And then, being reconciled with one another, come to the banquet of that most heavenly Food.

And if, in your preparation, you need help and counsel, then go and open your grief to a discreet and understanding priest, and confess your sins, that you may receive the benefit of absolution, and spiritual counsel and advice; to the removal of scruple and doubt, the assurance of pardon, and the strengthening of your faith.

To Christ our Lord who loves us, and washed us in his own blood, and made us a kingdom of priests to serve his God and Father, to him be glory in the Church evermore. Through him let us offer continually the sacrifice of praise, which is our bounden duty and service, and, with faith in him, come boldly before the throne of grace and humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

*Silence may be kept.*

**God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.**

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

*Celebrant* Bless God who forgives all our sins.  
*People* **His mercy endures for ever.**

*Officiant:* Lord, have mercy upon us.  
*People:* **Christ, have mercy upon us.**  
*Officiant:* Lord, have mercy upon us.

## THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

*Priest* The Lord be with you.  
*People* **And also with you.**  
*Priest* Let us pray.

*Priest and People*

**O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

*The people are seated.*

*Reader* A reading from the Book of Genesis.

The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

*Reader* Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 121**

I lift up my eyes to the hills; \*  
**from where is my help to come?**

My help comes from the Lord, \*  
**the maker of heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot be moved \*  
**and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.**

Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel \*  
**shall neither slumber nor sleep;**

The Lord himself watches over you; \*  
**the Lord is your shade at your right hand,**

So that the sun shall not strike you by day, \*  
**nor the moon by night.**

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; \*  
**it is he who shall keep you safe.**

The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, \*  
**from this time forth for evermore.**

*The people stand*

## THE GOSPEL

John 3:1-17

*Deacon* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John.  
*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

*Deacon* The Gospel of the Lord.  
*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## SERMON

The Rev. Deacon Rosa Briones

## THE NICENE CREED

**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 truly human. 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. 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.

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

## **Form I**

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying "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 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 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 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.**

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

**To thee, O Lord our God.**

*Silence*

*The People may add their own petitions.*

We pray for comfort, healing, courage and hope for **TJ M; Susan A; Tana H; Ben H; Brittany B; Eric H; Kenny P; Santos (Baby); Jay B; Adam A; Yesenia T; Gillian K; Carol G; Sharon W; Pam N; David N; Danielle P; Bruce K; Hudson M;** and all those

who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, as well as for all those on our extended healing prayer list.

*Extended Prayer List:* Keith W; Jean I; Matt C; Jeanie C; Delita R; Alero N; Barbara H; Kirk D; Henrietta J; Jacque (Jackie) H; Barbara G; Barbara N; David P; Barbara M; Bobita J; Christine k.

We pray for peace in the world and for the victims of war everywhere. We also pray for all who are serving our country here and abroad, especially those in harm's way, and their families.

We pray for all those affected by, suffering from, and killed by gun violence throughout our country.

We pray for the well-being of our planet Earth and for all who are affected by and suffering from natural disasters, as well as those who are working to avert the climate crisis, including each of us as we care for God's creation in our own homes and in our own lives.

We give thanks for the life of Andrew Greene, who died on February 16, 2026

We give thanks for the life of Pam Steinhauer, sister of Dr. Debra Mallu, who died on February 22, 2026

We give thanks for the recent birthdays of **Robert U; Lauren H; Florence C; Susan M; Stephanie B; Monica K; Fredy D; Toni B; Bill B; Gordon D; Mathias W; Janelle J; Richard M; Abigail W; Rebecca W; Deborah W; Isaac R; Christine K, and Ana Q.**

*Celebrant* Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you:" Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. Amen.

## THE PEACE

*Celebrant* The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People* **And also with you.**

## OFFERTORY SENTENCE

If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.

*The altar is prepared for Holy Communion and an offering is received to support Ascension's ministry of sharing God's love with the world. Text ASCENSIONMD + Amount to 73256 to give a donation using your text messaging Or scan the QR code*

## THE HOLY COMMUNION EUCHARISTIC PRAYER C



*Celebrant* 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.**  
*Celebrant*

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.  
**Glory to you for ever and ever.**

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.  
**By your will they were created and have their being.**

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.  
**Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.**

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.  
**By his blood, he reconciled us.**  
**By his wounds, we are healed.**

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

*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.**

*The people kneel or remain standing. The Celebrant continues.*

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, 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."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

**We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our Ancestors: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; God of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

**Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.**

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN.**

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

*Celebrant and People*

**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, forever and ever. Amen.**

**THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

*Celebrant:* O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,

*People:* **have mercy upon us.**

*Celebrant:* O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,

*People:* **have mercy upon us.**

*Celebrant:* O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,

*People:* **grant us your peace.**

*All:*

**We do not come to your Table, O merciful God, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your abundant and endless mercy. We are not worthy even to gather the crumbs from under your Table. But you are the same Lord whose nature is always to show mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, that as we receive the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ, we may live in him, and he in us. Amen.**

*Celebrant* The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ lives in you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

*A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.*

**PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

**Lord Jesus, we believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. We offer you praise and thanksgiving as we proclaim your resurrection. We love you above all, and long for you in our souls. Since we cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into our hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let us never be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.**

*All are welcome to receive Holy Communion at Church of the Ascension. Please follow the directions of the Priest. In addition to using a communion kit or receiving bread only, you may now receive in both parts but with the caveat that intincting (“dipping”) is not permitted; only receiving the wine by drinking from the cup.*

## **THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

**Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. We thank you for the Body of Christ, the bread of heaven, and for the offering of Christ’s holy presence, the gift of spiritual communion, which feeds us when we must be apart. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we become One Body in the sacrament of Christ’s Body. Transform our lives with your life, for the love we share becomes bread for the world. AMEN.**

## **SOLEMN PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE**

*Celebrant:* Bow down before the Lord.

Keep this your family, Lord, with your never-failing mercy, that relying solely on the help of your heavenly grace, they may be upheld by your divine protection; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **DISMISSAL**

*Celebrant* Let us bless the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

**Service Participants:**

The Rev. Javier Ocampo – Rector  
The Rev. Tracey Forfa – Pastoral Associate  
The Rev. Rosa Briones – Deacon  
The Ascension Choir  
The Ascension Tech Team

**Congregational Participants**

Welcomer -Janet King  
Reader – Peg Donnellon  
Altar Guild – Danielle Allen

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