



**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church**
13564 St. Andrews Drive; Seal Beach, CA 90740
Phone (562) 598-8697; FAX (562) 598-8697
e-mail: redeemer_lutheran@verizon.net

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Worship and Discipleship by Margo Geesing

“Lent”

March 2 – Transfiguration of Our Lord

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 9 verses 28-43

Third Sunday of February is the last Sunday after Epiphany. It is the Transfiguration of Our Lord Sunday. We began the time after Epiphany with the Baptism of Jesus and ends with the Transfiguration of Jesus. The presence of the Trinity on both occasions includes the Father claiming Jesus as His own and giving us directions to listen this time! How did Peter, James, and John react? Fear but wanting to stay on the mountain. To dwell here. Instead, Jesus brings them down the mountain and tells them not to speak of what happened – until after the resurrection. This is one of the issues when you decide to become a follower of Jesus – what we want to do versus what Jesus want you to do. The “yes” to follow the call comes with a price: usually involving pain and sacrifice but definitely fear and confusion. We don’t get to hang out on the mountain top with God; we have to go down and deal with the nitty-gritty of reality and people. Which brings us back to being Salt and Light to the world.

It’s Lent again! It was a long time coming this year, but Lent is finally here! I love Lent. Really. I love the lessons, I love the solemnity, I love the hymns, I love the fact that there’s not a lot of hoopla surrounding it, I love the encouragement to give and do more, I love that people pray more, I love the disciplines, most especially I love that it’s a time to slow down and reflect.

March 5, 2025 – *Ash Wednesday*

The Gospel Lesson is from Matthew chapter 6 verses 1-6, 16-21

On Ash Wednesday we begin the season of Lent; we hear from the Gospel of Matthew. This Gospel lesson is a continuation of the Sermon on the Mount. In it we are given the outline of how we should live Lent, and the rest of our lives. We are called to do righteous deeds, give alms, spend time in prayer, fast and thereby build treasures in heaven. Jesus also gives us the warning: don’t do these to show off; don’t brag about what you do; do it simply, in our ordinary everyday lives, looking only for God to approve.

Sunday, March 9, 2025 – *First Sunday in Lent*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 4 verses 1-13

The second Sunday of March which is the First Sunday in Lent, we, again, have one of those great understatements in the Gospel: “... *was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, ... During that time, he ate nothing, and at the end of it he was hungry.*” (Lk. 4:2). One may think, gee, Jesus is God therefore if he follows the Holy Spirit nothing could go wrong.

Oops. Not quite. Jesus goes into the desert to prepare for his ministry and there meets the devil who then proceeds to tempt him. The temptations that Jesus faces are the same general ones that we face: material comforts being foremost in our life; to achieve power and influence for our own purposes; being dependent only on ourselves and prideful in our self-sufficiency. This Gospel lesson brings into direct view those ideas and wants that are in direct opposition to the actions that we are called to do on Ash Wednesday. It is a good guideline for what to do (righteous deeds, give alms, spend time in prayer, fast, build treasures in heaven) and what not to do (seek material comforts, power, and influence, be prideful) as we journey through Lent.

March 16, 2025 – *Second Sunday in Lent*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 13 verses 31-35

The second Sunday of Lent we have a foreshadowing of Jesus' own death and resurrection – 3 days reflection – *“I cast out demons and I perform healings today and tomorrow, and on the third day I accomplish my purpose.”* (Lk. 13:32). Jesus also laments over Jerusalem. It ends with a call for all to recognize that the Lord sent him: *“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”* (Lk. 13:35). During this time perhaps we can more fully recognize who Jesus was and is and will ever be.

March 23, 2025 – *Third Sunday in Lent*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 13 verses 1-9

The third Sunday of Lent we have a call to repentance and a reminder that we need to bear good fruit. This Gospel lesson also addresses that idea that bad things happen to sinners – and even worse things if they are big sinners. Jesus reminds us about a couple of important things in his response: we are not to judge others, suffering has a purpose, obedience to the will of God should be foremost in our actions. And about that bearing fruit, please note: there is no limit to when this bearing of fruit ends. In fact, there is the implication that if that tree stops bearing fruit there is a very real possibility of it being uprooted.

March 30, 2025 – *Fourth Sunday in Lent*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 15 verses 1-3, 11b-32

The last Sunday of March we begin with the accusation of Jesus eating with sinners; which is true! Jesus came for the sinners and outcasts. That was one of his purposes. It continues with the story of the prodigal son. In this story, a man gives one of his sons half of his treasure. The son then goes and spends it all. Then goes through bad times before deciding to return to his father and ask for forgiveness. The father not only forgives him, welcomes him back as his son, and throws a party for him. The other son is a bit jealous of all this attention lavished on the “bad” son. How often do we share those feelings? How often do we cry, “not fair” when we learn about good things happening to “bad” people? How often do we limit God's forgiveness and mercy? But the father's response is a reminder to us all that we do need to be grateful for what we have: for the people in our lives, for the relationships we have and built over years, for the love we have shared.

During this month let us look at the mountains we need to climb to encounter Jesus. What obstacles do we need to overcome? What do we place in front of ourselves that keep us

from the pinnacle of the mountain? How are we planning to spend this Lenten season? How are we responding to the call to do righteous deeds, give alms, spend time in prayer, and fast? What temptations keep you from responding? Where are we encountering Jesus in our daily lives? How are we presenting Jesus to others? What fruits are you growing? How are you planting and cultivating your own little patch? How are we asking for God's forgiveness and mercy? How are we sharing it with others?