

Reflections on Faith and Life, Transfiguration

This Wednesday, February 17th, is Ash Wednesday, beginning of the season of Lent (which means “spring” in German). Traditionally in the Christian and Catholic traditions, this is a time of reflection, repentance, and fasting to deepen our relationship with the Savior who died for us. The joy of Easter is all the greater when we’ve allowed ourselves to deeply examine our life practices and attitudes.

Lent has often been perceived (and too often experienced) as a season of self-sacrifice, somber and sometimes joyless. Forty-seven Sundays a year our gospel is introduced with these words: “Alleluia, Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia!” On Transfiguration (always the Sunday before Ash Wednesday) we traditionally “bury” the Alleluias (although we sing as many as we can before the official start of Lent!).

But our Lenten gospel acclamation reminds us that these 40 days of repentance can be a time of quiet joy. “Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.” We don’t repent before an angry God, but open ourselves to let him draw ever closer. Our world is in many ways broken, and our “normal” lives disrupted by COVID, unrest, and chaos. But the cross of Jesus, God-in-the-flesh, is a constant reminder of the overwhelming mercy and love our Father has for us.

Because of the coronavirus we won’t be sharing food this Lent. (It’s hard for me to imagine Wednesday services without a soup supper!) All services begin at 6:00 as follows:

Ash Wednesday	St. Stephen
February 24	St. John
March 3	St. Stephen
March 19	St. John
March 17	St. Stephen
March 24	St. John

March 28th is Palm Sunday

Maundy Thursday, April 1	St. Stephen
Good Friday, April 2, 1:00	St. Stephen
6:00	St. John
Easter Sunrise 6:00	St. Stephen
Easter service 9:00	St. John