

St. Alban's E-Blast
The Second Week of Lent
The Week of 3/9 - 3/15/20

In him was life, and that life was the light of men.
The light shines in the darkness,
but the darkness has not understood it.” John 1:4-5

As I was driving to Church early Sunday morning, the moon was still in the heavens. It was partially covered by darkness, then wholly covered, then exposed, full, and then gone from the sky. (Or at least, gone from my vision). It was beautiful – a KODAK moment one might say. I kicked myself later for not stopping and capturing it on my phone but then perhaps, it would have become a visual memory instead of the soul opening moment it was.

At first, I thought it was the sun it was so beautifully bright and orange. Then I realized that the sun rises in the East and this “thing” was certainly not rising in the East as it was disappearing into the darkness of the night. Then slowly pieces emerged from the darkness, almost as if a lacey veil was being placed over the orange thing. I watched the darkness slip over and under this orange thing (while keeping my eyes on the road – thank God for no early traffic!) I began to thank God for the times I have been partially blinded by the darkness of my sin and as His love and forgiveness wash over me, I become a bright, orange ball of fire! Well, perhaps, not quite a ball of fire, yet.

“Set my soul on fire” was one of the new songs that I encountered at our conference in the Netherlands. And my soul was set on fire. Thank God for LENT. It is such a time to have one’s soul set on fire. Amy Zietlow writes: “Season of Lent invites us to open our eyes to the life –giving presence of God around us, to note our wonder, to talk, to be changed. God may use surprising people to move over the waters of impossibility and minister to our souls.”

Are you ready to be changed? Are you ready to have your soul set on fire? Are you walking or marching with Jesus as we head toward the Cross? I invite you to walk, march, and even at times to trudge, with me as we journey together this season of Lent. Be ready to be surprised and changed as the living water washes over us.

Judith+

LENT

40 days of fasting, praying, and almsgiving – that is how Robert E Webber describes the season of Lent in his book, *Ancient Future Time*. I re-read this book often and not just during Lent to once again be reminded of how the seasons of the Church enable us to walk in the Light and in the darkness, to wait and to watch, and to celebrate the victories in our life. I hope you are praying that prayer of St. Ephrem each day to discover the glory of repentance and forgiveness. Oops, who is St. Ephrem? On Sunday, I gave out Bookmarks with the prayer of this 4th century Saint to be uttered each day during Lent. Be sure to pick one up next Sunday.

Many of our family have been battling the flu and colds, so we offer up our prayers for healing. Some of you might be discouraged and fearful about the latest virus. I encourage one to be wise and careful, but know that you are missed when not present to worship with us.

On this note: With the threat of the Coronavirus, discussions have arisen about the use of the Common Cup. One does have options. One can receive Communion of one kind – that is acceptable. Beginning on Sunday, the 2nd Sunday of Lent, the Lay Eucharistic Minister and I used sanitizer (much to my dismay, I might add) and will continue to do that during flu season. If one desires intinction, the LEM will dip the Bread in the Blood and put it in one’s mouth. There has been research that states drinking from the Common Cup is more sanitary than dipping. I recently wrote “For all these hundreds of years, the common cup bearing the Blood of

Christ has not caused an influenza epidemic in the Church. We would have no priests left in the Church if it were unsafe as they drink the cup after everyone else has received, dipped, and even spit.”

On yet another note: Soup and Study along with a sassy discussion (trying to think of a word to describe our conversations that begin with the letter “S” can be challenging) on **Wednesday** nights, **5:30 to 7:00 PM** during this season of Lent. Last week we read and discussed the healing story of the Centurion’s Son found in Luke 7:1-10 and the sending out of the twelve (Luke 9:1-2, Matthew 10:1, 7-8) to “heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons...freely you have received, freely give.” This week we will be sharing about the healing of the man born blind: John 9:1-41). Hope to see more of you on this Wednesday, March 11th.

More Ramblings

See what happens when one travels – catching up on my ramblings.

Each Sunday during Lent has a different theme and yet they are connected. We are in Cycle A which uses the Gospel of Matthew for much of the cycle, except during Lent when we are interrupted, disrupted by the words from John’s Gospel. And we all know about the style of John’s writing: signs, dialogue, and discourse. Here are the themes just in case one has already missed a Sunday, but the good news, one can catch up and join us on Sunday, the third Sunday of this journey called Lent.

NO SOUP!!

To add to Judith’s note about the soup supper...what’s a soup supper with no soup?? No one signed up to bring either a meat or meatless soup. Laura and Robin furnished soup last week, Charlie is making chili for the 18th. Who will be bringing soup tomorrow night?

Lent 1	The Need to Change - Matthew 4:1-11 The Temptation of Christ. We face temptation as we discern what God really wants from us.
Lent 2	Reset - John 3:1-17 Nicodemus encounters Jesus in the dark of night. Spiritual rebirth means a new start.
Lent 3	Hydrate - Exodus 17:1-7 and John 4:5-42 The story of the Samaritan woman at the well, seeking the living waters. Did she even know she was thirsty? How about you?
Lent 4	Redefined - John 9:1-41 We are more than we appear to be. Jesus heals a blind man and proclaims “I have come into the world so that the blind will see”.
Lent 5	Dead End - John 11:1-45 When all hope seems lost, God revives.
Palm Sunday	Celebrate and wait - Matthew 21:1-11 Rejoice at the end of the journey, but know challenges lie ahead.

Readings, Readers and more for 3/15/20

1 st Lesson	Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm	95
2 nd Lesson	Romans 5:1-11
Gospel	John 4:5-42
8:00	
LEM	Karen Kanakares
Lector/Psalm	Judy Murdock
Lector	Vern Murdock
Prayers	Don France
Altar	Judy Murdock
LEV	Judy & Vern Murdock
10:15	
LEM	Jane Shovar
Lector/Psalm	Sue McCoy
Lector	Robin Sade
Prayers	Laura Showers
Acolyte	Angie Roberts
Usher	Chris Cash
Altar	Sue McCoy
Counters	Robin Sade Michelle Dierickx

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

COMING on Good Friday – An Interactive Prayer Walk. We will be offering an interactive Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, 7:00 pm. It is described as a “guided prayer-walk, through the Journey to the Cross.”

One will have space and time to reflect on the events of Jesus’ crucifixion in a unique and meaningful way.

Mark your calendars for April 10! We are also checking with a couple of schools to bring us a Blues band to play at the Good Friday service at noon. Like Judith said, we sing the blues on Friday, but shout Alleluia on Sunday! Stay tuned!

THANK YOU!

Thanks to Sue McCoy, I have turned the Maundy Thursday overnight security torch to her. She will be here to unlock the doors to let you in the church to provide a secure place to pray for the hour that you will be in the Garden. Thanks again!

DECISION MADE

I have made the decision to not continue in the ordination process of becoming a priest. This has come after many months of prayer, thought and sometimes tears. I appreciate the support of the Bishop, the Diocese, the discernment team and all of those who prayed for me. I met with the Bishop last Friday and told him of my decision and he is supportive, but encouraged me to “keep an open mind” for the future. Many factors entered in, but basically, I’m very comfortable with my ministry at the jail, being on the board of Attacking Trafficking and now, volunteering at Family Resources, specializing in advocacy of sexual assault/domestic battery survivors, hopefully encountering survivors of human trafficking to provide support. Robin

