

March 3-4, 2018

Third Sunday of Lent

Exodus 20:1-17

First Corinthians 1:22-25

John 2:13-25

The SPIRIT of the law versus the LETTER of the Law...

Since people began bumping into each other outside their caves and thatched huts, *rules/laws/common understandings of conduct* have been enacted so as to promote 'greater harmony' among the growing population. While the Ten Commandments, as they have come to be called, are the ones most prominently attributed to God Almighty himself, the Jewish community at the time of Jesus had expanded their rules and regulations to a mind boggling 613 commandments with ample additional SILLY extrapolations that went so far as to decree how many single steps a person could take on the Sabbath before it would be considered the violation of 'keeping holy the Sabbath.' Beginning with our own 'FAMILIAL rules' given to us as children: do your chores, wash your hands before meals, chew with your mouth closed, we evolve into 'SOCIAL laws' of driving on the right side of the street, stopping for red lights, no theft or murder and finally as 'PEOPLE of FAITH we are supposed to be able to read BETWEEN THE LINES and understand the unwritten and unspoken guidance's given us by the Holy Spirit. When it comes to RELATIONSHIPS (which is what we are supposed to be developing between ourselves and God) the challenges to be true and faithful to our God-relationships while living in our contemporary society are sometimes harder and harder to honor. In the same manner in which we live our lives (or are supposed to) so as to NOT bring shame or disgrace upon our spouses, children and extended family...as PEOPLE of FAITH, during these Lenten days, we are asked to look at what type of WITNESS we are giving to God through our lives, actions and pursuits? Is God truly first in our lives if we cavalierly turn our hearts against the homeless, those without legal status, and even the criminal? Is God truly first in our lives if we reserve the right to sexualize every relationship, to harass or demean others...because we can? Do we honor FLAG over CROSS? Have we abandoned the NUANCES of being a disciple of Jesus in favor of hard and fast rules? Have we forgotten all the Gospel passages of how Jesus TAUGHT through his ACTIONS that mercy prevails over condemnation, that kindness will not be forgotten by God, that forgiveness sets US free to get on with our lives? The SPIRIT of the law is all about NUANCE...it is the whisper of the Holy Spirit to be people of the full spectrum of color and not just black and white.

Thank you for sharing our Lenten journey with our Santa Clara community. **This Thursday, March 8th, is our Parish Reconciliation Service at 7pm.** We have a strong coterie of priests lined up to quickly cleanse your souls and prepare you interiorly for Easter...so please come and join us. Back on February 17th we presented **Catechumens** (those not Baptized): *Ryan Gray, Nicolas Grimmell and Ryan Hamilton* along with our **Candidates** (those already baptized in another Christian denomination): *Natalie Gray, RaeAnn Salvador and Aimee Juarez* to the Bishop during the Rite of Election. **We offer you their names so YOU may write them a note of welcome and support, to be given to them on Holy Saturday Evening after they are fully received into the Church.** Please drop off your notes and cards to the Parish Offices or via the Stewardship Basket before Palm Sunday.

THANKS! Lastly, a reminder that it takes a lot of flowers to transform our Hall into a celebration of the Resurrection...and flowers cost money! Rather than ask you to go to Costco and buy them...we offer you...FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE...the FLOWER DONATION ENVELOPES (available at the entrances/exists) by which you can have the knowledge that our Easter Season beauty is because of your generosity. Lastly, **next weekend, DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME RETURNS...**so SPRING your clocks FORWARD one hour on Saturday night before you go to sleep...and even though you loose an hour of sleep...remember, you are loved. FKB