

**March 4-5, 2017**  
**First Sunday of Lent**

**Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7**

**Romans 5:12-19**

**Matthew 4:1-11**

A certain newly ordained Priest (who has spent way too much time in Rome) loves a warm baguette of crispy French bread, fresh from the oven. Truly, with a warm, crispy baguette in hand, one could be excused for thinking that perhaps bread alone would suffice for life...until of course we grow tired of it or the bread grows stale and we realize we may have traded our soul for crusty crumbs. As testified to within the opening chapters of Genesis, we human beings have been created by God and called VERY GOOD...yet the gift of FREE WILL given us by our Creator is a two-edged sword by which we can not only learn of the world around us but also make dark choices that turn us from God's light and deafen us to his whispers and guidance. The literary story of Adam and Eve in our Genesis passage speaks to our capacity to be tempted by what looks appealing and follow our own paths as opposed to honoring the ways blessed by God...we have the capacity to defy the guidance of God. Journeying into the desert of Lent this weekend we also hear of the SAME temptations faced by Jesus in darkness' effort to deter his salvific mission: ***\*Command these stones become bread; \*Throw yourself down (from the parapet of the Temple.) \*Prostrate yourself and worship me.*** We too, within the days of our lives, are tempted by these same proposals, we too look at how appealing something APPEARS to be, frequently throwing aside conscience's cautions so as to obtain what we WANT. WANTING something assumes primary importance....not whether something is good or right for us. These days of Lent are opportunities for us to attune our souls to once again hear the whispers of God calling us back to the VERY GOODNESS in which he created us. Lent is NOT about punishment...it is a homecoming for we who have lost our ways....especially for those who do not realize they are lost. Even the best baguettes eventually grow stale; the CROSS remains fresh and a strong support to which to cling as we journey home to the heart from which we were created.

Our smudged brows have finally been washed clean of their ashen crosses, on this FIRST weekend of Lent, welcome to our Santa Clara community as we journey together into the desert of the season. **Our invitations for the Good Friday Prayer Breakfast: 'ELOI! ELOI!-MY God! My God!' have been sent out;** this year's guest speakers, Retired Army Captain Nick Vogt and his wife, Lieutenant Lauren Vogt, offer us a powerful story of embracing the CROSS and moving on with life despite painful transformations. Please do not delay in making your reservations as the available tables/seats are disappearing promptly! This weekend our HEART & SOUL Outreach to our Sister Parish, Immaculate Heart of Mary in Santa Ana, is overseeing our **IHM SCHOOL STUDENT EASTER BASKET adoption effort**, an opportunity to provide an Easter Basket of both school supplies and Easter Candy to EVERY student at Immaculate Heart of Mary School. Please check-in with the Heart & Soul team outside to participate. The Bulletin has news of other events and opportunities, please take one with you as you depart...and do not forget...**next Saturday and Sunday is the weekend BEFORE St. Patrick's Day**...which means a certain SPECIAL Santa Clara tradition will once again be offered after all the Masses... **Sláinte!** Whether you are Irish or not, please know that you are loved. FKB