

The Master's Message

The Newsletter of the Church of the Master

March/April, 2026

Virtual Adult Bible Study
Wednesday, 7:00 PM
Saturday, 12:00

2783 Lafayette Avenue
Bronx, N.Y. 10465
718-597-6298

Sunday Worship
Sunday 11:00 am

WWW.COTMBRONX.ORG

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor

WHAT TO GIVE UP

A Lenten Reflection

Give up complaining - focus on gratitude.

Give up pessimism - become an optimist

Give up harsh judgements - think kindly thoughts

Give up worry - trust Divine Providence

Give up discouragement - be full of hope

Give up bitterness - turn to forgiveness

Give up hatred - return good for evil.

Give up negativism - be positive.

Give up anger - be more patient

Give up pettiness - become mature

Give up gloom - enjoy the beauty that's all around you

Give up jealousy - pray for trust.

Give up gossiping - control your tongue.

Give up sin - turn to virtue

Give up giving up - hang in there!



SPECIAL DATES

- Second Sunday in Lent, *March 1st*
- World Day of Prayer, *March 6th*
- Third Sunday in Lent, *March 8th*
- Daylight-Saving Time Begins, *March 8th*
- Fourth Sunday in Lent, *March 15th*
- First Day of Spring, *March 20th*
- Fifth Sunday in Lent, *March 22nd*
- Palm Sunday, *March 29th*

News From the Pews



Continue praying for:
Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,
Loretta Byrd, John Bruno,
Alice & Alex Rivera

Our **Online Bible Study** meets
Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 12:00.
Contact Ron Rivera (917-716-8273)
for information on joining



Lenten insights

Fasting makes sense if it really chips away at our security and, as a consequence, benefits someone else, if it helps us cultivate the style of the good Samaritan, who bent down to his other in need and took care of him.

—Pope Francis

Lent is like a long "retreat" during which we can turn back to ourselves and listen to the voice of God ... using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to receive the promises of our baptism.

—Pope Benedict XVI

We begin to pray, believing that it is our own initiative that compels us to do so. Instead, we learn that it is always God's initiative within us.

—Pope John Paul II

CHURCH CHUCKLES

Steven, a Protestant, moved into an all-Catholic community, where he received a good Christian welcome. But these good Catholics did not eat red meat on Fridays during Lent, so when their new neighbor began barbecuing a juicy steak on Friday night, they began to squirm.

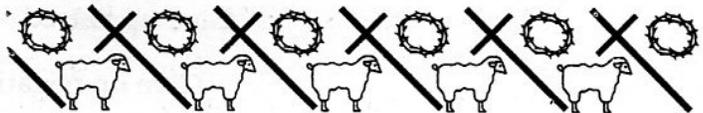
They decided to talk to Steven about it. After much discussion, they convinced him to become Catholic. The next Sunday the priest sprinkled holy water on him and said, "You were born Protestant, You were raised Protestant. But now you are Catholic."

But the next Friday, as the neighbors sat down to eat their fish, they were once again disturbed by the smell of roast beef coming from the neighboring house. They went to talk to the new Catholic to remind him that he was not supposed to eat beef on Fridays.

When they got there, he was sprinkling ketchup on the beef and saying, "You were born a cow. You were raised a cow. But now you are a fish."

OUR CHURCH TODAY

For Easter services, we will ask Mrs. Brown to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.



St. Patrick's Day trivia

You may know that St. Patrick used shamrocks to teach about the Trinity, but did you know these other facts about him?

- St. Patrick wasn't Irish. (His parents were Roman citizens living in either Scotland or Wales.)
- He was kidnapped and sold as a slave at age 16. After escaping six years later, he joined a monastery in England.
- March 17 is the date of St. Patrick's death, not his birth. He died in 461 A.D.
- The color originally associated with St. Patrick is blue, not green.
- The harp, not the shamrock, is the national symbol of Ireland.

Pastor's
EASTER
MESSAGE

March-April Newsletter Article *

This year, the months of March through April bring more than merely windy weather and showers; they bring the Lenten Season, Holy Week and Easter Resurrection Sunday! As I mentioned during morning worship on the first Sunday in Lent, instead of giving up something only to go back to that thing I had temporarily given up for Lent, I have committed over the next 40 days of Lent to taking on something! I have health issues that do not allow me to fast as much and as long as I desire to do. So, the thing that I have committed to is making more time to devote to the Lord Jesus in my own personal one-on-one worship and devotion time with the Lord. Lately, I have noticed that I unintentionally allow other things (work, calls, emails, etc.) to distract me and take time away from doing my daily devotion and morning worship. My personal prayer and worship time is where I set aside time as soon as I open my eyes, to thank God for another day, and begin my morning ritual of praise, devotion and Scripture reading. It is my prayer and hope that this commitment will remain even after Lent to help strengthen my spiritual life and walk with Jesus.

I was reading the Gospel of John during my morning worship and devotional time and our Bible Study was also studying the Gospel of John. As I read the Gospel of John 3:16: "for God so loved that world that he gave his only Son that whosoever believes on him should not perish but have everlasting life," I am always struck by the depth of God's love for sinful humankind—that he gave his *only* son to die for humankind's sins and to reconcile us back to the Father following Adam and Eve's original sin! And, as I continued reading in John's gospel, I began to think of how the prevailing powers falsely accused Jesus, how he was betrayed by one of his very own hand-picked disciples, how his other hand-picked disciples could not remain on watch in the Garden of Gethsemane while Jesus went to pray, how his hand-picked disciples deserted him after Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus into the hands of the chief priests with a kiss and for thirty pieces of silver, how one of his closest hand-picked disciples, Peter, denied knowing Jesus three times before the cock crowed twice, how Jesus was tortured, mocked, spat upon, and brutalized for your sins and my sins, how He who knew no sin became the sin offering to satisfy the debt for sin that we humans rightfully owed, and how Jesus did not open his mouth or ask his Father to take him off the cross. I could not help but begin to weep! I pondered the question, if there was *only one person* who needed to be saved, would Jesus have still gone to the cross to die and atone for that *one* person's sins? As I prayed for an answer to my inquiry, the Holy Spirit brought to my remembrance that familiar hymn of the church, *Even Me*:

Lord, I hear of showers of blessings
Thou art scattering full and free;
Showers the thirsty soul refreshing,
Let some drops now fall on me!
Even me Lord,
Even me
Even me Lord

Even me
Let some drops
Let some drops
Now fall on me

Everyone will need to ponder the answer to this question for him or herself. But, for me, the lyrics of this hymn confirm the answer to my question. Yes, I believe that Jesus would have gone to that old rugged cross for just one soul, even you, or even me! I pray that you all will have a meaningful fast and strength to keep your Lent commitments over these next 40 days. But most of all I pray that you will not merely temporarily give up something only to take it back up after Lent is over. Rather, I pray that you will seek to take on more of Jesus' characteristics during this Lenten Season that will have a lasting effect on you and for you well after Lent is over! Happy Easter Resurrection Sunday!

Shalom to you,

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden

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Pastor
Church of the Master

* Revised and Reprinted from 2019 Master's Message Newsletter



A well-balanced church

The owner of a new puppy got a good laugh when the little dog, out for a walk, had an itch. The trouble was that the itchy spot was accessible only to a hind leg. So, while still walking, the pup tried to scratch and tumbled over, rolling a couple of times before coming to rest.

In several places throughout Scripture, the apostle Paul writes about the church as the body of Christ, and of the importance of each member. Just as the dog needed each leg to stay balanced while walking, so the church needs all the different God-given gifts of its members: preachers and teachers, friendly visitors, generous givers, musicians and singers, wise parents and imaginative children, people to produce and distribute meals, newsletters, lesson materials, and on and on.

When we start thinking that some part of Christ's body isn't necessary, we risk taking quite a tumble!

The Argyle Sweater



MEMORIES THAT GROW SOFTER WITH TIME

People may leave
Years may pass.
But memories walk with us quietly.

They sit beside us in silence,
warming the heart
when the world feels distant.
Memories do not fade.
They grow gentler with time.

Growing older
does not harden the heart.
It softens it.

We learn patience.
We learn forgiveness.
We learn that peace matters
more than being right.
Age teaches gently
What youth could not.

Providing proof

If we are to accept the teaching of Jesus at all, then the only test of the reality of a man's religion is his attitude to his fellow men. The only possible proof that a man loves God is the demonstrated fact that he loves his fellow men.
—William Barclay

A new spring

Botanists say that trees need the powerful March winds to flex their trunks and main branches, so that the sap is drawn up to nourish the budding leaves. Perhaps we need the gales of life in the same way, though we dislike enduring them. A blustery period in our fortunes is often the prelude to a new spring of life and health, success and happiness, when we keep steadfast in faith and look to the good in spite of appearances.



—Jane Truax

Forgive yourself

If the Lord Jesus Christ has washed you in his own blood and forgiven you all your sins, how dare you refuse to forgive yourself?

—Francis MacNutt

