

Kidane-Mehret

Ge'ez Rite Ethiopian Catholic Church



March 2018

Rev. Abayneh Gebremichael, M.A., B.C.C., Pastor

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am at St. Vincent de Paul, 14M Street SE Washington, DC 20003.

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Important Parish Information

Newcomers to the parish: Please fill out your full names and addresses on the Registration Form. The Catholic Church requires that each member of a parish, to the extent allowed by his income, support the day-to-day running of the parish's pastoral activities.

Sacraments and Pastoral Care

Baptisms: Please telephone your pastor at the office to make an appointment to fill out the form and make the necessary arrangements. **Marriages:** It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Washington that couples proposing to marry must first contact, or see, a priest or deacon at least six months prior to the date on which they intend to marry for Marriage Preparation classes. All Catholics are bound to observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage. **Confessions:** are heard before the start of the Divine Liturgy, and any other times by appointment. **Funerals:** Contact your pastor at the parish office to make arrangements. **Hospital Visits:** Notify the pastor if a family member is hospitalized. **Mass Intentions (Stipend):** \$25.00. This is for Memorial Masses, thanksgivings, or petitions.

From the Pastor's Desk

Our Lenten Prayer

As we continue our Lenten observance, we strive to imitate Jesus more closely. During the whole of his suffering, He never forgot the purpose of His mission and stayed in constant contact with His Father to receive the strength and grace to achieve our salvation.

The prayer of Jesus during his agony in the garden of Gethsemane and his last words on the cross reveal the depth of His filial prayer. Through this steadfast relationship, Jesus brings to completion the loving plan of the Father and takes upon Himself all the anguish of humanity and all their petitions and intercessions to the Father who accepts them and answers them beyond all human expectation by raising His Son from the dead.

On the cross, in the very depths of human agony, Jesus continues His prayer to the Father, and completes His sacrificial offering to the Father with His stark words.

Jesus Seven Last Words

1. Father forgive them they know not what they do.
2. Truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise.
3. Jesus said to His Mother, "Woman this is your son."
Then he said to the disciple at the foot of the cross, "This is your Mother."
4. My God my God why have you forsaken me?
5. I thirst
6. It is finished
7. Father in to your hands I commend my Spirit.

These words echo throughout our minds during Lent. Everything Jesus wants to teach us is summed up in these words. We are shown that it is possible for humans to forgive tormentors. God's Mercy is available to us through repentance, no matter what we have done. And He gives us His own Mother to be our Mother to help us in every situation. The last four Words remind us that at the end of our lives, we need to surrender everything to God.

The Stations of the Cross.

Traditionally in the Catholic Church we pray the Station of the Cross. Commonly, a series of 14 images will be arranged in numbered order along a path and the faithful travel from image to image, in order, stopping at each station to say the selected prayers and reflections. The object of the stations is to help the Christians faithful to make a spiritual [pilgrimage](#) through

contemplation of the [Passion of Christ](#). We share the suffering of Jesus by praying with Him, we accompany Him on his journey to Golgotha.



Jesus walked all the way to his crucifixion with obedience and humble heart. On the way, He fell three times, but He stood up and walked again and again. On the way, He met some nice people. Simon of Cyrene helped Him by carrying the cross, others consoled Him, and Veronica wiped His face, yet others cried for Him. In contrast there were those who whipped Him, despised Him, mocked Him and grumbled about him. How do we relate the suffering of Jesus with other people around the world. Do we share the pain, praying for them, truly concerned for them? Or don't we care? Do we judge them or condemn them, betray, and mock them? How do we feel if other people

treat us without care, condemning us in our need and sadness? Sure, we feel very bad. So, let us show compassion and care for the suffering people around us. Let us remember His Last Words and try to bring love and mercy to those in need.

Sunday Readings for March 2018

March 4: Gal 5:1-10 ; Jam 5:14-20 ; Jn 5:1-14
March 11: 1 Th 4:13-18 ; 2 Pet 3:7-14 ; Mt 24:1-14
March 18: 2 Tim 2:1-10 ; 1Pet 5:1-5 ; Mt 25:14-30
March 25: Rm 7:1-10 ; 1 Jn 4:18-21 ; Jn 3:1-11

Psalm 51:18-19

For you are not pleased with sacrifices;
should I offer a burnt offering, you would not accept it.
My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;
a heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn.

Prayer:

Put a new spirit within us, O God our Savior. Form our minds by your heavenly teaching, so we may draw profit from our observance of Lent. Amen. (Pope Benedict XVI: Journey to Easter)

Let us pray for:

All baptized Christians throughout the world that we will show the world that we are Christians by our love for Christ and one another.

The Parish of Kidane-Mehret: for Peace, Unity, Harmony and Charity in the Parish.

For the World: That the King of Peace will reign in every nation and in every heart.

Great Tsomme or Lent

Lent is a solemn season during which we are called to fast and pray alongside Our Lord Jesus Christ as He fasted and prayed for forty days and nights in the wilderness after His baptism. This year, this penitential period, included the Feast of Kidane-Mehret, on which we honor Our Lady Who is not only Mother of God but also the Queen of Heaven and Earth and our Mother. She is honored by Her Son by His always granting her requests. She is honored by us because we trust in Her love for us and know She is there to listen and advise us.

The Parish of Kidane-Mehret came together on the last Saturday of February to give thanks for Her unique and powerful intercession. As Abba Abayneh pointed out in his homily, Our Lord leapt into Her arms for comfort and likewise, She is always there with open arms to take us into Her protection and love, opening up the rich graces of Heaven for us.

We found joy in being together, we found joy in praying together, particularly through the rich musical heritage that is ours. In the prayers before the reading of the Gospel, we are exhorted to “intone the psalms and strike drum, accompanied with joyful harp and harmonious hymns.” This style of worship goes back to the times of King David who danced before the Ark



of the Covenant on its journey into Jerusalem. In Samuel 6:5 we read, “...David and all the house of Israel danced before the LORD with all their might, with singing, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, sistrams, and cymbals.”

Before the Divine Liturgy, there was the singing of the ancient Mahlet prayers in

praise of Mary dating back to Yared and accompanied by drums and sistrum. This was followed by even more jubilant and full-throated singing and dancing of the Wereb (or in Amharic Sebeshebo) in Her honor. This was followed by an anthem from the modern choir, accompanied by modern electronic taken from Genesis That God created everything...we Praise him and honor him with new song, clapping, dram and cheering. It provided a magnificent fanfare, heralding the Presence of Our Lord and His Mother in our midst.

As more and more of the family of God filled the Church, the singing swelled until the Egzeo Maharana Christus in which we plead for God’s Mercy. That mercy He has made so readily available to us when we turn to Kidane-Mehret and ask for Her help.



After a Eucharistic procession, the parish family gathered together for a meal. The food was plentiful, but it was Fasting Food, and a sudden reminder of what Our Lord replied to the Pharisees when they asked Him why His disciples were not keeping to the fasts of Israel, “*Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. (Matt. 9:5)*

Fasting is not really an option for us Catholics. Christ took it for granted that we would fast: “*When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*” (Matt 6:17-18)

Fasting and abstinence rules for us are no meat, no dairy products or eggs and only one meal a day.

2018 Lenten Message of His Holiness Pope Francis

“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (Mt 24:12)



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Once again, the Pasch of the Lord draws near! In our preparation for Easter, God in his providence offers us each year the season of Lent as a “sacramental sign of our conversion”. Lent summons us, and enables us, to come back to the Lord wholeheartedly and in every aspect of our life. With this message, I would like again this year to help the entire Church experience this time of grace anew, with joy and in truth. I will take my cue from the words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: *“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold”* (24:12).

“These words appear in Christ’s preaching about the end of time. They were spoken in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, where the Lord’s passion would begin. In reply to a question of the disciples, Jesus foretells a great tribulation and describes a situation in which the community of believers might well find itself: amid great trials, false prophets would lead people astray and the love that is the core of the Gospel would grow cold in the hearts of many...

False prophets

“... In order to confound the human heart, the devil, who is *“a liar and the father of lies”* (Jn 8:44), has always presented evil as good, falsehood as truth. That is why each of us is called to peer into our heart to see if we are falling prey to the lies of these false prophets. We must learn to look closely, beneath the surface, and to recognize what leaves a good and lasting mark on our hearts, because it comes from God and is truly for our benefit.

A cold heart

“In his description of hell, Dante Alighieri pictures the devil seated on a throne of ice, in frozen and loveless isolation. We might well ask ourselves how it happens that charity can turn cold within us. What are the signs that indicate that our love is beginning to cool? More than anything else, what destroys charity is greed for money, *“the root of all evil”* (1 Tim 6:10). The rejection of God and his peace soon follows; we prefer our own desolation rather than the comfort found in his word and the sacraments. All this leads to violence against anyone we think is a threat to our own “certainties”: the unborn child, the elderly and infirm, the migrant, the alien among us, or our neighbor who does not live up to our expectations. “Creation itself becomes a silent witness to this cooling of charity. The earth is poisoned by refuse, discarded out of carelessness or for self-interest. The seas, themselves polluted, engulf the remains of countless shipwrecked victims of forced migration. The heavens, which in God’s plan, were created to sing his praises, are rent by engines raining down implements of death. “Love can also grow cold in our own communities. In the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, I sought to describe the most evident signs of this lack of love: selfishness and spiritual sloth, sterile pessimism, the temptation to self-absorption, constant warring among ourselves, and the worldly mentality that makes us concerned only for appearances, and thus lessens our missionary zeal.

What are we to do?

“Perhaps we see, deep within ourselves and all about us, the signs I have just described. But the Church, our Mother and Teacher, along with the often bitter medicine of the truth, offers us in the Lenten season the soothing remedy of prayer, almsgiving and fasting. By devoting more time to ***prayer***, we enable our hearts to root out our secret lies and forms of self-deception, and then to find the consolation God offers. He is our Father and he wants us to live life well. ***Almsgiving*** sets us free from greed and helps us to regard our neighbor as a brother or sister. What I possess is never mine alone. How I would like almsgiving to become a genuine style of life for each of us..! When we give alms, we share in God’s providential care for each of his children. If through me God helps someone today, will he not tomorrow provide for my own needs? For no one is more generous than God. ***Fasting*** weakens our tendency to violence; it disarms us and becomes an important opportunity for growth. On the one hand, it allows us to experience what the destitute and the starving have to endure. On the other hand, it expresses our own spiritual hunger and thirst for life in God. Fasting wakes us up. It makes us more attentive to God and our neighbor. It revives our desire to obey God, who alone is capable of satisfying our hunger...

The fire of Easter

“Above all, I urge the members of the Church to take up the Lenten journey with enthusiasm, sustained by almsgiving, fasting and prayer. If, at times, the flame of charity seems to die in our own hearts, know that this is never the case in the heart of God! He constantly gives us a chance to begin loving anew.

With affection and the promise of my prayers for all of you, I send you my blessing. Please do not forget to pray for me.