

23 March 2022



ST. SAVIOUR'S

ANGLICAN CHURCH.

DIOCESE OF CAPE TOWN.

Lent 3: The Book of Esther

COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Almighty and holy God, your Son, in obedience to the Spirit, fasted forty days in the desert: give us grace to discipline ourselves that we may press on towards Easter with eager faith and love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

PREACHER: Revd. Chesnay Frantz

PRESIDER: Revd. Chesnay Frantz

READING: Esther 8:16-17 *The gift of courage*

HYMNS: SOF

Introit: 19 Amazing grace

Offertory: 334 Let your living water flow over my soul

Recessional: 321 Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

Lent 2022: Week 3

As each week of Lent passes by we get closer and closer to the celebration of Easter. The discipline of Lent and that which it calls us to is simply to remain steadfast in prayer, fasting and almsgiving whilst making our way to that glorious celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, on Easter day.

I am sure that many families are starting to get the menu ready for Easter day, for many it will be the first-time regathering after two years of lockdown in its different guises. I want to encourage each of us to do just that, to regather as families and celebrate, of course to do so safely and responsibly. We have endured much and have the tenacity to endure so much more, but we do have the need to be affirmed and celebrated and this is what regathering is about, being courageous (not blindly) to step out in faith and celebrate ourselves, our friends, our family, and those whom we love.

Again, as we hold these two things in tension; our Lenten journey and the excitement of Easter and regathering, I want to encourage you to pray the Ash Wednesday collect daily. It is a collect which captures living in this tension so beautifully. A call to discipline ourselves as we press on towards Easter with eager faith and love.

This week our reading of Esther, reminds us of the prize of courageous acts, the Jews are set free because of Esther's courageous request. So, too I believe it will be on Easter day when we celebrate the resurrection, after courageously wandering through the desert during Lent.

God bless.

Fr. Chesnay

23 March 2022

This week on our journey through the book of Esther, reflecting on chapters 6,7 and 8 we get to the heart of the story of Queen Esther. Up until now, we have encountered the tension between Esther and Mordechai, Esther and Haman and even at times Esther and the King. Esther has now solidified her favour and is in a space to make courageous requests or demands. It is this courage which Queen Esther displays that now brings to fruition the freedom of the Jews. As a result of Queen Esther's courage we see how Haman's plan backfires and someone who abused his place and proximity to the King is killed, in contrast to Queen Esther who used her favour with the King, to set her people free.

The courage of Queen Esther demonstrates the gift it brings with it. Too often courage is confused with arrogance, when instead courage involves patience, timing and confidence in the love and grace of God. Queen Esther uses her courage not for selfish ambition or personal gain, but instead she uses the gift of courage for the benefit of the Jewish nation.

When we seek to exercise the gift of courage, at the forefront of our thinking ought to be how it will benefit others, our courageous acts should not be in vain because of being misguided by jealousy and envy, instead our courageous acts ought to be grounded on the gift of service; serving God and Gods people.

Questions for reflection:

1. What would you consider as your most courageous act?
2. Does being courageous involve interaction with God, and if so, how?
3. What courageous actions/conversations are required in our community?

LENT PROGRAM

BOOK OF ESTHER

Week 3: 23 March 2022- Chapter 6,7,8 ***(The gift of courage)***

Week 4: 30 March 2022- Chapter 9,10 ***(The gift of Power)***

Week 5: 6 April 2022- Summary ***(Our Esther story)***

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