

# ANNUNCIATION & CHURCH ASCENSION MISSION



## Lectors Proclaim the Word of God

Have you ever noticed how even the simplest of texts can be transformed when read aloud? We are all familiar with the stories in the Bible, but every Sunday we hear three different Scripture passages read aloud in the Liturgy of the Word. At Mass, lectors are tasked with conveying the depth of the Word of God to the rest of the congregation. With careful preparation, lectors can successfully transmit the nuances of each reading, and grow in their own faith, as well.

“We need to take the time to make sure that the audience hears [the readings] as they were meant to be heard,” says longtime lector Roxanne Pung. “In order to do this, we need to make sure we understand what we are reading. If we express the words with their original intent – for example, something filled with love or hope – we are able to give that to the congregation.”

In addition to periodic training given by Fr. Stephen and ministry leaders Toni McPeck and Larry Denis, lectors are also given a guidebook for the Mass readings. The guide gives lectors pronunciation tips and explains the background behind each reading. Lectors are encouraged to



read the guide and practice their reading several times during the week leading up to the Mass.

“These books that Father gave us really help give us confidence while we’re reading,” Roxanne says. “You’re just an instrument, really – your voice is just what is transmitting God’s Word to the people.”

Two lectors are assigned to each Mass – one does the first reading and the Prayers of the Faithful, and another lector does the second reading. The first lector in Puako also reads an introduction at the beginning of the Mass.

“Because we have so many visitors to the island, we’re very geared toward welcoming everyone,” Roxanne says. “We greet everyone, make sure that everyone is comfortable and feels welcome, and share what the day’s readings are.”

For Roxanne, serving as a lector is a way to give back to God. Serving in the Mass has also helped her to grow in faith and as a part of the parish community.

“Once you really understand what the Mass is, and why you are there, you realize why we need to participate,” she says. “When I read at

*continued on back cover*

## Stewardship

# Hannah, the Good Steward

What should we do when our prayers are answered?

Is there anything left to do after we have sincerely thanked God for His favors? If God were a human peer, we would probably try to reciprocate by granting Him a favor in return. But the truth is that God cannot be made greater by anything that we do for Him. Instead, God receives our thanks and tells us to “go and do likewise.” That is, He

tells us to share with others the good that He has bestowed on us. And in doing so, we are really sharing God Himself. That is the definition of stewardship!

The Old Testament Book of Samuel contains one of the most poignant examples of stewardship in the entire Bible. The first chapter teaches us of an unhappy, barren woman named Hannah. Desperate in her barrenness, Hannah prays that

God will give her a son, vowing that she will raise him to be a man of God.

Imagine Hannah’s elation when she was granted her prayer! When Samuel was born, her heart’s desire had come true! Imagine further the pang of motherly sorrow, as Hannah kept her promise to God by taking Samuel at a young age to be the servant of Eli, the high priest. The Book of Samuel tells us that once Samuel became Eli’s servant, Hannah saw her young son just once a year.

Indeed, Hannah knew that Samuel was truly a gift from God – an answered prayer. Hannah’s response is that of the Good Steward – with an attitude of both gratitude and sacrifice, she gave up her son to honor God. One imagines that Hannah probably struggled with this sacrifice during those first years. She probably did not know what God had in store for her son. Yet, through her faithfulness, God used him as a gift to an entire nation. Samuel would, in time, become one of the greatest prophets of Jewish history.

Sometimes it is difficult to understand the sacrifices we make in the name of stewardship, while the results may just be impossible to miss! However, He asks that we continue to be faithful in either case. God has undoubtedly bestowed gifts on all of us – at whatever the cost, we are to “go and do likewise.”





*A Letter from Our Pastor*

## Make Prayer and Hospitality Pillars of Your Lenten Journey

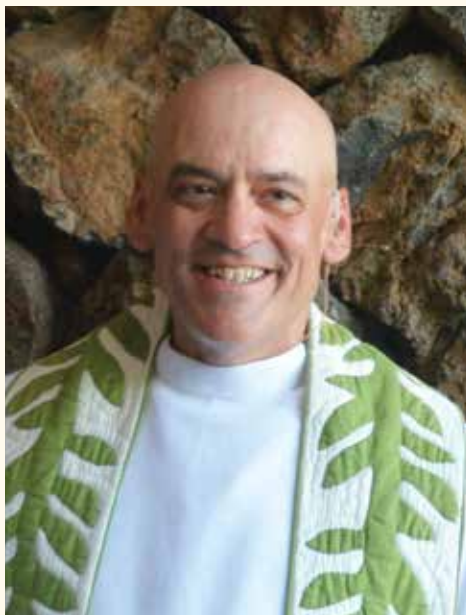
Dear Parishioners,

We are now in the midst of our Lenten observance, and soon we will experience Holy Week, and celebrate the joy of Easter. Of course, I hope that we will all put forth the effort to make this Lenten season special and significant.

With thoughts of Lent and Easter at the top of my mind, I offer a couple suggestions to help carry you to the end of your Lenten journey.

As you know, prayer is foundational to stewardship, as it is one of the Four Pillars of a stewardship parish — along with hospitality, formation and service. With this in mind, here are some suggestions on how you might make your prayers even more consequential.

Pick someone to pray for, perhaps even someone you don't get along with. Just pray for them. You do not have to tell them you are praying for them, but the exercise is good for you, and for them, as well. If possible, find a time this month to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, especially if this is something you do not normally do. We are currently



offering Adoration every Friday from 8 a.m. to noon. Pray every morning shortly after you get up, and again each evening before you turn in. It does not have to be a long prayer, but it does need to be done consistently.

In terms of the pillar of hospitality, there is also much we can do in this area, both as a parish and as individuals and families. Here is a suggestion that involves hospitality — one that is also connected to gratitude. Many of us spend time

at a computer. It is a way for us to stay connected to those who are close to us, and to the world around us. Why not begin and end each week emailing someone a note of thanksgiving? Again, it does not have to be lengthy, but when we think about it, each of our lives is filled with people to whom we should be grateful.

Just send that someone a note thanking them for something specifically, or in general. By starting and ending each week like that, our minds are in the right place for prayer and for having the attitude that Christ asks us to have.

I thank you for all you do, for our parish, for the Church, for one another, and for me personally. I am blessed. Like most, I may not express it often enough. I pray for you, and I ask you to pray for me during this holy time.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Fr. Stephen*

Reverend Stephen Macedo  
Pastor

*How One Family's Young Son Le*

In his general audience on March 18, 2015, Pope Francis declared, “God has no difficulty in being understood by children, and children have no trouble in understanding God.” The pope’s words remind us of Jesus’ own claim that those with the faith of a child will enter the kingdom of heaven (Mark 10:15). Indeed, while parents are tasked with passing on the Catholic faith to their children, we often find that we are learning just as much – if not more – from our little ones.



*Bishop Silva presented the Evangelista family with an Island Treasures Award in November 2016.*

For parishioners Blanca and Martin Evangelista, this reality rings especially true. Although both of these parents are lifelong Catholics who have always regularly attended Mass, it was the desire of their son, Andre, to get more involved in the parish that inspired this couple to begin spending more time in service to God’s people.

Soon, stewardship became such a big part of the Evangelistas’ life that they received the Bishop’s Island Treasures Award last fall!

“Receiving the award was a big surprise,” Blanca says. “We weren’t even sure at first what it was! We had never met the bishop, so the whole experience was just an incredible honor.”

“Martin and I have been married for 14 years and we’ve always attended Annunciation, but we weren’t really involved in the parish in any way,” she continues. “Then our son, Andre, made his First Communion in 2015 and he decided that he wanted to serve as an altar boy. That is how

we started to get more involved – we went to Mass more often, and one thing led to the next.”

Like Blanca, Martin gives their young son full credit for getting the family more involved at Annunciation.

“It was Andre that really wanted to get involved first,” he confirms. “When he wanted to be an altar boy after his First Communion, something just told me that this was it – that I needed to get involved. I remember the first time he was up there serving – he was really nervous, and I thought, ‘Wow, here is this little boy with all eyes on him, and he’s up there doing it.’ So, I thought, ‘If my boy can do it, I can do it, too.’”

Inspired by Andre’s willingness to serve, Martin soon went through the training to become a Eucharistic Minister, and then an usher. He is currently serving in both ministries, in addition to helping to direct church parking when there are a lot of visitors.

“I never thought I’d be doing this, but it’s a satisfying feeling to be able to serve the parish,” Martin says. “Doing all of it – from parking to ushering to Eucharistic Ministry – I love it all.”

Blanca, for whom photography has long been a hobby, first found a way to get involved when Fr. Stephen asked her if she could take some photos for the parish. Since then, she has begun helping behind the scenes with Religious Education, and she looks forward to finding even more ways to serve the parish and community.

“This is just the beginning,” she says. “It’s an honor and a pleasure to serve. It’s like I’m becoming more alive and I’m more willing to serve and help – in church and in other places in the community. We also got involved with the 4H program, so we’re helping there with fundraisers, camping trips – there is always something popping up. So, I guess it’s a learning experience from the church. I’m learning from being a steward and opening up to new things.”

While their work schedules keep the Evangelistas busy – Blanca works for their cleaning business and then swaps “parent duty” with Martin when he leaves for his shifts as a security officer at the Four Seasons

## OF A CHILD

### *led Them to a Life of Stewardship*

– the couple found that, since they have committed to staying more active in their faith, God somehow manages to make the timing work! And they are now finding that the quality time they spend together as a family has become richer and even more rewarding.

“I notice in our family that serving has brought us a lot closer,” Martin says. “We were close already, but having that special family bond and what we do together in church has made it even better. After church, I’m happy – I feel good that I was there with my wife and my son, and that we served.”

The couple points to many incredible people in the parish who have inspired them to more actively live out their faith, including Fr. Stephen, as well



*Martin, Andre and Blanca Evangelista.*

as Pete and Joan Hoffmann. The Evangelistas continue to look to their fellow parishioners as valuable examples of stewardship.

However, for Martin and Blanca, the desire to grow their faith in a new way came most notably from the youngest member of their family, serving as a reminder to us all of the power of a child’s faith.

“When I first got to the parish, I was more the type of person that would sit in the far corner, not wanting to be involved in anything,” Martin says. “Then, when my son wanted to get involved, moving from the corner up to the front was a big change. It really was Andre and his spark that started it all. Sometimes I tell Blanca, ‘I’ve learned a lot from him.’”

## DO YOU HAVE TRAVEL PLANS? *Check Out Our New Program!*



Annunciation Catholic Church is now part of the Hawaiian Airlines Preferred Affiliate Program. With this program, parishioners and visitors will receive the following benefits:

- 5% discount on all transpacific web fares booked through our Preferred Affiliate page, including First Class.
- Valid for both business and leisure travel on interisland, mainland or international flights.
- Convenient online booking with a variety of fare and itinerary options.
- Completely electronic process.
- Our Church will earn one HawaiianMile for every dollar spent that our ministries will use for free air travel in the future.

Book your flight today by going to [www.HawaiianAirlines.com/Affiliate](http://www.HawaiianAirlines.com/Affiliate) and entering the program code **Annunciation**

If you have any questions, please contact us at [annunciationstewardship@gmail.com](mailto:annunciationstewardship@gmail.com)

**Mahalo!**



A  
HISTORY  
OF

LENT  
*and Lenten Practices*

When we approach the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, we look toward a season of preparation, sacrifice and penance, culminating in Holy Week and the joyous celebrations of Easter. And while the liturgical season of Lent offers us a time for solemn reflection, it is also widely welcomed each year as an opportunity to be drawn closer to our faith.

But just how did this penitential season come to be? And how did the reverent hallmarks of Lent – such as fasting and prayer – become so deeply engrained in our observance of this season?

To understand the Lenten season, it is important to understand the word “Lent” itself, which is derived from two Anglo-Saxon terms: *lencten*, meaning “spring,” and *lenctentid*, which is the term for both “springtide” and “March” – of course, Lent often falls throughout most of the month of March, and during the transition into (and renewal of) the spring season. In Latin, the corresponding term for “Lent,” *quadragesima*, refers to its dating from the 40th day before Easter.

This brings us to another hallmark of the Lenten season – its length of 40 days. However, Lent was not originally observed for this length of time. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, Easter

preparations consisted of three days of fasting and prayer. In some places, this preparation was extended into the entire week prior to Easter – which we now observe as Holy Week. There is also some evidence that, in Rome, Easter preparation was as long as three weeks.

In its early form, Lent was an intense period of spiritual and liturgical preparation for catechumens who were to be baptized at Easter. At the time, many members of the community observed this period of preparation alongside the catechumens. But, as time passed and more people were baptized as infants, the connection between catechumens and Lenten preparation gave way to a focus on the themes of repentance and fasting during Lent for *all* Christians.

It was not until the fourth century – upon the legalization of Christianity – that Lent developed into its current length of 40 days, which mirrored the length of Jesus’ fast and temptation in the desert, as chronicled in Luke 4:1-13.

Yet, interestingly, the Lenten observations of fasting and prayer did not always take place for 40 *consecutive* days. For instance, in Jerusalem, fasting was observed for 40 days, Monday through Friday, but not on Saturday or Sunday – thus, Lent lasted for a total of *eight* weeks. In Rome and the West,

fasting took place for six weeks, Monday through Saturday, with Lent being observed over *six* weeks. The practice of fasting for six days over the course of six weeks eventually prevailed, with Ash Wednesday being instituted to account for 40 fasting days prior to Easter.

And as the length of Lenten observance developed over time, so did the observance of fasting itself. At first, some areas of the Church abstained from all meat and animal products, while others made exceptions for certain foods, like fish. And while a person was to only have one meal a day, a smaller repast would be allowed so that manual laborers could maintain their strength throughout the day. Eventually, eating meat was allowed throughout the week, save for Ash Wednesday and on Fridays.

In fact, two of our most common and beloved Lenten and Easter traditions – the Shrove Tuesday meal and Easter eggs – developed from these early Lenten observations. Initially, abstinence from dairy products was observed during Lent, with dispensations given if pious works had taken place. Eventually, this particular rule of abstinence was relaxed entirely. Today, pre-Lenten pancake breakfasts, Easter egg decoration and egg hunts remain as enjoyable seasonal opportunities for fellowship and fun within our parish families!

## SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES THIS LENT

### LENTEN FAITH-SHARING GROUPS

*Puako, Sundays - March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 9, 2017.*

*8:30 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. (in Gazebo)*

*Waimea, Wednesdays - March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5, 2017.*

*5:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m. (in Old Church)*

### ASH WEDNESDAY

*Wednesday, March 1*

*7 a.m., Waimea*

*7 p.m., Puako*

### FIRST FRIDAY ADORATION

*Special 24-Hour Adoration, Waimea*

*Friday, March 3, 8 a.m. to*

*Saturday, March 4, 8 a.m.*

### STATIONS OF THE CROSS

*Every Friday during Lent, 6 p.m.,*

*Waimea*

### RITE OF ELECTION

*Saturday, March 4*

*5 p.m., St. Joseph Church,*

*Hilo*

### CHRISM MASS

*Thursday, March 23*

*6 p.m., St. Joseph Church,*

*Hilo*

### PENANCE SERVICE

*Tuesday, April 4*

*6:30 p.m., Waimea*

### HOLY THURSDAY

*Thursday, April 13*

*5 p.m., Puako*

*7 p.m., Waimea*

### GOOD FRIDAY

*Friday, April 14*

*Stations of the Cross, Noon, St. James*

*Episcopal Church, Waimea*

*Service - 5 p.m., Puako and 7 p.m.,*

*Waimea*

### EASTER VIGIL

*Saturday, April 15*

*7 p.m., Waimea (Note - no confession*

*at 4 p.m.)*

### EASTER SUNDAY

*Sunday, April 16*

*8 a.m., Waimea*

*10 a.m., Puako*

**CONFIRMATION** *on Ascension of our Lord  
Jesus Christ, King of the Universe*

*Thursday, May 25*

*6 p.m., Puako*



Annunciation / Ascension Parish  
PO Box 301 Kamuela, HI 96743

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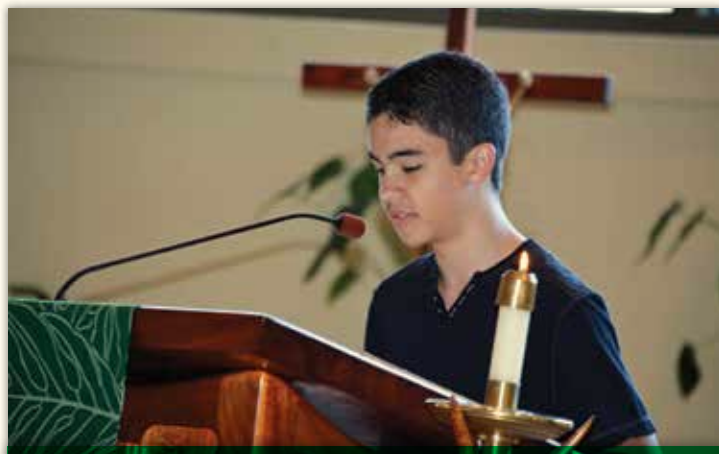
## Lectors Proclaim the Word of God

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Mass, I sometimes feel like I am saying these words for the first time, because I am reflecting on how they apply to our lives now. It's also great when you see people who may have never heard these words before, and you see the expression on their face when something clicks. The Scriptures reflect what is important in the Catholic faith, and what makes you who you are as a Catholic."

Roxanne advises those considering serving as lectors to not be afraid, and encourages them to try it out, even if it is just once. Anyone who has been confirmed, including youth, is welcome.

"Everyone gets nervous speaking in public, but we are all there to help and to support them," she says. "If you can just be open to the fact that God is calling you, you can do it! Everyone at the parish is very happy when someone participates and shares their time and talent with us."



*If you would like more information about the Lectors Ministry, or to get involved, please contact the parish office at 808-887-1220.*

## MASS SCHEDULE

**Saturday Vigil:** 5pm (Waimea) | **Sunday:** 8am (Waimea) & 10am (Puako) | **Confession:** Saturday 4pm (Waimea)