

St. Rita Catholic Church

**89-318 Farrington Hwy.
Nanakuli, Hawaii 96792**

**Parish Office: (808) 668-7833
Website: <http://www.stritananakuli.org>**

Pastor:	Rev. Paulo Kosaka, OFM Cap	
Deacon:	Deacon Harold S. Levy, Jr.	
Office Manager:	Mele Ahuna	
Bookkeeper:	Lalla Andres	
Religious Education:	Karen Victor	808-672-5437
O. C. I. A.	Don Gerry	860-908-5954
Youth Minister:	Ivan Okuda	808-3086261
Knights of Columbus:	Bill Kozak	609-381-1193
Outreach Coordinator:	Carlin Ujimori-Kaeo	808-668-7833
Outreach/Facsimile/Prayer-line		808-668-7716

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday at **5:00 PM**

Sunday at **7:00 AM, 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM**

Confessions: Saturday from 3:15 to 4:00 PM **at the church** or by appointment

Infant Baptism: Contact Parish Office

Sacrament of Matrimony: Contact the Pastor 6 months before the wedding date for an appointment.

Funerals: Contact the Pastor before going to the Mortuary

We, the people of God of St. Rita Parish in Nanakuli, are united in our belief and in our commitment to Jesus Christ. In the spirit of aloha we respond to Christ's mission of love and freedom with our care, concern and communal action. This is expressed in the stewardship of our treasure through tithing and in the gift of our time and talents through shared ministries.

As a fast growing rural parish with a large Hawaiian population we feel a special calling to stand together in truth and justice for indigenous people of this land. As part of the universal Church, our outreach extends beyond our boundaries to the global community and we affirm the human dignity of all peoples. As a parish family we enthusiastically participate in bringing about God's reign of peace. We continue to evangelize, welcome and invite all of God's people to St. Rita Parish.

IF YOU ARE NEW TO THE PARISH HAVE A NEW PHONE NUMBER
 HAVE A NEW ADDRESS NEED OFFERTORY ENVELOPES

NAME _____ PHONE(HM) _____ (WK.) _____

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Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 15, 2026

Rejoice Jerusalem,
and all who love her!

PARISH CALENDAR

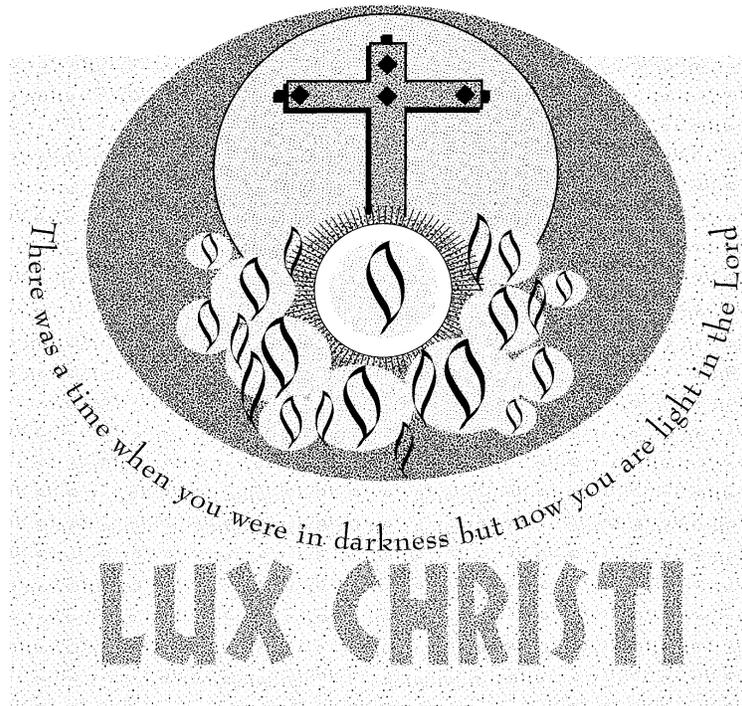
Saturday, March 14	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Sunday, March 15	..... 7:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:00 a.m.	Mass (<i>Live Stream</i>)
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass
Monday, March 16	..... 7:30 a.m.	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
Tuesday, March 17	..... 7:30 a.m.	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 7:00 p.m.	Finance Council Meeting - Kamiano Trailer
Wednesday, March 18	..... 7:30 a.m.	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a.m.	<i>Communion Service</i>
	.. 9:30am -11:30 am	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, March 19	..... 8:00 a.m.	<i>Communion Service</i>
Friday, March 20	..... 7:30 a.m.	<i>Liturgy of Hours/Rosary</i>
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 7:00 p.m.	Station of the Cross - Outreach
Saturday, March 21	..... 3:15-4:00 p.m.	Confession - Church
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass

NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Ez:37:12-14: *The Lord God told the people that soon the graves of the dead would open and they would rise. "I will put my spirit in you that you may live. . . . says the Lord."*

Rm:8:8-11: *"Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." God, who raised Jesus from the dead, will raise also those in whom the Spirit dwells.*

Jn:11 :1-45: *Lazarus died, and Jesus raised him from death. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believe in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives believes in me will never die."*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

CRS RICE BOWL: FEEDING DREAMS IN TIMOR-LESTE:

By participating in CRS Rice Bowl, we're helping young people in Timor-Leste find opportunities and support to fulfill their dreams of becoming leaders in their communities. Visit www.crsricebowl.org/week-1 to read about Adriana's dream of becoming a doctor in this week's Story of Hope.

WORD OF LIFE: "To celebrate the Gospel of life means to celebrate the God of life, the God who gives life. . . . In every child which is born and in every person who lives or dies we see the image of God's glory. We celebrate this glory in every human being, a sign of the living God, an icon of Jesus Christ." (The Gospel of Life 84)

WEEKLY READINGS

Mar 15 Sun: 4th Sunday of Lent

1 Sm:16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ps:23; Ep:5:8-14; Jn:9:1-41

Mar 16 Mon: Lenten Weekday

Is:65:17-21; Ps:30:2 & 4, 5-6, 11-12a & 13b; Jn:4:43-54

Mar 17 Tue: Lenten Weekday

Ez:47:1-9, 12; Ps:46: 2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn:5:1-16

Mar 18 Wed: Lenten Weekday

Is:49:8-15; Ps:145: 8-9, 13cd-14, 17-18; Jn:5:17-30

Mar 19 Thur: Saint Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

2 Sam:7:4-5a, 12-14a, 16; Ps:89:2-3, 4-5, 27 & 29; Rm: 4:13, 16-18, 22; Mt:1:16, 18-21, 24a

Mar 20 Fri: Lenten Weekday

Ws:2:1a, 12-22; Ps:34: 17-18, 19-20, 21 & 23; Jn:7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Mar 21 Sat: Lenten Weekday

Jer:11:18-20; Ps:7: 2-3, 9bc-10, 11-12; Jn:7:40-53

A STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

*Saint Paul gives us a wakeup call. As stewards of the light of Christ, we are to reflect that light with the help of the Holy Spirit. If Christ's work has transformed and illuminated our lives, there should be a change. The light of Christ's active presence should be at work in us. And as the light shine too. We are used by God to shine the light of Christ in the lives of others. A challenging Lenten reflection: is the light of Christ shining in our hearts? Is the light of Christ reflecting our from us to others? **International Catholic Stewardship Council***

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

Sunday Collection	\$ 3,770.26
Candles	60.00
Mass Intentions	40.00
Outreach	45.00
Total	\$ 3,915.26

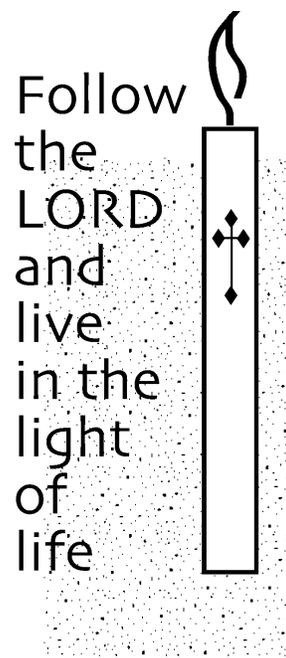
RESTRICTED COLLECTIONS

Building Fund	\$ 995.00
Total	\$ 995.00

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our LIGHT

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Laetare Sunday – 4th Sunday of Lent A March 15, 2026

Ka Leo O Ke Kahuhipa – Aloha ‘Ohana Aloha Nu’ia

4th Sunday of Lent is traditionally known as **Laetare Sunday**. **Laetare** – means **Rejoice**, taken from **Latin** translation of **Isaiah 66: 10 – 11**. We are called to be fill with joy in anticipation of the Easter mystery. This call to rejoice is symbolized by the **rose color** that is present on **Laetare Sunday!**

On **Laetare Sunday – 4th Sunday of Lent** we also celebrate the **2nd Scrutiny of the Elect** who are to continuously seek conversion and transformation on their journey to reception of the Sacraments on Easter Vigil.

Scripture Reflections

Old Testament: 1 Samuel 16: 1b – 6-7, 10-13b

Background Context: The first reading taken from **1 Samuel** comes at a turning point in Isreal’s history. Saul the first king of Isreal had failed to remain faithful to God. So, the Lord sent **prophet Samuel** to Bethlehem to anoint a new king from the sons of Jessie. At this time kingship was still new in Isreal, the people expected the king to look tall, strong and impressive like Saul.

When **prophet Samuel** sees **Jessie’s** older sons, he assumed that the lofty and the strongest one among them must be God’s chosen one. But God corrects him with words that is at the heart of this reading. **“Do not judge from appearance or from his lofty stature...Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance, but the Lord looks into the heart.” (1 Samuel 16: 7).**

Application to Life: While in high school I assisted the school librarian twice a month and there I learned how to use the Dewey System to organize hundreds of books in proper category. Like many who assisted in the library I was always drawn to the books with attractive and colorful covers or the eye-catching photo covers.

I still recall the head librarian constantly reminding us, **“Do not judge the book by its cover!”** I am sure many of you have heard that phrase before. It simply translates; we cannot really know a book (**a person**) just by the way it (**he or she**) looks outside.

This wisdom is found in our first reading. When **prophet Samuel** informed **Jessie** that he was coming to his home in Bethlehem to see his sons, **Jessie** quickly assembled his sons. But **David**, the youngest, was not even considered important enough and was not present but out in the field tending to the sheep.

Though the sons of **Jesse** presented to Samuel were impressive and Samuel himself thought God would surely choose one of them, God rejected them all and Samuel asked Jessie if anyone else was there?

One was left out to tend the sheep in the fields and initially was not even call to be at home to meet Samuel. Yet we learn that the one not considered by them was chosen by God.

Prophet Samuel led by God chose David and anointed him. As soon this was done, the Spirit of God came upon **David**. God saw in **David** a heart that was open and trusting and willing to grow even though **David** was young, hidden and imperfect.

This reading brings a message of hope and encouragement. **Lent** invites us to look honestly at ourselves, not just at how we appear on the outside or how others may see us. Like **Samuel** we have the human tendency to judge by looks, success, status, and image but God looks deeper into our hearts.

God sees our hidden motives and faithfulness in all big things or small things. **David**, the one who was overlooked became the chosen.

This passage reminds us that God's light shines where we least expect. In the world that is obsessed with external appearances – what is seen and touched by human senses, let us seek and embrace our inner transformation, to grow rightly before God in our hearts where our true motives may be found.

The wise words of my past teachers still resonate “**Do not judge a book by its cover**” or “**Do not judge until you first walk a mile in his shoes.**”

Lent leads us to Easter, we are called to trust that God is worked within us shaping our hearts even when our lives seem quiet and hidden just as God was quietly preparing **David** for something greater. We are called to be always faithful before God in all we do.

New Testament: Ephesians 5: 8-14

Background Context: In the second reading **St. Paul** reminds the Christians in Ephesus who they are truly in **Jesus Christ**. **Paul** states “**you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.**” Darkness showed how deeply sin and ignorance affects Christians and how they shaped their lives. But through **Jesus Christ** they are made light in the Lord, thus their identity has changed completely.

Application to Life: They are now people of light and because they are light **Paul** urged them to “**live as children of the light**”.

Paul underscores that light produces goodness, righteousness and truth. This means a Christian life should reflect honesty, compassion and justice all those virtues that makes a Christian visible and a sign. **Paul** also warned them about taking part in the fruitless work of darkness -sin, actions that harm others or us and lead us to away from God.

Instead of hiding such deeds, light exposes them and brings healing. Light in this passage is not meant to shame but to transform. When light shines things become visible so that they can be changed. This is why **Paul** says that even darkness can become light when it is exposed.

Paul invites believers to wake up from complacency, sin or indifference and allow **Jesus Christ** to shine in through our lives. For us today this reading is gentle but strong reminder that **faith** is not only about avoiding darkness - sin **but to actively live in the light – a virtuous life**. When we choose forgiveness over anger, truth over lies and love over selfishness, **Jesus Christ's** light shines through us and others are drawn to Him.

Gospel: John 9: 1- 41

Background Context: Back in the days when computers and calculators were not available to students, answers to math problems, especially in Algebra or Calculus, were not that simple as having just the correct answer.

To get the passing grade, students had to follow **math steps** that led to the **right answer**. This meant that each step in solving the math problem had to be as exactly as the teacher had taught. Every step carried was graded and only if students followed the given method to arrive at the final correct answer did students get the full marks-grades.

Even when answers were correct, students could be penalized if they did not follow the expected methods - steps. In a way they were punished for being different, penalized for not fitting into the system or the expected norms of learning and solving Algebra or Calculus back then.

The **Gospel taken from John** shines the light on the **Pharisees** the religious leaders of Jesus' time that made rules and methods - systems matter more than the truth, the final good outcome, the healing and the dignity of the human person.

Today's Gospel began with **“As Jesus pass by he saw a man blind from birth.”** His disciples immediately asked a theological – religious question, **“Who sinned?”** They wanted explanation for the suffering caused by blindness. **Jesus** shifted the focus away from blame and towards God's work of mercy and healing. Jesus states, **“I am the light of the world.” (John 1:6).**

Jesus restored the man's sight by spitting on the ground and smearing the blind man's eyes with it. Then he commanded him to go wash in the pool of Siloam ("**sent**"). The man obeyed, he went, washed and began to see. The Pharisees were angered because it was on Sabbath that Jesus gave sight to the man born blind.

Application to Life: To the **Pharisees, Jesus'** act of healing on Sabbath was considered breaking the law, that no work whatsoever was to be done on Sabbath.

Tragically the **Pharisees** obsessed with the details of Sabbath Law being broken, shut their hearts to the amazing miracle that had taken place.

Rather than search for truth the **Pharisees' minds** were closed and their hearts hardened, they could not empathize and rejoice that a man born blind now finally can see.

The **Pharisees** were so focused on proving **Jesus** wrong that they failed to rejoice in the dignity of human life restored – the man born blind now able to see and the truth that **Jesus'** power of healing originated from God.

The gospel contrast **light and darkness, sight and blindness** to teach us important lessons. Ironically the man who was physically born blind begins to see clearly not just with his physical eyes but gradually with his eyes of faith.

We witness a gradual growth step by step taken by the man born blind now see and to grow in courage, faith and truth. When he was healed the man could initially only answer "**the man called Jesus...**" then as he grew in courage boldly stated, "**He is a prophet**" and was thrown out by the Pharisees.

Toward the end this story comes to a full circle, the gospel that began with Jesus passing by and saw the blind man and stated, "**I am the light of the world.**" Then Jesus initiated the healing that gave sight - light in darkness.

Here it is interesting to note that Jesus told him to go to Siloam to wash. "**Siloam meant sent**" the man obeyed. The healing first began with the man's obedience to Jesus who sent him! Obedience to Jesus makes a world of difference in all our lives just as disobedience do!

Finally, when he is thrown out and found by Jesus, the man is rewarded for his courage and witness he gave before the Pharisees. He was personally asked by Jesus, "**Do you believe in the Son of Man?**" He simply responded, "**Who is he, sir that I may believe?**" and when told that He the one speaking is, without hesitation the man confessed, "**I do believe, Lord and worshiped Jesus.**"

Truly a remarkable irony for the blind man comes to see and on the other hand, those who claimed to see, the **Pharisees** though physically seeing became blind, in darkness.

Perhaps their stubbornness, fear of losing control and anger that Jesus healed on Sabbath had closed their minds and hearts.

The gospel proclaim to us today is not only about the blindness of the **Pharisees** of long ago; but it is also a mirror held up to us today that challenges **our own blindness**.

It is easy to criticize the **Pharisees** for their closed mind and rigidity that was borne out of deep pride, refusing any possibility of conversion of their hearts even when encountered by irrefutable truth of the miracle in their very presence. The miracle that spoke so clearly of the truth about **who Jesus is**.

We too can fall into such harden attitude that slowly shut our minds and hearts to the truth - light; we too can harden our hearts to the call of conversion of our hearts and to repentance so clearly spoken by **Jesus**.

We too can become more concerned about our prejudiced procedures and outward appearances than the truth revealed to us or heard in our life. Sadly, truth can drown out, and darkness can engulf us in sin.

Often in our families, workplaces or even in parish life we label people by their past mistakes and refuse to see how God maybe working in them now in the present. We say people don't change or this is not how things are to be done, and in doing so we close – shut ourselves to the grace – light of God.

Like the **Pharisees** we may assume and think to be sincere and religious yet may be blind to the living presence of God – His light in front of us. Jesus challenged this tragic mindset, for Sabbath existed for healing and goodness not for condemnation. The **Law** exists to serve life not to suffocate it or destroy it.

When rules- laws become more important than compassion, we risk losing the spirit of the law – the gospel message.

This Gospel passage invites us to ask ourselves this **Lent to reflect: Where** we may have become rigid – harden because of our unwillingness to open our hearts? **Whom** have we already judged without knowing the circumstances of the person's life?

Are there people we have written off without giving them a second chance? **It is not that** we become a floor mat to be stepped on, rather that we possess a heart of compassion. **Lent** is a time to allow Jesus to touch many blind spots in us.

True faith is not about proving that we are always right but learning to love as God loves us. The Goodnews is this blindness is not the final word.

Jesus still opens eyes especially hearts willing to change. May we leave today not just seeing better but loving better.

Our Prayers and Condolences:

We offer our prayers and condolences to **Lefua – Vito Ohana** on the death of **+Deacon Jerome Vito**. He peacefully passed away early Monday morning, March 9th at home.

Eternal Rest Grand Unto **+Deacon Jerome Lefua Vito**, O Lord, and Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Him. May the soul of **+Deacon Jerome Lefua Vito** and souls of All the Faithful Departed in the Mercy of God Rest in Peace. Amen.

Please keep his wife **Letita** and the **Lefua – Vito Ohana** in your prayers. Funeral date is still pending.

Funeral Mass for late **+Fr. Roland Emmanuel Duterte Pacudan** will take place, Monday, March 30th at St. Jude Church in Makakilo – Kapolei. **Visitation 9:00am and funeral mass presided by Bishop Larry Silva DD at 10:00am.**

Burial at Hawaiian Memorial Park Cemetery, Kaneohe at 1:00pm. **Eternal Rest** Grand Unto **+Fr. Roland Emmauel Duterte Pacudan**, O Lord, and Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Him. May the soul of **+Fr. Roland Emmauel Duterte Pacudan** and the souls of All the Faithful depart in the Mercy of God Rest in Peace. Amen.

St. Rita Parish Friday, Stations of the Cross:

Friday, March 20th at 7:00pm. Make the spiritual journey and walk prayerfully along the path Our Lord walked on to Calvary.

ST. Rita Parish Finance Meeting:

7:00pm on Tuesday, March 17th at the Kamiano Trailor.

Hawai'i Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal 2026 -2027

We encourage all St. Rita Parishioners to participate in **The Catholic Ministries Annual Appeal**. The most important part is our participation in any amount you desire to give on behalf of St. Rita Parish. Use the pledge envelop and give any amount you decide on behalf of St. Rita Parish. It all assists us in reaching the goal of \$13, 840. God bless you all!

Have a Blessed Week!
J. Ramirez of St. Rita