



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

*"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."*

**Our Vision:** *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

## THIS SUNDAY March 21 & BEYOND

### Priests in the Order of Melchizedek



The Letter to the Hebrews makes a connection between Jesus Christ as our High Priest and this biblical character who is mentioned briefly in the Book of Genesis, Melchizedek, king and priest of the Highest God, whose name means *king of righteousness*, and as king of Salem—the former name of Jerusalem—he is also recognized as *king of peace*.

In the narrative according to Genesis, Abram encounters Melchizedek after winning several battles against some war lords, and this man blesses him with bread and wine. In exchange, Abram gives him a tithe. Although the incident takes up little space in the Book of Genesis and the character is never mentioned again in the book, it does seem to have significance in the Jewish tradition because he is mentioned in Psalm 110, verse 4, in reference to a ruler that would govern according to God's will, a prototype of the Messiah or Christ. The verse reads: "The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

What makes this order so significantly different from the Aaronic order of priests?

First of all, historically speaking, Melchizedek is the first High Priest mentioned in Holy Scripture. He antecedes Aaron by several decades. He even antecedes the giving of the Law to Moses. And he does not make use of animal sacrifices but blesses through the use of bread and wine. The fact that no mention is made of his origin may have impinged the psalmist's mind with the idea that his ordination came directly from God, unlike the High Priests descended from the Aaronic lineage, who were ordained through human intervention.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews clearly saw in this character a prefiguration, a prototype of the Christ who offered Himself in sacrifice for our salvation and intercedes on our behalf forever in the heavenly realms. Christ's sacrifice, unlike that of the Aaronic priests, is totally effective and offers us real forgiveness of our sins and eternal salvation.

Through the use of bread and wine, just like Melchizedek did to Abram, Christ makes us partakers of His eternal blessing. Moreover, the bread and wine that we partake of in the Eucharist make us all partakers in the universal priesthood of the Church. We are all priests, "offering and presenting unto Thee, Oh Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto Thee", as Eucharist Prayer One in our Book of Common Prayer so beautifully expresses.

Through this living sacrifice that we offer in our daily lives by doing the good works that God wants us to do to others, we not only get the assurance of His promise of eternal salvation and participation in His ineffable joys, but we also contribute to bring others to the participation in His abundant life-giving love.

Fr. Carlos E. Expósito, Rector

Readings for this Sunday – The Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:11-16 Hebrews 5:1-10 John 12:20-33

## CALENDAR

**Note:** Starting this Sunday, March 21, a week before Holy Week, we are returning to worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. **The service time is 10am.**

**SUNDAY**    The Fifth Sunday in Lent

10:00am Mass

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**TUESDAY**    Noon Mass in All Saints' courtyard

**FRIDAY**    Stations of the Cross in the courtyard at Noon

**SUNDAY**    Palm Sunday

10:00am Mass (See note above)

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