**Heluhelu Baibala / Scripture Reading**

Romans 8:37  
Akā, ua lanakila loa kākou ma luna o kēia mau mea a pau, ma ka mea nāna kākou i aloha mai.

But in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

**Manaʻo / Thoughts**  
*Intimate Knowledge of Lent*  
By Nelson Wong, M.Ed., Certified Athletic Administrator  
Kamehameha Schools Hawaiʻi Associate Athletic Director

My earliest knowledge of Lent comes from my mother, Joanne. When I was in early elementary school, she and my dad were going through some challenges which eventually led to my parents getting divorced when I was in the third grade. To get herself through those challenging times while raising three very active boys, she turned to the church (St. Elizabeth Church in ‘Aiea) for strength.

Today she is still very active with the church (St. Joseph Church in Hilo) and observes Lent by giving up something – usually some type of food. When I was little, I knew Lent was around the corner when my maternal grandmother would place numerous rolls of Pillsbury biscuit dough and several bags of sugar into the shopping cart at the supermarket. Yup! Grandma Hatfield was about to make malasadas for Fat Tuesday! This is where I learned about the feast before the period of self-denial.
To be transparent I am not an active participant in giving up something tangible during Lent. What I think of when people are “giving up” something for Lent is how my mom never “gave up” on herself and her sons when she was going through the challenging times I mentioned earlier. I think about how Christ didn’t give up on getting his message out to the people. From that phase in my life, I developed a philosophy during Lent that the thing that I was going to “give up” was...giving up. I was not going to give up when times were tough or unpleasant. I was going to be the fighter that my mom was and still is today.

How I Draw Closer to Christ
Growing up in a Catholic household we went to catechism on Saturdays and church on Sundays. To be honest, my visits to church now are not as regular as they were when I was little – partly because I have learned through the people closest to me and through my travels, that Christ is everywhere!

I no longer feel obligated to step foot into a building once a week in order to draw closer to Christ. I see Christ in the beautiful ocean that surrounds our islands. I see Him whenever we visit Volcanoes National Park and hear the birds chirping through the serenity of the rainforests. I see Christ as he miraculously heals or helps those who cannot help themselves. I see Him in my beautiful wife Kāhea who is the epitome of tiger-like toughness combined with empathy for people that warms even the coldest heart.

Then, ever since June of 2008, I see Christ daily in my beautiful and caring son, Palikū. Palikū is the most tangible evidence of Christ that I have experienced in my lifetime. He is by far the greatest thing that I have ever created. Correction, he is the greatest thing in my life that God has created.

Palikū is the promise of God’s love in my life! I see Christ daily through Palikū’s infectious smile (he got that from his mother) and I see Christ through my son’s challenges. It is during those challenges that I try to guide my son with the same philosophy that the season of Lent reminds me of: “When times get tough boy, don’t ever give up! Your grandma Wong didn’t! Christ sure didn’t!”

Teen Take
By Keakealani Pacheco, KSH’16

What is Lent? Lent is a time of reflection, repentance, and prayer. It is done as a spiritual cleanse to prepare for Easter. Many denominations of Christianity participate in this tradition. I, however, am not one of those Christians.
Truth be told, I looked up that answer on Google. That’s how new I am to the idea. The first time I ever heard of Lent, I was sitting in health class in the ninth grade. I watched a couple of my friends stuff a package of peanuts down their throats, whining about how hungry they were.

Out of curiosity, I asked them if they were doing some special diet plan. They told me that they were participating in Lent, and had chosen to give up foods that are animal products. At first, I was like, “Well that sounds terrible. Why would you ever do that? What are you trying to prove?” Calmly, one friend said, “Jesus did it, and so can we.”

I felt extremely embarrassed. I live in a Christian household. I practically grew up with the stories in the Bible. And, now that I think of it, I hadn’t sympathized with Jesus’ life on Earth and how He suffered so much for the benefit of us all. It’s also embarrassing to realize that I don’t always think of the struggles of others. I thank God for my parents who cared for me, taught me well, and sent me to this amazing school. It almost feels like I’ve been sheltered my whole life. Consequently, I forget about how privileged I am from time to time.

Although I don’t participate in Lent, I find that there are other ways to humble myself before Easter approaches. I don’t want to starve myself, but I also need to understand the struggles Jesus endured. He sacrificed so much for the benefit of others, and as I grow older, I am now starting to understand these sacrifices.

My parents have always put my sisters and me first, before they chose to do anything for themselves. And because they taught me well, I take the partial burden of putting others’ needs before my own. This means doing chores around the house (even when I desperately wish not to), making sure my loved ones are cared for, and even staying home and finishing my homework before planning on hanging out with my friends.

I work my hardest to get good grades because, if I didn’t, I wouldn’t be honoring my parents’ hard work. Wherever I end up in the world, I plan to use my own resources to give everything back. And making the best of what I have now is definitely a humble way to honor what I am given.

To those who participate in Lent, please know that I deeply respect you. To give up something you love for Christ is a symbol of your strength, both physical and spiritual. And to those who don’t participate in Lent, know that it does not mean that you are any less of a Christian.
We are all blessed. Easter is a time of rebirth and profound hope in humanity. Though many celebrate it by hunting for Easter eggs, it is always important to remember what the real hunt is for. We will continuously hunt for redemption, and through this Lent period, we all will come closer to God.

I plan to spend this Lent period remembering why I love the Lord and why I put my faith in Him. He loved all of us the same. Jesus existed to remind us why we are given a second chance. And as said in Romans 8:37, “in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Questions to Ponder
- Why do you think God’s word calls us “more than conquerors” even when we are facing difficulties?
- Do you know someone who has gone through tough times and sought Jesus for comfort? Why do you think they prayed to Jesus?
- What kind of challenges in life have you experienced and have prayed to Jesus for comfort and support?

Pule / Prayer
Aloha mai e leʻe Kristo. You are an amazing and good God. Your promises of faith, of hope and of love stir up deep blessings within my heart and soul that I am overcome with joy. Lord Jesus, would You continue to bless me, to bless my family, to bless those with whom I have invested my time and to those who I encounter because of Your timing. Finally, I love You Lord and thank You for proclaiming Your promise that I am an overcomer and will not be overwhelmed by the challenges I face because You are with me now and forevermore. Ma ka inoa o leʻe Kristo, ʻĀmene.

Keiki Activity
Ask your makua to take a walk along the shoreline with you and talk about your favorite blessings in creation.
- Take time to pray for each of your family members and friends especially those who are going through struggles.
- Draw your hale and your ‘ohana and write, “God bless my ‘ohana.” Then place this on your refrigerator!!!
**Hīmeni/Hymn**
“Promises of God’s Love” by Kumu Hula Johnny Lum Ho

Ua lanakila nō mākou ma ke koko o ʻesū
Ua lanakila nō mākou ua pa’a kona aloha

Take one day at a time leave your troubles at his feet
Yes, he cares for you and me, open up your heart and see

**Hui:**
*We remain victorious through the blood of Jesus Christ*
*We remain more than conquerors through his promise and his love*

He died for you and me on the cross at Calvary
Who else would sacrifice their life so lovingly **Hui**

He promised happiness in the heavens up above
Just believe and you'll receive blessings of eternity **Hui**

Ua lanakila nō mākou ma ke koko o ʻesū
Ua lanakila nō mākou ua pa’a kona aloha

View the video below the I Mua Newsroom story to sing the hymn along with KS Hawai‘i vocalists Moananui Peleiholani Blankenfeld, Kukui Haumea and Kaimilani Kipapa; and musicians Kahu Kaunaloa Boshard and BJ McCollum. The video by Electronic Media Kumu Nader Shehata and Kaelia Saniatan features hula dancers Mikaila-Beth Braun, Taylor Quinories, Taylor Uyetake and Kylie Manliguis.

**He Manaʻo o ke Kahu**
*By KS Hawai‘i Kahu Kaunaloa Boshard*

As we enter into Easter Sunday, God’s promise for us is that when we go through tough times we are already victorious. Most of the time, we attribute being a conqueror or a victor when we have gone through the battle and have won. However, God’s word reminds us that we are more than conquerors because the power of Christ is with us now while we are in the struggle, not after.

So, we are told to take on the mantel of being more than a conqueror because of Christ’s victory on the cross. As a result, the next time you find yourself, or your ʻohana in a challenging situation just believe deep within your naʻau that you are already a victor in the difficulty.
Christ’s resurrection from the grave on Easter day demonstrated this type of power to overcome and it is available to those whose faith, hope and love is in Jesus. Finally, God also promises that nothing and no one can separate us from the love of God that is through Christ Jesus! This is our victory!