Ka Mōhai Aloha- The Gift of Grace or the Gracious Sacrifice.

The Season of Lent is a time that we use to reflect on the gracious gift that God gave to us in His Son Jesus Christ. We celebrated his birth at Christmas and now at Easter, we mark his death. But unlike us humans, for whom physical death is final, Christ’s death was not. On the third day after Jesus was crucified, he was resurrected or rose again. This was a sign to us that we too will rise again. That life in Christ is eternal. The Season of Lent is designed to help us to reflect on what that gift truly means to us and how we might be better people while we still have the chance.

Lent starts on Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter, lasting for 40 days (not counting Sundays). There are a variety of practices that the different faith groups have used to prepare for Easter. Some will give up something such as candy, sweets, ice cream or even meat. Others might add something to bolster their faith life, like prayer. For me, I’ll usually turn off my car radio on my way to work and use that time to pray. That’s 30 minutes talking with my Heavenly Father. Do whatever will work for you to strengthen your faith.

For these series of devotionals, we asked some of the leaders, faculty and staff of the various Kamehameha Schools programs to share their manaʻo of what Lent means to them. We hope this will provide you strength and encouragement during this special time.

Looking forward to Easter!
Nā Kahu Kordell Kekoa and Kalani Wong

Here are a few kid friendly web pages on Lent:
- http://brightsadness.org/kids.html

Did you know…
...that the date of Easter changes every year? Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon on or after the vernal equinox.
...the day before Ash Wednesday is called a “Fat Tuesday” or “Shrove Tuesday”? In some places, pancakes are served. Here in Hawaiʻi, malasadas are a tasty treat eaten by all. What else is that Tuesday known as?
...the ashes used on Ash Wednesday are made from burning the palms used on Palm Sunday the year prior?
...there are a number of events in the Bible that last 40 days including the amount of time that Jesus spent in the wilderness? What are the others?
Lent 1 (February 18-21) by Kahu Kalani Wong, Chaplain KS Maui

Heluhelu Baibala/Scripture Reading

7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! - Romans 5:7-9

Manaʻo

Have you received gifts that you haven’t used? I’m sure the giver must have spent time looking for something that you might want or could use, spending time and money to get the right gift. It could have been for Christmas or a birthday, or just because. Yet it sits in your closet unused or unwanted. There’s a really special gift that is so wonderful and so valuable that it would be really sad if we never used it. It’s a gift that was given to us by God- free and totally unexpected and undeserved. It’s Ka Mōhai Aloha- the gift of grace or the withholding of the punishment and forgiving us of our wrongdoings even though we don’t deserve it.

We often do things that go against what God hopes for us. These are called sins. We should be punished for this, just like our parents would discipline us when we do the wrong things. However, there are times that our earthly parents hold back the punishment because they love us. God does the same thing. It tells us in the Bible that “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23). We should be punished for the sins that we commit, but instead, Jesus took the punishment himself. Jesus became Ka Mōhai Aloha- the Gracious Sacrifice so that we might be forgiven for the wrong that we’ve done, not just now but always. And because of that forgiveness, we have live eternally with God in heaven.

Questions to Ponder

• Is there someone in your life who has done something wrong to you? Can you find a way to forgive them?
• What do we need to do to live our lives so we sin less?

Pule

Dear God, mahalo for all the gifts that you shower upon us so freely. May we never take any of them for granted. Help us to recognize the wrong that we do each day and help us to live pono. Ma ka inoa o Iesū Kristo, ‘Āmene.

Keiki Activity

• Look up the word “Mōhai” in the Hawaiian dictionary. What can you sacrifice for others?
• Do you have any unused gifts in your closet that someone else could really use? Share it with him/her.
Ka Mōhai Aloha

Lent Devotional
Lent 2 (February 22-28) by Shontell Calina, Christian Education Instructor- KS Hawai‘i

Heluhelu Baibala/Scripture Reading- Mataio/Matthew 4:1-11

A laila, alaka‘i ia akula ‘o lesū e ka ‘Uhane i ka wao nahele, e ho‘owalewale ‘ia aku ai e ka diabolō. Hoʻokē ‘ai ihola ia i ho‘okahi kanahā iā, a me nā pō he kanahā, a ma hope iho, pōloli ihola iā.

3 A hiki aku ka mea ho‘owalewale i ona lā, ‘i akula ia, Inā ‘o ke Keiki ‘oe a ke Akua, e i mai ‘oe i kēia mau pōhaku i lilo i berena.

4 Akā, ‘ōlelo maila ‘o lesū, ‘i maila, Ua palapala ‘ia, ‘A‘ole e ola ke kanaka i ka berena wale nō, akā, ma nā mea a pau mai ka waha mai o ke Akua. 5 A laila, lawe akula ka diabolō iā ia i ke kūlanakauhale ho‘āno; a ho‘okau akula iā ia ma luna iho o kahi ‘oioi o ka luakini; 6 ‘I akula iā ia, Inā ‘o ‘oe ke Keiki a ke Akua, e lele iho ‘oe i lalo; no ka mea, ua palapala ‘ia, E kauoha mai nō ia i kona po’e ‘ānela nou, e ka‘ika‘i lākou iā ‘oe ma ko lākou mau lima, o kū ‘ia kou wāwae i ka pōhaku. 7 ‘I maila ‘o lesū, Ua palapala ‘ia nō ho‘i, Mai hoʻā‘o aku ‘oe i ka Haku i kou Akua. 8 Lawe hou akula ka diabolō iā ia i kahi mauna kiʻekiʻe loa, a hōʻike akula iā ia i nā aupuni a pau o ka honua, a me ko lākou nani; 9 ‘I akula ho‘i iā ia, ‘O ke kia mau mea a pau ka‘u e hā‘awi aku ai iā ‘oe, ke kukuli iho ‘oe, a hoʻomana mai ia‘u. 10 A laila, ‘ōlelo maila lesū iā ia, E hele pēlā ‘oe, e Sātana; no ka mea, ua palapala ‘ia, E hoʻomana aku ‘oe i ka Haku i kou Akua, a e mālama aku ‘oe iā ia wale nō.

11 A laila, haʻalele akula ka diabolō iā ia; aia ho‘i, hele maila nā ‘ānela, a lawelawe nāna.

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” 4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ” 5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ ” 7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” 10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’ ” 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Manaʻo

The season of Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for the celebration of Easter, the joyous resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a 40-day time period often observed by fasting, repentance, deep reflection of Jesus Christ and one’s pilina with God and how one may be living out Christian values.

The story of Jesus being tempted is often connected to Lent because of the
lesson this moʻolelo brings. Jesus fasted for forty days, meaning he went without food for that time. Fasting meats or sweets during Lent, for example, is a common practice amongst Christians today. The fasting, however, was meant to prepare oneself spiritually for the work at hand or ahead. It was denying the needs of the flesh in hopes of strengthening the spirit.

During this time of physical weakness in the desert, the devil came and tempted Jesus to do the opposite of what God had taught him, the opposite of what Jesus knew to be the truth, to deny who He really was. However, every time, Jesus was tempted, He did not fight back with His fists or with sarcasm or with lengthy pleading. He spoke the Word of God. He quoted scripture. He came back with the truth. Although the devil tried three times, Jesus never gave in and the story tells us that the devil left.

In life we will often be tempted to go against what God has taught us, what we know is truth, what we know to be pono, to perhaps forget our identity in who ke Akua has created us to be. It can also often feel as if times of temptation come when we are physically or emotionally weak. There are times when we want to say and do the wrong thing because it seems justified or we think it will make us feel better at that moment. Be encouraged, mai hopohopo, look to what our Jesus did. He simply went back to the truth, God’s Word. He chose to stand on His loving Father’s promises and holomua instead of giving in. And just as in the story, God too will mālama you, will attend to you in your times of weakness.

Questions to Ponder

- What are some things that tempt me?
- What can I do to not give in to temptation?
- How can I be an encouragement to others?

Pule

E ke Akua Mana Loa, Almighty God, thank You for your promises and being the source of my strength. Please help me to make pono choices even when I am weak. For Your word says, Your strength is made perfect in weakness. Ma ka inoa o Iesū Kristo, ʻāmene.

For Keiki

Have you ever felt tempted to do something you know you should not do? Tempted is a word that means you may feel as if you might want to do something that may not be very pono. For example, have you ever wanted to eat a piece of candy even though your mākua said not to? How about stay up past your bedtime without anyone noticing? Sometimes we can even be tempted to not tell the truth or maybe say an unkind word to someone because that person made us mad.

Well, in our Bible story, Jesus was tempted too. He was tempted to not follow God, but because He had great pilina with God and loved God, and knew that God loved Him so much, it made Him very strong in His heart. It made Jesus strong enough to continue following ke Akua even when He wasn’t feeling so well.
So when we get those feelings of temptation, feelings like we might want to do something we know is pono’ole, just remember that God loves you so much that He put His strength inside of your heart already to continue following His ways. You can also always pule and ask God to help you to make the right choices just like Jesus did.

Keiki Pule
E Makua Lani, Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me so much. Please help me to make good choices today no matter what is happening. And thank You for also putting your strength right inside my heart. Ma ka inoa o Iesū, āmene.

Keiki Activity
Discuss situations in which they might be tempted to make a pono’ole choice and come up with solutions on how to make a better choice. For example, wanting to eat a piece of candy after being told ‘a’ole by a parent or being tempted to puni about their homework so they don’t get in trouble.

Himeni- E Iesū, e Aloha Mai
E Iesū, e aloha mai iā mākou
E Iesū, e aloha mai iā mākou
Hui kala mai i kō mākou mau hewa
E Iesū, e aloha mai
Lent 3 by Dr. Rod Chamberlain, Vice President of Campus Education

_Heluhelu Baibala/Scripture Reading_

“Ua hā‘awi ‘ia mai ke kānāwai ma o Mose lā; akā, ‘o ka lokomaika‘i a me ka ‘o ia‘i‘o ma o Iesū Kristo iā ia”
John 1:17

“Ua hā‘awi ʻia mai ke kānāwai ma o Mose lā; akā, ‘o ka lokomaika‘i a me ka ‘o ia‘i‘o ma o Iesū Kristo iā ia”
John 1:17

_Manaʻo_

It’s hard when the rules change. Sometimes we see this happen as our younger brother or sister gets away with something that we are not allowed to do — and our parents say, “You are older – we expect more from you.” This is commonly the expectation of the _keiki hiapo_, the eldest child, in the ‘ohana.

Sometimes we experience these rule changes in our activities — the size of the field increases in soccer, the height of the basketball hoop gets higher, new rhythms are introduced in music, or what we are expected to memorize in plays and ‘oli become longer and longer. It just doesn’t seem fair.

This scripture passage from John talks about a rule change — about what God expects from us. For over a thousand year (through some laws given to Moses), the expectation was about meeting a whole lot of laws (big time rules) — so many laws that no one could actually obey them all. And then God sent his son, Jesus, to change the rules: that our relationship with God and meeting His expectations would now be through grace.

The word “grace” is used 156 times in the New Testament (and you know if a word is repeated that you ought to pay attention). In the Paipala Hemolele, the Hawaiian Bible, “grace” is interpreted as _lokomaika‘i_ or _aloha_. Lokomaika‘i occurs 416 times and aloha appears 966 times throughout the Baibala! God gave this present to all of us without us earning or deserving it — that’s why we call it “_Ka Mōhai Aloha_”, a “gift of grace” — because He loves us so much that He gave His only son, Iesū Kristo, as a _mōhai_ or _mōliaola_ — an ultimate sacrifice — for our sins.

The way we say “mahalo” to God is to share this gift of grace — aloha for others — without thinking about if they have earned it or deserved it. And that’s a rule change that we can all live with!

_Questions to Ponder_

- What are some ways you can show grace to others?
- Based upon what you know about God and His grace, is there any limit to grace?

_Pule_

Aloha e ke Akua – mahalo for sharing Your grace with me through your son, Jesus, Iesū Ka Mōhai Aloha. During this Easter time, help me especially to share your grace with others who really need it. ‘Āmene
Keiki Activity
Make a list of five things you could do to show God’s grace to some other people this week – especially others who are your age. Share the list with a friend – and each of you pick one to use this week. Then you can come back later in the week and share what happened.

Suggested Himeni
“Lokomaika’i! He Nani Nō” (Amazing Grace, Nā Himeni o Ka ‘Ekalesia #133)
Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found
Was blind, but now I see

Lokomaika’i, he nani nō
Ho‘ola mai ia‘u
Ua hewa ia e aloha ‘ānō
Ua pō a’e ua lā