



SUNDAY REFLECTION

Lent is a time for reflection. As we prepare to celebrate the Paschal Mystery, the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, we not only listen to the events leading up to the momentous weekend two thousand years ago: we reflect and meditate on the meaning of those event and the words of Jesus for our lives in the world we live in.

The Transfiguration was a unique event, rich in significance and symbolism. For a moment the disciples, Peter, James and John, are given a glimpse of Christ glorified, transfigured, transformed, an intimation of His state after the Resurrection. The appearance of the two great figures from the Old Testament, Moses, the great leader and lawgiver, Elijah, the prophet many thought would return to prepare the way for the Messiah, confirm Jesus as the fulfilment of the promises and the covenants of the Old Testament. The disciples are overwhelmed and do not know what to say. They wish to prolong the moment by building three tents. As they come down the mountain one can see that they still, at that moment, do not fully realize the full significance of what has happened. They have received confirmation that Jesus is the

beloved Son of God, the Messiah, the One who was to come, the prophet predicted by Moses. It was only after the Resurrection that full understanding would come.

The Transfiguration, spectacular as it must have been, was only a moment, a unique moment of enlightenment, and a glimpse of the glory that would be Jesus at the moment of His Resurrection. We must remember that, apart from that one brief moment, Jesus lived His life in the fullness of His humanity, sharing the pain and joy, the happiness and the sorrow, the disappointments and the exhilaration that are the stuff of the lives of all men and women. Because of that, we know that He journeys with us on our pilgrimage, shares all our moments, moments of deep and convinced faith, moments of doubt and fear, of joy and sorrow, that make up the minutes, the hours, months and years of our lives. His is the hand we can hold; He is the One with whom, no matter the circumstances, we can say 'it is good for us to here.' During Lent we share His journey with Him, through all the moments that made up those final few weeks and months as He headed towards Jerusalem to His death and resurrection and His glorification, a journey taken on our behalf so that we too could share in the glory and the life He so wants us to have.

STEWARDSHIP: Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. St. Paul reminds us that God Himself "did not spare His own Son." Are my gifts to the Lord – of my resources, of my time, of myself – also sacrificial?

READINGS THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

7 MAR '21

Cycle B

Ex. 20:1-17: On Mount Sinai God delivers to Moses the Ten Commandments, the central commands of the Law. These are the conditions under which Israel is to be God's special People, chosen to be His own and to be close to Him.

1 Cor. 1:22-25: Paul explains to the young Christian community at Corinth that the wisdom of the world has no value in God's eyes. Christ is the Power and the Wisdom of God, and God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom.

Jn. 2:13-25: At the opening of His ministry in Jerusalem Jesus purged the Temple. It could no longer be the symbol of God's presence in the world. For the future this was to be the Body of Christ Himself.

Cycle A

Ex. 17:3-7: God tells Moses to bring forth water from the rock.

Rom. 5:1-2, 5-8: Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

Jn. 4:5-42: Jesus reveals himself to the Samaritan woman at the well.

YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH

Pope Francis announced a Year of St. Joseph, in honor of the 150th anniversary of the saint's proclamation as patron of the Universal Church.

Pope Francis said he was establishing the year so that "every member of the faithful, following his example, may strengthen their life of faith daily in the complete fulfillment of God's will."

Why does the Church have years dedicated to specific topics?

The Church observes the passage of time through the liturgical calendar - which includes feasts such as Easter and Christmas, and seasons such as Lent and Advent. In addition, however, popes can set aside time for the Church to reflect more deeply on a specific aspect of Catholic teaching or belief. Past years designated by recent popes include a Year of Faith, Year of the Eucharist, and Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Why did the Pope declare a year of St. Joseph?

In making his declaration, Pope Francis noted that this year marks the 150th anniversary of the saint's proclamation as patron of the Universal Church by Pope Pius IX on Dec. 8, 1870.

Pope Francis said the coronavirus pandemic has heightened his desire to reflect on St. Joseph, as so many people during the pandemic have made hidden sacrifices to protect others, just as St. Joseph quietly protected and cared for Mary and Jesus.

"Each of us can discover in Joseph -- the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence -- an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble," the pope wrote.

He also said he wanted to highlight St. Joseph's role as a father who served his family with charity and humility, adding, "Our world today needs fathers."

When does the Year of St. Joseph begin and end?

The year begins Dec. 8, 2020, and concludes on Dec. 8, 2021.

What special graces are available during this year?

As Catholics pray and reflect on the life of St. Joseph throughout the coming year, they also have opportunities to gain a plenary indulgence, or remission of all temporal punishment due to sin. An indulgence can be applied to oneself or to a soul in Purgatory.

An indulgence requires a specific act, defined by the Church, as well as sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, prayer for the pope's intentions, and full detachment from sin.

Special indulgences during the Year of St. Joseph can be received through more than a dozen different prayers and actions, including praying for the unemployed, entrusting one's daily work to St. Joseph, performing a corporal or spiritual work of mercy, or meditating for at least 30 minutes on the Lord's Prayer.

Why does the Church honor St. Joseph?

Catholics do not worship saints, but ask for their heavenly intercession before God and seek to imitate their virtues here on earth. The Catholic Church honors St. Joseph as the foster father of Jesus. He is invoked as the patron saint of the Universal Church. He is also the patron of workers, father, and a happy death.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

What is the significance of the Stations of the Cross?

The Stations of the Cross are representations of the path Jesus bore on his way to the crucifixion. They involve Jesus enduring suffering, insults, moments of support, and relay the intense sacrifice that Christians believe Jesus undertook for human salvation. The Stations of the Cross provide a type of meditation or reflection about individuals and the configuration that governs human beings.

The Scriptural significance of the Stations of the Cross is to detail the path Jesus walked on his way to eventual redemption of humanity. This path was one that featured him bearing the weight of the cross, falling down three times due to the physical exhaustion he endured,

meeting his mother, Simon the Cyrene, and a woman named Veronica along the way. The Stations of the Cross also include Jesus being nailed to the cross, his death, and eventual resurrection. The path to spiritual paradise lies in the Station of the Cross when individuals recognize what Jesus endured and enable it as a call to action in their own lives. For congregations, someone who is leading the narrative effect of the experience will call out after each station that "We adore you O Christ and we praise you," to which the respondents reply that "Because by you holy Cross you have redeemed the world." Pope Pius XI argued that the Stations of the Cross was necessary so that Christians could understand the magnitude of what was endured, providing "some sort of compensation to be rendered for the injury." The path to spiritual paradise for Christians involve this aspect of "compensation." It is through the acknowledging that the Stations of the Cross provides a needed element in the path to spiritual paradise for Christians.

THIS FRIDAY EVENING, 5 March, AT 7:00 P.M. THE STATIONS THAT WILL BE PRAYED AND REFLECTED ON WILL BE AN ADAPTATION OF THE WAY of the CROSS of ST. ALPHONSUS LIGOURI.

ST. JOSEPH'S TABLE

Once again we will have the St. Joseph's Table for the collection of breads set up in the Commons the weekend of 20-21 March. Donations of bread may also be dropped off in the circle at a specific time that weekend which will be provided with additional information later.

For a number of years we have continued the tradition of the Saint Joseph Table, a tradition that originated in Sicily, Italy in the Middle Ages. Legend has it that during a severe drought, the Sicilians prayed to Saint Joseph, their patron saint, for relief. When the rains came, the people rejoiced! In gratitude, they prepared a special table with an assortment of food from their harvest. These tables, or "altars," offered traditional cookies and cakes, bread baked in symbolic Christian symbols, assorted confections, fruit, wine, fava beans, and beautiful decorations of candles, figurines and flowers. After paying homage to Saint Joseph, the food was distributed to those less fortunate and Saint Joseph's Day was born, celebrated annually in March. The parish St. Joseph's Table is very simple in comparison to the traditional tables which will be discussed in the future. What is requested is bread items (commercially made and sealed) which at the end of the weekend will be distributed to the various food banks in the area.

REFLECTIONS ON THE DAILY READINGS THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT 1 - 6 MARCH

Monday 1 March

Dan. 9:4-10: The experience of Exile was the great disaster which prompted the

Chosen People to examine itself. All seemed lost – their political and economic systems in ruins, the Davidic line overturned, and the Temple no longer available as the place where they were assured that God dwelt among them. The prophets had proclaimed that such could be the outcome of their failure in fidelity, even God remains faithful to the covenant and full of integrity. Daniel understands in his prayer that integrity is God's, and that he can rely on this integrity in his all for mercy.

Lk. 6:36-38: Jesus too is deeply confident in the mercy that resides in the Godhead and that defines God. For our part, we are not to be merely passive recipients of this mercy: we must allow our own lives to be shaped by God's compassion, and extend it to our neighbors.

God's mercy is infinite and unconditional. But isn't there some kind of *condition* built into the phrases of today's reading? "Judge not and you will not be judged." "Forgive and you will be forgiven." "The measure you give is the measure you will get." Don't these phrases suggest that if you do judge you will be judged; if you refuse to forgive you will be refused forgiveness; and that God is only as merciful as you are? How are we to understand this?

St. Augustine was at his best when he was struggling with the most difficult passages. Hear what he has to say about this. "What do you want from the Lord? Mercy. Give it, and it shall be given to you. What do you want from the Lord? Forgiveness. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Then later he added: "*Forgive, and you will be forgiven, Give, and it will be given you:* These are the two wings of prayer, on which your spirit soars to God." Our spirit is meant to soar, not just to be lifted up like a stone. God's mercy, forgiveness, and generosity are not just exercised *on* us; they are to exercise *in* us. By being merciful, forgiving and generous, as best we can, we are *receiving* God's gift rather than just being credited with it.

Tuesday 2 March

Isa. 1:10, 16-20: It was probably inevitable that there would be a weakening of the people's devotion to the God of the covenant, once they had settled in the Promised Land and began to experience prosperity. And thus worship could become routine. Isaiah, and the prophets who preceded him, proclaimed that worship honors God only if it comes from the heart and is allied with a life committed to doing good, especially in works of justice.

Mt. 23:1-12: Jesus takes up Isaiah's attack on hypocrisy in religion, pointing out that religious professionals can be the worst offenders. For followers of Jesus a standard of conduct even higher than justice is required – utter selflessness, a lesson taught us by the example of 'the one Teacher'.

In many languages today the word 'Pharisee' is synonymous with 'hypocrite'. This solid reputation is probably due to the later part of this chapter of Matthew's gospel: the repeated phrase "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites!" Jesus acknowledged the value of some of what the Pharisees were teaching: "Do whatever

they teach you.” What He objected to was the discrepancy between this and their own lives. They had made themselves interpreters of the Law of Moses (“they sit on Moses’ seat”), and were applying it without mercy. This was the reverse of their own stated claim: to be as lenient, or as strict, with others as with themselves. They were imposing the burden of the law on others while they themselves enjoyed precedence and privilege. It is less the sinfulness of sinners than the hypocrisy of the pious that causes people to abandon religion. Atheism is caused mainly by religious hypocrites. An anonymous fifth-century Christian writer said: “Mistaken laity may be more easily set straight, but clerics, if they are evil, are almost impossible to set straight.” Anyone who presumes to teach is inviting comparison with the historical Pharisees, and is in the direct line of fire.

The Pharisees have long disappeared from history, but the Church has us reading about them frequently in the Liturgy. Why? Because we haven’t gone away, you know!

Wednesday 3 March

Jer. 18:18-20: Jeremiah as a figure of contradiction among his own people we know in greater detail than probably any other historical figure in the Jewish Scriptures. His having to face a murderous conspiracy makes of him a figure to reflect on during Lent, as one who vividly prefigures for us the effects of the alliance which caused the suffering and death of our Lord.

Mt . 20:17-28: Even those whom Jesus trusted most deeply and selected to be present at such privileged experiences as His Transfiguration, failed to understand the cup of suffering He would have to drink. Despite knowing of all that Jeremiah had had to endure, they seemed to think that following a prophet was a matter of status rather than of serving the word of God for the sake of the people, whatever suffering might ensue for the prophet and those closest to him.

Mark says that it was the James and John who asked Jesus for important posts in his kingdom (10:37). But Matthew puts the blame on their mother! However, the cover-up is transparent in the text when you check the original Greek. ‘You’ is both singular and plural in English, but Greek makes the difference clear. “Jesus said to the brothers, ‘You(plural) do not know what you (plural) are asking. Can you (plural) drink the cup that I am about to drink?’” He was speaking to them, not to their mother. Furthermore, the others were angry “with the two brothers.” John Chrysostom tried to steer around it by saying: “It seems that both the mother and the two sons of Zebedee together came to him.” Nice try.

The anger of the others reveals something else. Why were they not just amused, or perhaps embarrassed for them? Their anger reveals that they had a personal stake in the matter. They too saw *themselves* in the running for the top posts! This is all the more absurd because Jesus had just been speaking about the suffering and humiliation he himself was about to endure.

Today’s reading, then, has the same theme as yesterday’s. The only difference is that yesterday’s was about the Pharisees, but today’s is about the Apostles! If there is an excuse for the two, it is possibly that they were very young and inexperienced, and

didn't have much awareness of what they were saying. John Chrysostom added that they seen not to have grasped the logic of Jesus: that the first would be last. "James and John disgraced themselves by seeking the first place. That puts them among the last."

Through the ages, that logic – much more difficult than Aristotle's – has been more honored in the breach than in the observance. Its implications have not fully sunk in. there is still a culture of privilege, precedence and power in the Church. Has it e v e r sunk in, in any age? The same ancient writer said, "If James and John were installed at Jesus' right and left, how could there be any room left for the rest of us?"

Thursday 4 March

Jer. 17:5-10: In beautiful images drawn from the countryside, the prophet expresses the classic religious truth that we are all totally dependent on God. The God on whom we place our trust, will nourish our spirits, and will also enable us to probe our own motivations and actions.

Lk. 16:19-31: The prophet's insight into God's close care for all his people emerges especially in the story of the rich man and Lazarus.. that the poor man receives compensation after death, is beautifully consonant with the insight of the prophets that God has a special care for the poor and the weak.

We used to call the rich man Dives, but Jesus did not give any name to this character in His story. The poor man does have a personal name, Lazarus. (As it happens, Jesus had a friend called Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary.) St. Augustine wrote: "Jesus kept quiet about the rich man's name but gave the name of the poor man. The rich man's name was well known around, but God kept quiet about it. The other's name was lost in obscurity, but God spoke it. Pleased do not be surprised ... God kept quiet about the rich man's name, because He did not find it written in heaven. He spoke the poor man's name, because He found it written there, indeed He gave instructions for it to be written there."

The story tells us something about riches: the rich are inclined to define themselves by what they own, not by what they are. Riches can clog up your inner being, so that you do not know who you are. Then you look out from that place of not-knowing and you see other people, but you do not really see them; you only see what they own – or do not own. Others looked through the doorway and saw a poor man there; the rich man looked and saw nobody. That is the subtlety of this story: the rich man was neither cruel nor kind to Lazarus; Lazarus was invisible to him.

Jesus told this story to the rich, to their faces, as an accusation against them. He told it to the Pharisees, who as Luke said, "loved money" (16:14). It has the same import as Luke's version of the Beatitudes: "Alas for you who are rich!" (6:24).

Friday 5 March

Gen. 37:3-4, 12-13, 17-28: To the Christian eye, it is easy to recognize in Joseph a figure of Christ: he was handed over by his brothers, and the evil they had planned was by God's design turned to good when he became a source of

deliverance – not just for his family, but for all the Jewish people.

Mt. 21:33-43, 45-46: Today's parable is a prediction of the trial, suffering and death Jesus would undergo; and, as Matthew sets out the story, it is told only a few days before the events took place. It is spoken in Jerusalem, the place of Jesus' death, and addressed to some of those who would be closely involved in that trial and death. Realizing how quickly these predictions would be fulfilled makes for a special intensity in hearing them proclaimed today.

When Jesus tells this story about the vineyard He is really talking about His country and the people who ran it. They were quite aware of this, "The chief priests and the Pharisees... realized that Jesus was referring to them." It wasn't a story to flatter them; it enraged them. That means that it frightened them – lying just behind anger there is always fear. They were frightened because He said they were going to lose power. They were religious leaders and He told them, "The kingdom of heaven will be taken from you and given to people who will yield a harvest."

This is not just a story about a comfortable 'long ago'; it is for the Church of today. If we are not "producing the goods," others will. Many people, experiencing lack of community and spiritual support in their parishes, are looking to new religions and cults for support.

Saturday 6 March

Mic. 7:14-15, 18-20: Returning from Exile, God's People see the guiding hand of a saving God in the events that had befallen them. Though they accept that the pain of exile was a just punishment for their wrongdoing, it is also clear to them that God is merciful, and that they can trust in being guided by that mercy.

Lk. 15:1-3, 11-32: The parable of the Prodigal Son is an incomparable statement of confidence in God's mercy. It is encouraging to hear of this mercy being offered to the ne'er-do-well younger son. But there are no limits to that mercy: the generous Father wished to extend it also to the self-righteous older son who appears not to understand his own need for mercy.

Jesus could have drawn any kind of picture of God He wanted. This is the one He drew. God is rich in mercy, abounding in love. The 'Almighty God' of our youth didn't always leave us with that impression, but the truth was never lost on the saints. Julian of Norwich wrote, "Our courteous Lord will show Himself to the soul full joyfully and with glad countenance and friendly welcoming, as if he had been in pain and in prison, saying sweetly, 'My dear one, I am glad that you are come to Me in all your woe I have always been with you, and now you see My love, and we will be united in bliss.'"

This heart-warming story of God is essential to our Lenten diet. Without it, our efforts to lead a better life only lead us into self-righteousness – or despair.

Which brings us to the older brother. Remember that when Jesus told this story He was surrounded by a crowd of surly scribes and Pharisees. They were objecting to His friendliness towards sinners. Jesus captured them perfectly in the figure of the older

brother. Celebration was foreign to him, he was enjoying his resentment, he was a kill-joy, he had no heart. And he was stingy.

Any of us, if we're not careful, could slip into that dreary role. We can become so focused on doing our duty that we disregard all other values. The Pharisees were like a group of angry elder brothers; they accused Jesus of being a glutton and a drunkard (Lk. 7:34), because He knew how to celebrate. But they were not able to make Him like themselves. In fact he spoke of the kingdom (the presence) of God as a banquet (Mt. 22). Again, it was not lost on the saints. Julian again: "Our sins are forgiven by mercy and grace, and we are received with joy, just as it will be when we come to heaven."

PRAYERS

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we come in our afflictions, and having implored the help of your most holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also.

Through that charity which bound you to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God and through the paternal love with which you embraced the Child Jesus, we humbly beg you graciously to regard the inheritance which Jesus Christ has purchased by his Blood, and with your power and strength to aid us in our necessities.

O most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, defend the chosen children of Jesus Christ; O most loving father, ward off from us every contagion of error and corrupting influence; O our most mighty protector, be kind to us and from heaven assist us in our struggle with the power of darkness.

As once you rescued the Child Jesus from deadly peril, so now protect God's Holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; shield, too, each one of us by your constant protection, so that, supported by your example and your aid, we may be able to live piously, to die in holiness, and to obtain eternal happiness in heaven. Amen.

Prayer to St. Joseph, Patron of the Universal Church

O GLORIOUS St. Joseph, selected by God to be the foster-father of Jesus, the most pure spouse of Mary, ever Virgin, and head of the Holy Family; therefore chosen by Christ's vicar as the heavenly patron and protector of the Church founded by Christ; with the greatest confidence I now implore thy powerful assistance for the whole Church militant.

Protect in an especial manner, with thy truly fatherly love, the Sovereign Pontiff and all bishops and priests united with the See of Peter. Be the protector of those who labor for souls amid the trials and tribulations of this life, and grant that all the people of the earth may submit with docility to that Church which is the necessary means of salvation for all.

Deign also, dear St. Joseph, to accept the consecration which I make of myself to thee. I dedicate myself to thy service, that thou may be ever my father, my protector and my guide in the way of salvation. Obtain for me great purity of heart and a servant love for the interior life. Grant that, after thy example, all my actions may be directed to the greater glory of God in union with the Divine Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and thy own. Finally, pray for me, that I may participate in the peace and joy which thou didst enjoy in thy holy death. Amen.

Prayer Before a Crucifix

O good and dearest Jesus, I kneel before your face. With all my heart I ask you to place in my heart more faith, hope and charity. Give me a true sorrow for my sins and a strong will to do better. With great sorrow and grief I look upon your five wounds and think about them. Before my eyes are the words that the prophet David said of you, O good Jesus: *"They have pierced my hands and feet. They have numbered all my bones."*

SCHEDULE FOR THE SECOND WEEK OF LENT SATURDAY 27 - SUNDAY 7 MARCH

Saturday 27 Feb

8:30 a.m. Mass (Lenten Preface II Eucharistic Prayer II
10:00 a.m. – Noon First Reconciliation Prayer Service & Confessions
1:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m. Confessions
5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass Second Sunday of Lent
Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer III

Sunday 28 Feb Second Sunday of Lent

7:00 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer II
8:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer III
11:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer III
2:00 p.m. Mass Brig Mass
5:00 p.m. Youth Confessions

Monday 1 Mar Lenten Weekday Day Off

6:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer II
7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions
8:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer II

Tuesday 2 Mar Lenten Weekday

6:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface IV & Eucharistic Prayer III
7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions
8:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface IV & Eucharistic Prayer III
7:00 p.m. Meeting

Wednesday 3 Mar Lenten Weekday St. Katharine Drexel

6:30 a.m. Mass Collect of the Saint Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation I
7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions
8:30 a.m. Mass Collect of the Saint Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation I

Thursday 4 Mar Lenten Weekday Saint Casimir

6:30 a.m. Mass Collect of the saint Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer II
7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions
8:30 a.m. Mass Collect of the saint Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer II
5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Confessions
6:30 p.m. Mass Collect of the saint Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer II

Friday 5 Mar Lenten Weekday First Friday

6:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface IV & Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. Confessions

8:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface IV & Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Adoration

6:30 p.m. Mass

7:00 p.m. Stations of the Cross

Saturday 6 Mar Lenten Weekday

8:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface II & Eucharistic Prayer II

10:00 – Noon First Reconciliation Prayer Service & Confessions

1:00 p.m. Inurnment

2:00 - 4:30 p.m. Confessions

5:00 p.m. Mass Vigil Third Sunday of Lent

Lenten Preface III Eucharistic Prayer III

Sunday 28 Feb Third Sunday of Lent

7:00 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer II

8:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer III

11:30 a.m. Mass Lenten Preface III & Eucharistic Prayer III

2:00 p.m. Brig Mass

I have decided not to
let this Lent go by like
rain on stones, leaving
no trace. I will let it
soak into me, changing
me. I will be converted,
I will turn again to
the Lord and love
Him as He wants
to be loved.

ST
JOSE MARIA
ESCRIVA

theBreadboxLetters.com

